

The Development of Educational Systems in the Member States of The Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States and Unesco, Doha

Achievements and Success Stories

Prepared Under Direction of ABEGS by

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Contents

Table of content	5
List of tables	10
List of forms 12	
List of boxes	13
Section One:.....	17
The Development of Education Systems in Member States	17
The development of education in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)	22
General principles and aims of the education system	22
Managing the education system.....	23
The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:	25
1- The development of preschool education	26
2- The development of basic education	28
3- The development of secondary education	30
The aims of secondary education are:	30
4- Teachers provision and training.....	32
5- Adult education program	35
6- Programs supporting quality education	36
The development of education in the Kingdom of Bahrain.....	44
Principles and aims of the education system	44
Managing the education system.....	45
The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements	48
1- The development of pre-school education	48
7- The development of basic education.....	52
8- The development of secondary education	56
9- Teachers provision and training	59
10- Adult learning programs	61
11- Programs supporting quality education:	62
The development of education in Yemen	66
General principles and aims of the education system	66
Managing the education system	67
The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:.....	68

1- The development of preschool education	68
12- The development of basic education:.....	70
13- The development of secondary education	71
14- Teachers provision and training	73
15- Adult learning programs	74
16- Programs supporting education quality.....	77
The development of education in the State of Kuwait.....	82
General principles and objectives of the educational system.....	82
Management of the educational system.....	83
Main quantitative and qualitative achievements:.....	84
1- The development of pre-school education	85
17- The development of basic education	86
3. The development of secondary education.....	89
4- Teachers provision and training.....	91
5- Adult education programs.....	93
6- Programs supporting quality education.....	94
The development of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.....	98
General principles and aims of the education system.....	98
Managing the education system.....	99
The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:.....	101
1- The development of preschool education	101
18- The development of primary education	105
19- The development of secondary education	107
4- Teachers provision and training.....	109
5- Adult education programs.....	111
6- Programs supporting quality education.....	113
The development of education in the Sultanate of Oman	116
General principles and objectives of the educational system.....	116
Management of the Educational System.....	117
The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:.....	120
3- The development of secondary education	123
4- Teachers provision and training.....	125

5- Adult education programs	127
Programs supporting quality education	129
The development of education in the State of Qatar	134
General principles and aims of the education system	134
Managing the education system	135
The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:.....	137
1- The development of preschool education	137
20- The development of basic education.....	138
21- The development of secondary education	139
22- Teachers provision and training.....	142
5. Adult Education Programs	144
6. Programs supporting quality education	146
success stories in education development	151
success stories in education development	152
1- Education development projects	152
1.1. Programs classification and overview	152
1.2. Classification of education development programs and projects	153
23- Joint education development programs and projects.....	154
2.1 Overview and classification of joint programs and projects mentioned in the report.....	155
2.2 Joint development programs and projects goals	157
2.2.1 The general education curriculum field.....	157
2.2.2 The education apprenticeship field.....	159
2.2.3 The Educational Systems Field	159
2.2.4 The Education and Technology Field	159
2.2.5 The community partnership field	160
24- Education development programs and projects in Member States.....	160
3.1.1 Project overview	161
3.1.2 Success stories	161
3.1.2.1 The school accreditation for public and private schools initiative project	162
3.1.2.3 The Mohammed bin Rashid Smart Learning Project.....	163
3.1.2.4 The kindergarten development initiative project	164
3.2 Kingdom of Bahrain	165

3.2.1 Project overview	165
3.2.2 Presenting successful experiences	166
3.2.2.1 The school performance improvement project	166
3.2.2.2 Integrating autistic students in public schools project	166
3.2.2.3 The Project for helping establish small enterprises	167
3.2.2.4 Technical and vocational school student training program	167
3.2.2.5 Skills competition	168
3.3 The Republic of Yemen	169
3.3.1 Project overview	169
1.1.2 Success stories	169
3.3.1.1 The school-based development project.....	169
3.3.1.2 The parent association establishment project	171
3.3.1.3 Girls' education project in the Republic of Yemen	171
3.4 The State of Kuwait	172
3.4.1 Project Overview	172
3.4.2 Success stories	172
3.4.2.1 Project of computerization of education in kindergartens and primary education	172
3.4.2.2 The achievement file project	173
3.4.2.3 Support classes project	173
3.4.2.4 The integration and education of children with Down syndrome in primary education project	174
3.4.2.5 The care for special categories project.....	174
3.4.2.6 The entrepreneurship education project.....	175
3.4.2.7 Ambitious insertion of technology in education projects.....	175
3.4.2.8 The education value consolidation project	176
3.4.2.9 The human rights education project	177
3.5 The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	178
3.5.1 Project Overview	178
3.5.2 Success stories	179
3.5.2.1 The networking and communication project.....	179
3.5.2.2 Service guide and operation design project for the national center at the Ministry of Education	179
3.5.2.3 Computer laboratory and learning resource laboratory supplying and installing.....	180
3.5.2.4 The INJAZ project.....	180

3.5.2.5 The financial and administrative resource management program (FARES)	181
3.5.2.6 The NOOR education management system project.....	181
3.5.2.8 The 2013 national Olympics for scientific creativity project	182
3.5.2.9 The active learning project	183
3.6 The Sultanate of Oman	184
3.6.1 Programs overview.....	184
3.6.2 Success stories	185
3.6.2.1 The experienced teacher academic project in cooperation with the Sultan Qaboos University	185
3.6.2.3 The ROI (Return On Investment) project.....	186
3.6.2.4 The teacher knowledge examination program project.....	186
3.6.2.5 The communication program between schools, families, and local communities project	187
3.6.2.6 “Teaching young learners” project	188
3.6.2.7 The use of online blogs to teach sciences project.....	188
3.6.2.8 The safety and security team project.....	189
3.7 State of Qatar	190
3.7.1 Projects overview	190
3.7.2 Success stories	191
3.7.2.1 Project to set up learning sources based on national curricula standards for subject areas... 191	
3.7.2.2 Project of exceptional and periodic assessment of independent schools in Qatar	192
3.7.2.3 Qatar National Schools Accreditation.....	192
3.7.2.4 International Examinations Project – TIMSS & PIRLS 2011	193
3.7.2.5 Project of implementing LMS (Learning Management System) in all independent schools... 194	
3.7.2.6 The e-bag project (one laptop per student/teacher)	195
3.7.2.7 National Education Data System Project	195
3.7.2.8 The e-library project.....	196
3.7.2.9 Project of digital interactive books library	197
3.7.2.10 Project of the Qatar National Network for Educational Information	197
3.7.2.11 Project of electronic registration for early admission of students in independent schools..... 198	
3.7.2.12 Project of electronic assessment system	199
Conclusion	200
References	203

List of tables

Table 1: the educational System of general public education
Table 2: No. of students and schools in the UAE in 2013-2014
Table 3: Preschool Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and other ECCE programs by gender
Table 4: Net and Gross Enrolment Ratios in elementary education
Table 5: Student population in the secondary level
Table 6: No. of students in TVET institutions
Table 7: number of teachers in pre-school and other ECCE programs (private and public)
Table 8: No. and planned distribution of teachers by academic qualifications and education level
Table 9: Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)
Table 10: Educational System in kingdom of Bahrain
Table 11: Number of nurseries and registered children
Table 12: No. of kindergartens and registered children
Table 13: Student numbers in education levels (private and public) between 2001/2001 and 2012/2013
Table 14: GER and NER in primary education
Table 15: GER and NER in intermediate education (private and public)
Table 16: Students registered in secondary education (public and private) between 2001.2002 and 2012/2013
Table 17: GER and NER in secondary education (general and public)
Table 18: Number and percentage of enrolled students in secondary level technical and vocational tracks in 2001/2001-2012/2013
Table 19: Illiteracy rates among Bahraini citizens (1981-2010)
Table 20: Promotion rates to intermediate and secondary education (%)
Table 21: Early childhood indicators between 2001/2002 and 2012/2013
Table 22: Development of intake and enrolment rates
Table 23: Secondary education enrolment rate in 2001-2002 and 2012-2013
Table 24: Illiteracy rate for males and females and urban areas
Table 25: Some indicators of the quality of basic and secondary education
Table 26: Number of students enrolled in technical and handy-work sessions
Table 27: Development of the illiteracy rate
Table 28: PMO for technical and vocational training

Table: 29: Preschool enrolment rates for children 4-5 years old
Table 30: Basic education enrolment rates (1-6)
Table 31: Enrolment rates by grades (7-9) and (10-12)
Table 32: No. and percentages of literate Omanis in 2013 of the age group (15-79)
Table 33: Education ladder of general public education
Table 34: Gross Kindergarten Enrolment Ratio from 2000/2001 to 2011/2012
Table 35: Net and Gross Enrollment Ratios in primary education
Table 36: Total Enrollment, Gross and Net Enrollment Ratios in technical and vocational education, in (2000/2001 – 2012/2013)
Table 37: No. and percentage of teachers, based on educational qualifications and gender for 2012/2013
Table 38: Educational System of equivalent education
Table 39: Adult literacy rates above the age of 15
Section two
Table 40: Distribution of projects by source and country
Table 41: Program and project classification
Table 42: Overview and classification of joint education development programs and projects
Table 43: Project distribution by source in the UAE
Table 44: Project distribution by source and intervention field in the Kingdom of Bahrain
Table 45: Distribution of projects by source in Yemen
Table 46: Distribution of projects by source within Kuwait
Table 47: Distribution of projects by source within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Table 48: Distribution of projects by source within the Sultanate of Oman
Table 49: Projects and programs distribution by source in Qatar

List of forms

Form 1: progression of adult illiteracy rates
Form 2: Assessing public schools performance by field of focusing
Form 3: National examinations results in the Arabic Language – reading (2010-2013)
Form 4: National examinations results in Math for (2010-2013)
Form 5: National examinations results in the English Language (2010-2013)
Form 6: Arab countries performance averages in science for grade 8 in TIMSS 2011
Form 7: Performance averages of Arab countries in Math in grade 8 in TIMSS 2011
Form 8: GER in Early Childhood Development programs
Form 9: No. of teachers in all levels in 2001/2002-2012/2013
Form 10: Student capacity in answering national exam questions for 2009-2010
Form 11: apparent (or gross) and net intake rates in kindergartens
Form 12: Apparent and net intake rate in primary education
Form 13: Apparent and net intake rate in intermediate education
Form 14: Apparent Intake Rate and Net Enrolment Rate in secondary education
Form 15: Proportions of academic qualifications for teachers in primary and intermediate cycles
Form 16: Proportions of teachers with educational qualifications for the primary and intermediate cycles
Form 17: Gross enrolment ratio development in early childhood development programs (2001-2012)
Form 18: Development of the number of children enrolled in early childhood
Form 19: GER and NER in primary education
Form 20: Secondary education enrolment rate
Form 21: Pupil to teacher ratio
Form 22: Development of the number of kindergarten female teachers
Form 23: Adult literacy rate
Form 24: Progression of the number of teachers by qualification in grades 1-6

List of boxes

Box 1: kindergarten development project
Box 2: project for the development of the system of semester teacher to subject area teacher in primary/elementary education.
Box 3: Smart learning in the UAE
Box 4: Independent schools in the kingdom of Bahrain
Box 5: Persons with special needs in Bahrain
Box 6: Literacy and adult learning programs
Box 7: Civil Society Organizations working in primary education
Box 8: Kindergarten development plans
Box 9: Direct and indirect incentives for adult education
Box 10: Oman Challenge - (Outward Bound Oman)
Box 11: Requesting the assistance of Omani Women Associations in implementing literacy programs
Box 12: E-learning
Box 13: Technical education in the State of Qatar
Box 14: Independent schools in the State of Qatar

Introduction

Through this report, the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) in collaboration with UNESCO Doah, is aiming at documenting the most important achievements and success stories in education development in the Gulf countries, to introduce and generalize them for other countries to benefit from such exceptional initiatives in tackling the emerging and future challenges so as to provide a distinguished education that meets the constantly changing needs of the youth.

The rationale of reviewing the educational achievements in the GCC states and Yemen in light of a wealth of knowledge and experiences could guide the process of developing effective and efficient education policies. If a number of challenges impede the development of education in the region, there are nonetheless successful and promising interventions that were exerted to overcome them. Education systems in the Gulf encompass a wide range of expertise and valuable lessons that deserve to be identified and exchanged. These are experiences that mostly reflect the new global trends in education development.

Hence, education systems in an ever-changing world must be first and foremost flexible. Flexibility in the education system structure, tracks, transition through the different tracks, curriculum and specialization, student population and age category, years of study and assessment methods etc. is a necessary requirement to meet the emerging needs of the labor market and tackle economic issues and social and cultural life requirements.

This review has many important aspects. First, it highlights success stories unlike the previous trend of focusing on weaknesses and difficulties and overlooking the strong points and successful aspects, wasting the opportunity to benefit from the positive aspects of the process of improving the education systems. It also highlights achievements made in the education systems of the countries in the GCC and Yemen so as to present the underlying dynamics and lessons learned, to facilitate the exchange of relevant information with the aim of promoting ongoing development of processes and strategies that would effectively develop education. It is by sharing the lessons learned that we hope to promote the culture of exchanging information, expertise and useful lessons.

Second, by looking for applicable policies and innovative solutions developed in the Gulf States, it rectifies the prevailing trend of turning fully to the outside world to look for answers to the education problems in every country of the region, hence impeding the development of local capacities and know-how and the direct identification of the shortcomings in their education systems. Thus, the second objective of the current report is to promote national analytical capacities for a sustainable development in national education policies.

Third, this review is not just an enumeration of achievements; it is a documentation of processes that have led to said achievements. One expected outcome of this process is the inclusion of the Ministries of Education (MoE) in analyzing its success factors and its development towards a sustainable culture in order to review periodically progress made, why and how, and future challenges. The third objective of the report is to contribute to the institutionalization of the culture of learning from previous experiences and to present relevant experiences for the purpose of future development.

The current review has significantly capitalized on the opportunity provided by the 2015 EFA assessment processes at country level, as country reports cover education developments made since 2000, national education development strategies and the different initiatives adopted to achieve EFA goals.

The review was based on a questionnaire about success stories in education development that was filled by ABEGS Member States, national EFA reports, as well as information from relevant websites in each country and other UNESCO online material, whereby additional elements pertaining to education development in general were used and the underlying strategies to provide a more comprehensive picture of MoE achievements.

Section One:
The Development of Education
Systems in Member States



The Development of Education Systems in Member States

This section highlights the most important facets of the development of the education system in every Member State of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS), the GCC and Yemen, including its principles and aims, management, most prominent qualitative and quantitative achievements at all education levels, K-12, adult education, literacy, teacher provision and training and the quality of education.

The aims of the education system include the long term vision for the education and learning sector, the objectives of building the human capital, the medium term strategies to achieve said objectives and the updated education delivery plans by levels.

The education system management will address the laws and regulations identifying the prerogatives of public administrations entitled to manage the education system with its various levels; the geographic districts; and the distribution of roles between central and local authorities. It also provides the educational ladder, admission conditions and duration of learning in each level, the education tracks and horizons at the end of each level and the duration of the academic year in every country.

The most prominent qualitative and quantitative achievements sum up the learning outcome at each level, the relevant legislations and regulations to consolidate the operational plans of every level, developments in institutional reforms and curriculum development and the development of initiatives promoting education expansion and quality in every cycle. They also show the development of some enrolment and participation indicators per level for the period of 2000 and the last available year as per the national reports, to assess the progress towards achieving EFA since Dakar.

Teacher provision and training encompass national teacher training policies and strategies, teacher training institutions, type of training available, admission conditions and certification. The progression in the total numbers of teachers by academic achievements and national standards is also included hereinto.

The chapter on adult education and literacy tackles the type of programs available and their objectives, the relation between their tracks and the formal educational ladder. It also presents the most important new initiatives to meet the diversified social demand for this type of education by various population and social categories. At the end of the chapter, the development of literacy and alphabetization rates during the past two decades is presented as per national EFA assessment reports.

The chapter on adult education and literacy addresses the various available programs and their aims, the link between their tracks and the formal educational ladder, and the most important initiatives to meet the wide social demand for this kind of education by people and social categories. At the end of the chapter, we find the progress made in the past two decades in literacy and alphabetization rates as per national EFA assessment reports.

Finally, the chapter on quality of education focuses on system-wide or institution-wide performance monitoring and control mechanisms. This involves the institutional framework - from legislations and regulations to the assessment entity and student learning assessment programs. As such, follow-up mechanisms for institutions' performance, especially student learning outcome, were showcased through countries' participation to international assessments.

United Arab Emirates
(UAE)



The development of education in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

General principles and aims of the education system

The general principles of education in the UAE follow the guidelines of HH the president of the State on human development which stress that “man is the ultimate value and most important element of the State”.

The UAE has understood the importance of early reform and development processes which prompted the Council of Ministers to establish in 1992 a ministerial education committee to prepare a comprehensive education policy document that would account for the current status of education and the State future aspirations for sustainable development; a document that was ratified by the Council in 1995.

Said document provided a framework for education policies that are well-defined and with clear objectives through basic education policy guidelines. It also identified relevant basic principles that included :

1. Educating and upbringing citizens based on the principles and values of the Islamic faith.
2. Promoting national affiliation and Arab and Islamic cultural identity.
3. Providing education to entrench social responsibility, delivering equal qualitative community services to all citizens.
4. Deepening sciences, mathematics and languages education and life skills; and empowering learners through ongoing education skills.

The MoE strategy consolidated the education policy principles and turned them into reality. The MoE presented its Vision 2020 in October 2000. It was a quantum leap and a first comprehensive strategic plan for education which encompassed strategic axes and goals and implementation programs for the development of education at the country level. It also included many clear targets and indicators to measure the outcome of proposed initiatives. The education vision set 23 strategic goals to develop the education system based on seven main axes: education the catalyst for national development, maximizing the education system productivity, quality and continuous development, education the catalyst for culture and knowledge, flexible and adequate infrastructure, restructuring education levels, and participation, contribution and community support.

Nine strategic goals stemmed from these axes:

1. Quality curriculum development and implementation to prepare students for the knowledge society.
2. Improve the performance of education authorities and develop specialized capacities in education to guarantee highly qualitative education to all students.
3. Limit drop-out rates.
4. Prepare a motivational education and learning environment that meets students' needs.
5. Provide education opportunities to disabled children to achieve a high level of equal opportunities.

6. Ensure performance quality in education and learning in public and private schools.
7. Activate community partnerships in the education and learning process.
8. Promote students' national identity and sense of citizenship.
9. Guarantee highly qualitative, efficient, transparent and timely central administration services.

Managing the education system

The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm-al-Quwain, Ajman, Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah. The Federal Supreme Council is the highest legislative body in the country; it is made up of the rulers of the seven emirates.

The MoE is in charge of general education, literacy and adult education programs; the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is in charge of higher education and the Ministry of Social Affairs of private schools. Schools are licensed by the relevant education district of the emirate while kindergartens and daycare centers are licensed by the MoSA. The MoE supervises all education councils and authorities in the emirates.

In September 2010, the new organizational chart of the MoE was approved. It defined the role of the ministry in providing education for all citizens of the UAE, developing education plans, elaborating school curricula, examinations systems, adult education programs and establishing schools and institutes and monitoring their performance. Under the new system, the ministry is divided into the five following branches: private education, education policies, school activities and environment, education processes and support services.

The National Institute for Vocational Education (NIVE) was established in 2006 to provide students with an opportunity to acquire skills that would enhance their employability. NIVE's mission is to provide a flexible and high quality vocational education of international standards governed by professional standards that would meet the current and future needs of stakeholders, government, society, employers and individuals in the UAE and the Gulf.

The State general educational ladder includes the following education levels:

- Kindergartens
- General education schools with two levels:
 - **Basic education**, with:
 1. A first cycle of two levels: level one which includes grades (1, 2 and 3) and level two with grades (4 and 5).
 2. A second cycle of also two levels: level three with grades (6 and 7) and level four with grades (8 and 9).

- **Secondary education**, which represents level five of the educational ladder with grades (10, 11 and 12). The resulting education tracks are two: (literature and sciences) following grade 10.

The following table shows the educational ladder in general public education pursuant to the Council of Ministers' decree no. (1/185) of 2001.

Table 1: the educational System of general public education

Cycle		Grade	Level
Secondary 11 10		12	Five
Basic education	Second cycle	9	Four
		8	
		7	Three
		6	
	First cycle	5	Two
		4	
	Preparatory cycle	3	One
		2	
		1	
kindergarten	KG2	(5 - 6) years old	
	KG1	(4 - 5) years old	

Higher education is provided in universities and higher technical colleges and other higher education institutes. Higher colleges of technology provide high school graduates one-year programs that lead to the first or intermediate diploma, or two-year programs that lead to the national diploma; and two-year programs that lead to the higher diploma (that targets diploma holders two years after high school); Bachelor programs are usually of four years or one year or more after the higher diploma. Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery take six years. Master's degree takes usually two years and PhD three years at least.

An academic year is equal to (180) calendar working days on average or (36) weeks for all levels. The academic year is divided into three trimesters.

The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:

The Emirati MoE education system is characterized by the following:

1. High flexibility and systematic diversity which provide comprehensive education opportunities for children in compulsory education age as well as illiterates, adults and the disabled, while providing them with adequate opportunities to follow-up their education.
2. Compulsory education for all those who complete six years; the commitment is binding until the completion of education or until the age of 18 depending on what comes first; and fully free education at all levels for Emirati nationals and partially free for children of non-citizens working in the public sector.
3. The continuous qualitative expansion in the numbers of schools, students and educational, technical and administrative authorities.
4. Free of charge facilities for learners as the MoE provides the required textbooks to students as well as free transportation, health care and social care.
5. The systematic qualitative development of plans, projects and programs.

The current education system in the UAE is experiencing a systematic increase in the numbers of private schools, especially English-speaking schools, international and local schools. There are many factors behind such growth, namely:

1. A demographic factor that is a huge increase in the number of expatriates living in the UAE wishing to teach their children the national curriculum of their home countries. There are English, American, Indian, Pakistani, German, French, Japanese and other schools.
2. An economic factor which prompted the MoE to adopt a decision in 1980 limiting the numbers of non-national Arab students in public schools; it also adopted laws governing their transfer from private to public schools throughout the different levels, which gave rise to what is known as the private Arab schools that follow the MoE curriculum.
3. The general trend among nationals and residents is their preference for private schools so as to access better quality education, especially in the English language. This trend was reinforced by the prerequisite of obtaining the IELTS or TOEFL to be accepted in many universities in the country.

Table 2: No. of students and schools in the UAE in 2013-2014

	Public	Private	Total
No. of students	273312	696226	969538
No. of schools	673	509	1182

According to the MoE official statistics for 2013-2014, there were 1182 schools in total with 969,538 students. 57% of those schools are public versus 43% in the private sector; public schools service 28% of the student population versus 72% for private schools.

1- The development of preschool education

Since its inception, the UAE, represented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) has given special attention to early childhood education as it believed in the importance of this phase in the education of a child, while preserving his own personality in a balanced manner in many aspects. The State, through its specialized bodies, set itself the mission to develop this phase as an integral part of the education system, as it is a natural entry point and the basic foundation of all the following education cycles. As early childhood education constitutes a strong bridge linking the limited environment of a child – i.e. the family – to the diversified school environment, early childhood was considered an integral part of the general education system, with its own pedagogical philosophy, requirements, programs and teachers. Preschool education (kindergarten) – which is non-compulsory and free – is regarded as an exceptional education phase due to the importance of this age category.

The aims of preschool education are:

1. Acquire Islamic values and virtues, adapt children to the school environment, gradual transition of children to social life, and respect the system and discipline.
2. Help children enrich their linguistic skills, acquire new information, develop their speech skills to express themselves and develop children's self-concept.
3. Instill a sense of security, belonging and happiness, and develop a child's senses and skills, his readiness and ability to develop concepts in a clear, organized and efficient manner, promote children's thinking and motivate their observation and discovery skills.

Box 1: kindergarten development project

This project is one of the most prominent initiatives. It was a turning point in the education development process and the starting point to the following development processes in the framework of the MoE calculated timeline to develop the system in place in light of early childhood modern global developments, theories and educational and developmental philosophies.

Objectives of the project:

- Updating the education process in line with the modern era and the huge transformation in knowledge, technology and information revolution.
- Adopting a child-centered education process at this phase to achieve early childhood outcome i.e. the full and comprehensive development of a child.
- Enabling a child to adapt to the next phase.

General outline of the project:

- Stress the comprehensive and integrated aspect of development of the preschool system.
- Ensure a high level of interaction and interconnectivity between all the project factors through development and planning and meticulous organization.
- Making a radical change in education concepts and methods and shifting the focus from education to learning and from teacher-centered to child-centered.
- Reaffirm the importance of building the complete personality in all its aspects in a manner that would unleash the kindergarten child's potentials and creativity.
- Highlight the kindergarten premises as one of the development pillars; this was given important attention in the strategy.
- The project was supported with many programs including:
 1. Establishing new development centers in (Abu Dhabi, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Fujairah)
 - In line with the implementation of the project's first operational plan, 3 centers were established by ministerial decree no. (2/162) of 2004.

Objectives of kindergarten development centers:

- Provide children with comprehensive education services; make such centers advanced centers that would produce pedagogical expertise for the world of childhood education in the Arab world and regionally.
- Train kindergarten and early childhood teachers (females) to use the developed curriculum.
- Link the centers to the international entities and organizations such as AGFUND and UNICEF and to other educational and pedagogical organizations.

2. English language programs:

This is one of the basic development programs as it is one of the main components of this critical phase of the education system. The program was initiated in 2008 by ministerial decree no. (1/262) of 2008. It was first piloted in 20 kindergartens in the various education districts of the UAE. The program was completed in 2012 covering all kindergartens in the country.

3. Project of implementing language development in kindergartens:

The idea behind the project was launched based on pedagogical studies which confirmed a child's potential to acquire reading and writing skills without any difficulty at the kindergarten level, and the other related positive impacts that would positively affect the development of a child's personality and reinforce a child's self-confidence.

Objectives of the project:

- Widen children's horizon and encourage them to acquire language skills suitable for their age.
- Exploit children's creativity in language development.
- Narrow the gap between kindergarten and the first cycle.
- Prepare children for schools and fulfil parents' wish to send their children to kindergartens.

4. The first Childhood Conference on developing reading and writing skills of kindergarten children:

The conference provided multiple opportunities for exchanging ideas on promoting, supporting and developing children's knowledge of reading and writing and for introducing best practices to develop such knowledge. The conference was the first of a series of conferences to be organized in the coming years. The first Childhood Conference of 2011 reached the following recommendations:

- Endeavoring to adopt compulsory education in preschool/kindergarten level and integrating it in the education ladder.
- Adopting the Arabic language in kindergartens being the mother tongue in the UAE which is the most important in teaching the basics of culture and reading and writing skills and the main factor in acquiring any additional language.
- Elaborating special guidelines and regulations related to kindergartens.
- Establishing the training policy to develop the skills of those in charge of kindergartens.

The UAE was keen on providing kindergartens throughout its territories, even in remote and scarcely populated areas. In such areas, it established kindergartens as part of the first cycle schools, to reach by the academic year 2011/2012 a total of 17 attached kindergartens.

The UAE is one of the countries that have made significant progress in early childhood development, as seen in the enrolment rates in the following table.

Table 3: Preschool Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) & other ECCE programs by gender

Gender	2000-2001	2005-2006	2011-2012
Male	63.4	85.6	80.5
Female	62.7	83.00	79.4
Total	63.1	84.3	79.4

Source: MoE

We notice a systematic increase in the enrolment rate of children (3-5) years old, male and female, from the base year 2000-2001, to 2005-2006 due to the boom the UAE witnessed. On the other hand, we notice a relative decrease in 2011-2012 which is due to the increasing enrolment rate to women's access to the labor market and participation in the production cycle in 2000-2005, while the decrease in GER in 2011-2012 is related to the rise in kindergarten enrolment fees, especially for expatriates, following the global economic recession and ensuing rising prices in addition to families return migration and thus the decrease in kindergarten enrolment rates.

2- The development of basic education

The aims of basic education are the following:

1. Building a child's comprehensive personality in terms of concepts and attitude, skills and performance, strengthening children's self-belief, and teaching children a number of religious duties according to their age.
2. Strengthening the national, Arab and Islamic identity, deepening the sense of national responsibility and belonging, and reinforcing the cultural identity.
3. Adopting the Arabic language as the language of teaching and communicating with other cultures based on the Arab Islamic culture.
4. Adopting an organized and ongoing method to overcome obstacles, acquiring as much information and knowledge about social life as possible, while improving quality and precision.
5. Motivating children to learn and gain knowledge, and develop their skills and orientations.
6. Helping children to acquire a practical method of thinking that suits their age and capacities, and help them understand the facts of life.
7. Appreciating beauty, loving the environment and life gifts, developing children's observation, imagination and creativity as per their capacities and competencies.
8. Developing children's diverse skills, creativity and awareness as to their rights and obligations.

More than 40% of students are enrolled in private schools; some of those schools teach foreign languages for migrant communities, while preserving the culture and curriculum of their country of origin. In general, private schools provide more than 17 different curricula including the one established by the MoE. Many of these schools cover elementary and secondary education.

There is no doubt that most development projects and initiatives stemming from strategies that consider the student to be at the heart of education and its focal point at all levels. In order to improve the quality of the education system and its outcome and in order to promote it to the standards of international competitiveness and face the challenges of the future, the MoE adopted many initiatives and projects namely: the project to develop the teacher of the subject area; the project to develop basic education; the project to develop education orientation; the project to develop student activities; school accreditation; the project for the integration of students with special needs (School for All). The MoE also strived to promote performance levels through the efficient use of the latest techniques and modern digital technologies as seen in the smart learning initiative; the questions bank; and the project of managing professional performance.

Box 2: project for the development of the system of semester teacher to subject area teacher in primary/elementary education.

The idea behind the project of the subject area teacher in the first cycle schools was first an alternative to the system of semester teachers in 2003 in line with the development directives that aim at structuring courses and rebuilding the curricula based on the integrated approach of similar subject areas by integrating such subjects or teaching them as similar subject areas to provide a positive link and complementarity between them; it adopted the comprehensive specialization for two supplementary subject matters - Islamic education and the Arabic language or math and science – which necessarily required restructuring teachers of the first cycle schools to be subject area teacher for Islamic education and Arabic language or science and math which reduced the teacher's workload by teaching two homogeneous subject matters instead of four and provide some freedom in organizing and managing the semester according to educational standards, student levels and the quality of the activity so that every student can find his/her place in it. It also bridged the gap upon the transfer of students from a semester teacher to a multi-disciplinary teacher, in addition to providing training opportunities and developing teachers' knowledge and strengthening the relationship between teachers and their field of specialization.

The education system in the UAE, especially during the past few decades, has registered a systematic qualitative and quantitative development. It was also able to expand throughout the different education levels especially the primary/elementary level as the GER in primary education was 103.3% in 2001 and around 102.6% in 2006 and then 110.9% in 2011. The adjusted net enrolment rate (ANER) on the other hand increased from 94% in 2006 to 96.1% in 2011 which clearly reflects the real enrolment rate that accounts for children who were enrolled in school at an early age and are at the higher level.

Table 4: Net and Gross Enrolment Ratios in elementary education

Indicator	2001	2006	2011
GER	103.3 %	%102.6	%110.9
ANER	-	%94	%96.1

UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)

3- The development of secondary education

The general secondary cycle requires three years. First year students follow common curricula; the second and third years open up specialization in sciences or literature. At the end of the secondary level, students receive the general secondary certificate (or technical secondary diploma for students in technical education) once they pass the general exam.

The aims of secondary education are:

1. Instill Islamic faith, promote Islamic behavior and reinforce the positive vision of the universe and life.
2. Reinforce the command of the Arabic language as a means of communication, a vessel for thought and as a means of cultural expression, and promote foreign languages as a means of modern learning and technology and as a means to embrace other civilizations.
3. Promote the full development of students.
4. Strengthen the sense of patriotism.
5. Acquire specialized knowledge and science and consolidate the scientific approach so as to understand phenomena and problem solving.
6. Develop tendencies and skills as well as trends and conscientious practices related to democracy and responsibility.
7. Prepare students according to their readiness and capacities to follow-up higher education or to enter the labor market.
8. Understand and produce modern technology and master technology-related skills.

The following table shows the quantitative expansion in student numbers in secondary education during the three benchmarked years.

Table 5: Student population in the secondary level

Years	Students				
	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
2000/2001	42716	47	48451	53	91.167
2005/2006	53.990	49	56.895	51	110.885
2011/2012	66232	50	67441	50	133.673

Source: UAE

We notice that the total student population in the secondary level increased from 91167 students in 2000/2001 during 2011-2012 to 133673 students in 2011-2012, i.e. with a 47% increase in female students. We also see a noticeable increase in male students in the secondary level from 47% to 50% during the same phase. Such an increase is due to State policies in rendering education in the second cycle and the secondary level compulsory and linking admission conditions in public entities and institutions to having secondary level certification.

The UAE pays great attention to technical education so as to be able to follow the country's economic and social boom in different sectors. Such attention is probably related to a number of considerations, most importantly:

- First :** labor market competitiveness; it is through technical education and training that young national Emiratis can acquire scientific and technical expertise and competencies that allow them to compete in the labor market.
- Second:** technical education responds to the State's plans to build a big industrial base which requires high quality skilled labor.
- Third :** technical education meets an important educational need which is to absorb a percentage of the youth who have potential and interests that correspond to the tracks of applied studies and that are taught by technical training centers in preparation for the labor market.

The following table shows the number of students in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions (secondary level).

Table 6: No. of students in TVET institutions

Academic year	No. of students					No. of schools	Faculty	
	Male		Female		Total		Male	Female
	No.	%	No.	%				
2000/2001	1663	100	0	0	1663	8	-	-
2005/2006	1442	100	0	0	1442	7	136	37
2011/2012	5253	83	1068	17	6321	14	244	169
2012/2013	6400	78	1838	22	8238	19	229	190

Source: MoE

It is worth noting that the average number of students enrolled in this type of education has risen during the benchmarking years to 8238 students in 2012-2013, i.e. it has increased about 5 folds compared with 2000/2001. It is probable that this increase is a result of the UAE's education policies that encourage students to enroll in this type of education, as a way to achieve the UAE vision 2020 to become one of the top countries in the world requires the rehabilitation of specialized national staff in science, technology and engineering; as well as the Abu Dhabi vision 2030 that was launched in 2006 aiming at transferring its economy into a knowledge-based economy and gradually reduce its dependence on the oil sector as a main source of economic activity.

In addition, female enrolment rate in this type of education is growing steadily; there were no female students enrolled in technical education in 2000-2001 and in 2012-2013, they represented 22% of the total student population in the technical education institutions. This is a reflection of the UAE's care to provide equal education opportunities to both genders, and encourage women to enroll in technical education to contribute to the fulfilment of the UAE vision.

On the other hand, technical institutes and training centers welcome students who have successfully completed 8th grade of the general education whether they were nationals, of national mothers, nationals of GCC countries, holders of UAE passports and those accepted by a decision of the Council of Ministers. All 12 grade students in technical high schools and institutes must join the field practical training program in institutes and companies of the private and public sectors for a specified period.

4- Teachers provision and training

Teachers play a vital and crucial role in the education process that is why training teachers is the backbone of any successful education system. The MoE plans to provide pre and in-service high quality training for teachers. The teaching profession requires a university degree and teaching expertise. Foreign candidates, whether resident or not, undertake a written test. Those who pass the written exam go through an interview to determine whether they were qualified to teach or not, and determine the education level that suits their personal and educational competencies.

In the case of Abu Dhabi, the latest reforms require newly appointed teachers to have a four year Bachelor degree with an acceptable command of the English language. Also, in-service teachers are required to attend trainings and competency development sessions during regular school breaks.

The Emirates College for Advanced Education (ECAE) was established in 2007 in Abu Dhabi as the first teacher training college licensed by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. ECAE provides teacher training of international standards and is currently granting a Bachelor degree after four years of study for Emiratis (and qualified foreigners as of 2011/2012) qualifying them for teaching many subjects such as English Language, math and science in public schools, from kindergarten to grade 1 and 5. ECAE also provides in-service English courses for teachers and principals and a number of pro-

professional development courses. It is expected to grant Higher Education degree and Master in Education and Pedagogy to candidates holding the Bachelor degree.

Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) also provide Bachelor degree, Diploma and Higher Diploma in education programs, and develop teacher training programs in particular to meet the education needs of the UAE. HCT also provide a four-year Bachelor degree in education technology. Teaching the English language was developed in schools and in early childhood level within the four-year Bachelor programs in collaboration with the Faculty of Education in Melbourne University, Australia.

Based on the UAE policies and legislations, all kindergarten teachers are women since the ministry was adamant about providing a safe and stable environment for children as a female teacher is a second mother for the child. That is why it was highly important to provide the adequate education and training to kindergarten (female) teachers. Given its awareness of the important role of kindergarten teachers, the MoE prepared specialized training programs for all female teachers by development axis; in 2004, a mobile training team of highly experienced female trainers in kindergarten education was established to train teachers to implement the upgraded curriculum pursuant to administrative decision no. (2/221). The number of female teachers more than doubled between 2000/2001 and 2011/2012.

Table 7: number of teachers in pre-school Education & other ECCE programs (private and public)

Year	2000-2001	2005-2006	2011-2012
No.	3691	4891	8046

Source: MoE

Such an increase was reinforced by the strategic plan 2010/2020. The strategy's second objective aimed at improving the performance of education bodies and developing their specialization in the education field in order to guarantee access to high quality education to all female students. The following table shows an improvement at the national level in the numbers and percentages of teachers with academic qualifications as a result of the government's special attention to the rehabilitation of in-service teachers, so that they would acquire the first-level university degree, and the prohibition imposed by the ministry of hiring diploma-holders graduates and focus on attracting persons with high - especially higher education – qualifications. This has been included in the comparative advantage terms of candidates applying for an educational job with the ministry. In addition, the ministry adopted specific measures to attract university teachers, from the specialized written exam to personal interviews, which confirms the MoE attachment to equipping its education staff with high pedagogical competencies and qualifications to achieve education quality. Also, issuing a teaching license that should be renewed every three years for all those working in the education sector, raises teachers' capabilities and motivate teachers' continuous professional development.

Table 8: No. and planned distribution of teachers by academic qualifications and education level

Year	Level	Secondary & equivalent (%)	Diploma (%)	University (%)	Higher education (%)
2000 /2001	kindergarten	15.02	33.19	50.05	1.73
	Cycle 1	2.70	35.34	57.80	4.17
	Cycle 2	0.42	4.08	86.88	8.62
	Secondary	0.05	1.28	85.97	12.70
2005/ 2006	kindergarten	11.96	24.41	61.26	2.37
	Cycle 1	2.27	21.39	71.36	4.98
	Cycle 2	0.36	7.20	84.76	7.69
	Secondary	0.15	1.15	83.88	14.81
2011/ 2012	kindergarten	6.08	14.24	72.77	6.91
	Cycle 1	1.75	13.88	75.08	9.29
	Cycle 2	1.15	6.90	72.53	19.42
	Secondary	1.10	4.53	80.45	13.92

Source: MoE

Above table reveals that the policies and legislations of the MoE have focused on the quality of the qualified teacher to work at the MoE. Statistics and data show a constant growth in the number of teachers with a university degree, Bachelor, at all educational levels. In 2000/2001, they represented 52% at the kindergarten level and in 2011/2012 they represented 80%. As for the first cycle, they represented 62% in 2000/2001 up to 84% in 2011/2012. This growing number of teachers with university degrees reflects the MoE efforts to prepare the teachers in the UAE through its strategic plans and projects. The education vision 2020, ratified in 2002, integrated many programs into its agenda most importantly, developing teachers' competencies. It set its first strategic priority to have all those working in all education levels holders of university qualifications. Accordingly, specific legislations were adopted to appoint teachers with the MOE; the first condition was for teachers to be holding specialized university qualification in the subject matter they teach. The MoE 2008-2010 strategy stressed in its objectives the importance of promoting the professional development systems and programs for all actors of the education system.

5- Adult education program

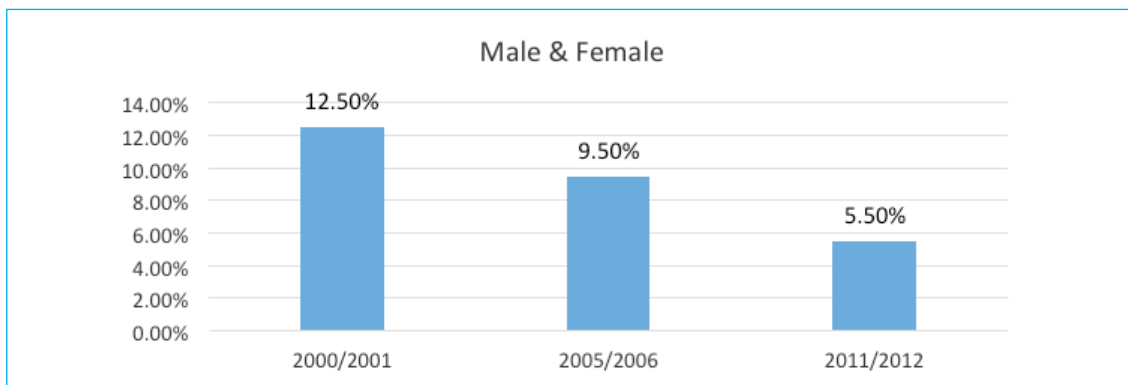
Literacy and adult education system adopted a set of goals:

1. Strengthen learners' reading skills, writing expression and mathematical operations needed in everyday life.
2. Teach students skills that would help them perform their functions, and prove their productive competencies or train in other professions.
3. Educate and rehabilitate learners to be able to follow the development process and face the challenges of life.
4. Provide opportunities for those who had received some schooling to follow their education.

Literacy was at the heart of the education directives since the inception of the modern education system in the UAE. The State has deployed intensive efforts to eradicate illiteracy. A special literacy and adult education administration was established represented by the Adult Education Administration which started working regularly since 1972/1973. The ministry also opened literacy and adult education centers in all places where adults would like to learn, so as to bridge the generation gap, face the problem of backwardness and change the inherited traditional education system. All capacities were mobilized to expand these centers; compulsory education was imposed until the end of the basic education level; adult education curricula were updated; a plan to improve the learning environment was elaborated; and human capital competencies were upgraded in said centers.

The ministerial decision no. 11 of 1980 was adopted establishing a higher commission for literacy and adult education and in 1989, the State ratified the comprehensive literacy and adult education campaign targeting all citizens. The deadline for the campaign was early 2000. Alexandria's Seventh Conference on Adult Education was held in October 2000 under the slogan Mechanisms and Plans for the Implementation of Adult Education Strategy to achieve this aim. As a result of these reforms, illiteracy rate dropped from 12.6% in 2000/2001 to 5.5% in 2011/2012, as seen in the following form.

Form 1: progression of adult illiteracy rates



Source: 2013 Human Development Report

Gender illiteracy rate was narrowed. In the early seventies, there was a noticeable gap between male and female illiteracy rates, but now, the number of female literates outgrew that of males, which reflects the focus of the country's education system on providing education for all without any gender discrimination.

It is worth noting that literacy rates have been systematically declining. The UAE has achieved an approximate 50% reduction in illiteracy rates. UIS report on youth and adult literacy that was published in 2013 showed that the UAE is among 7 Arab countries that will reach the set goal before 2015.

Education was also promoted by the role of women's associations, namely the General Women's Union (GWU) in the UAE, which was established under the support and hospices of the Head of State in 1975, i.e. since the early beginnings of the State. The adoption of literacy and adult education semesters within the associations' headquarters reduced illiteracy rates considerably. Promoting women's education had impacted women's position. These associations provided women with opportunities to take part in cultural and educational activities, and this was an accomplishment for the UAE society given the prestigious level Emirati women had reached in the education sector and labor market.

In the framework of developing literacy efforts, the Moe has prepared new curricula that allow learners to follow their studies for four years to receive the literacy certification: two years for the basic level and two follow-up years that allow learners to reach the sixth grade level, and which include mandatory courses to complete basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, deepen Islamic education and general culture; and elective courses that are determined according to the learner's aim, to continue their education or elementary vocational training.

6- Programs supporting quality education

Education strategic objectives in the UAE aim at promoting learning outcome in all levels and empowering graduates to acquire the necessary competencies to meet the labor market needs.

The Education Vision 2020, which was the first quantum leap, was based on a comprehensive strategic plan. It encompassed strategic axes and aims, preliminary projects and programs to develop education in the UAE in the scope of a clear vision. It confirmed the trend towards quality education, continuous development and measuring education output.

It was followed by implementation action plans that translated these principles into quality education initiatives and projects and improve the outcome of the UAE education system through the following efforts:

1. Focus on improving the school environment and provide school buildings equipped with all necessary means to provide a developed learning environment by: providing air conditionings and WCs, laboratories, plants, playgrounds

and other basic facilities, and adopt models executed and built in urban areas - such as cities - in rural areas.

2. Issuing ministerial decisions that aim at developing curricula in line with the Vision 2020 and reach excellence.
3. Focusing on professional development and improving the performance of the education body and provide them with adequate training in line with curricula development and teaching methods.
4. Compare student performance at the national and international level through national and international examinations such as PIRLS, TIMMS, PISA and others to measure learning outcome.
5. Develop school control and academic accreditation of general education establishments.

The MoE, in its strategic plan 2010-2020, fourth objective on preparing a motivational education environment that meets learners' needs; through this aim, were implemented many initiatives providing said environment such as developing education facilities, equipping them with the necessary equipment and techniques.

Table 9: Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)

Education level	2001	2006	2011
Pre-school	18.4	18.3	17.8
First cycle	15.9	15.5	17.0
Second cycle	14.5	13.9	15.6
Secondary level	13.0	12.3	12.0

Source: UIS

Table 9 details pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) in the different education levels, which are positive percentages and worldwide records. In pre-school, PTR didn't exceed 18.4 pupils per teacher in the benchmarking years; during the primary/elementary level, we notice an increase from 15.9 pupils per teacher in 2001 to 17 pupils per teacher. This increase is a result of the rising enrolment rate of children of expatriate families who settled in the UAE. The same is noticed in the second cycle where PTR did not exceed 14.5 in 2001 with 15.6 PTR in 2011. In the secondary level, PTR varied between 13 in 2001 and 12 in 2011.

Box 3: Smart learning in the UAE

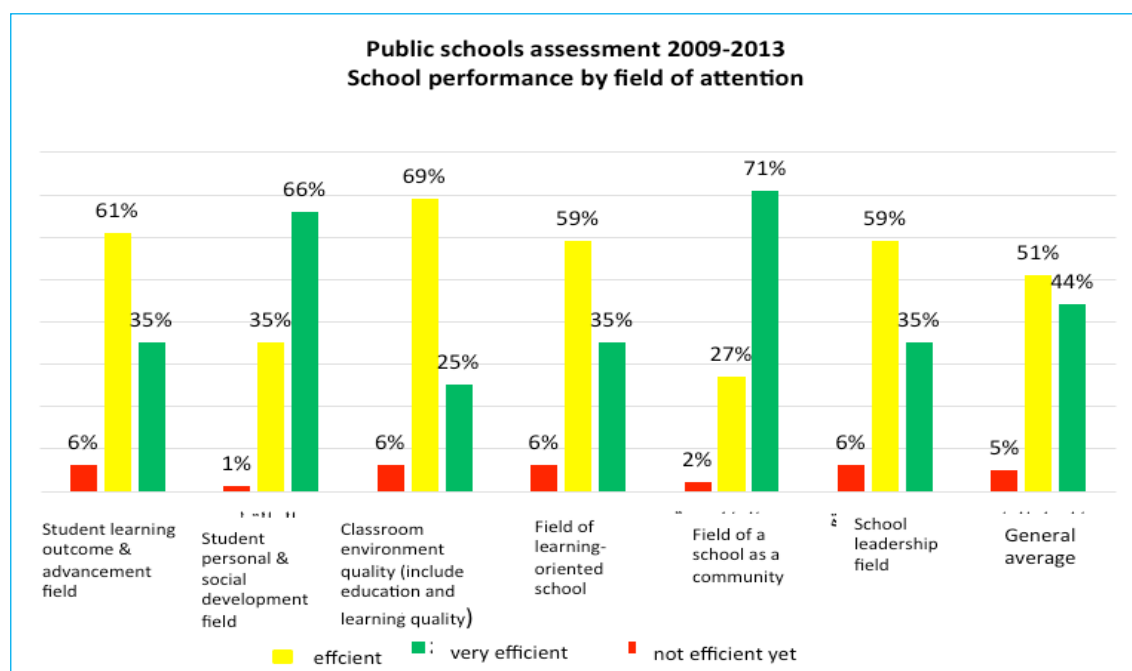
- The education sector is one of the main sectors that impact and is impacted by the technological advance. Thus, it was important to focus on integrating IT into the education and learning process as one of the foundations of an interactive and motivating learning environment that keeps up with the knowledge and technical advancement in the world, and the latest developments in modern education, which would provide current learners and future generations with an attractive interactive education environment according to the highest quality standards.
- The MoE had many achievements and ambitious initiatives aiming at keeping pace with the technological and technical revolution around us. One of the most important initiative is the Mohamed Bin Rachid Smart Learning Program which has contributed to the development of information technology infrastructure in schools. The program was launched in 2012 in collaboration with the office of the Prime Minister and the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA). Its objective was to build a new school environment for students in all public schools and its duration was five years. In its preliminary phase, the program focused on four main subjects that are the Arabic language, the English language, science and mathematics.
- Specialized technical teams were established to follow-up on and benefit from the best international practices in the field of smart learning; and build a strategic plan to support smart learning in the UAE in line with the specificities of the local environment. The UAE is the first in the Middle East to implement a program that targets exploiting information technology to develop electronic infrastructure and curricula in public schools nationwide.
- **Aims of the smart learning program:**
 - Improve public education level in the UAE.
 - Prepare leaders of the future by teaching them new skills that help them access the labor market, face different challenges and help students to be active and interactive in their education.
 - Improve access of all students to a high level education in accordance with the general State vision 2021.
 - Help education stakeholders to personally follow more closely the performance of every student, in order to help develop their talents and improve their performance in accordance with their capabilities; in addition to ensure a smooth learning process; and transform schools into a supplementary and interactive element that would encourage and motivate students to complete their education; reduce drop-out rates and encourage innovation, assiduity and initiative.
 - Bridge the technical gap between school and home; help introduce the biggest number of parents to the modern world of technology and new curricula which will benefit the society with all its elements.
 - Strengthen the relationship between students and new technologies.

The first implementation phase of the program was launched in 2013/2014 targeting the seventh grade; it will be extended to four years to include the remaining public schools, with a total number of 423 schools and around 150,000 students and 16,000 teachers. Targeted schools were equipped with state-of-the-art technologies worldwide and high speed internet to allow for internal and external communication; they were also equipped with smart boards which allow teachers to explain the lesson by presenting the electronic content developed in line with the objectives of the smart learning program. As a result, the content of the four basic subject areas was developed by 40%, and national education subject was added at this phase. At the same time, the e-book did not replace the regular school bag, rather supported it, promoting student/teacher interaction.

The program focused on teacher training: 83 teachers of the set pedagogical specializations were trained; technological support and assistance were provided through a teacher follow-up team of education experts and educators; a number of specialists were hired to provide technical support; and school administrations underwent training as well, with 20 training programs targeting school administrators.

The general results pertaining to UAE public schools performance show that regarding school leadership 35% of said schools are classified as highly efficient; regarding the school as a community the result was 71%; in students personal and social development the rate was 66%, while quality of classroom environment was only 25% and 35% in learning achievement and progress of students, which are the two most important fields to measure student education input and output, and which are the basis for improving education quality. Results also showed small percentages of between 1% and 6% for inefficient performance in schools.

Form 2: Assessing public schools performance by field of attention



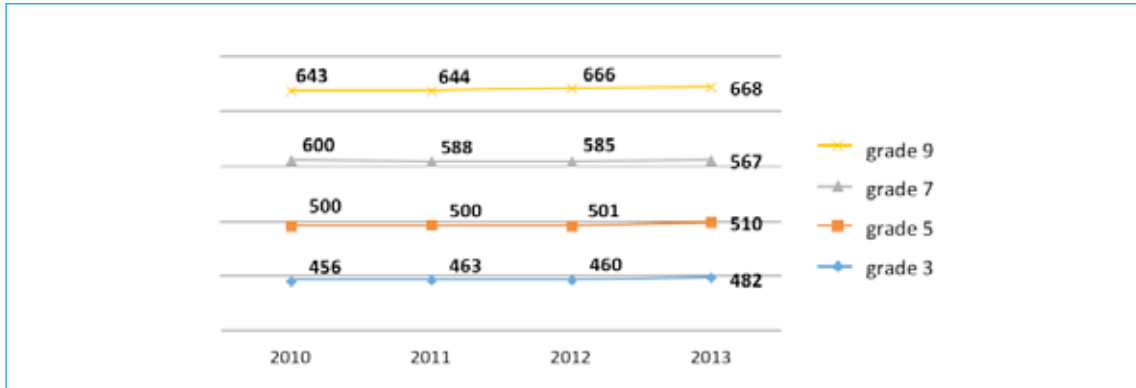
Source: MoE

The Education Vision 2020 document stressed the need to improve assessment policies and methods as assessment plays a crucial role in education reform and development. It also stressed that developing education curricula and programs and institutional assessment in general should be based on good governance standards such as performance, responsibility and accountability.

The MoE applied the national examinations program to grades 3, 5, 7 & 9 students in all UAE schools, in collaboration with the Australian council for Education Research to develop national exams, and create committees of curricula and assessment specialists in order to study the structure of said exams in terms of standards, content and questions. National examinations measure students' basic competencies in reading, writing, science, mathematics, thinking skills which difficulty lies in recalling from memory, remembering, analyzing and assessing. The examination sample of 2012 included guidelines of the Minister of Education to students of private schools that apply the MoE curriculum for the same grades, as well as students of public schools.

Student's results in national examinations are analyzed according to the student's average score on each of the four main subject matters based on the international grade average (500). Every year, the results of the current year are compared with those of the previous year so as to measure the improvement level in a student's performance. The number of students who took part in the 2012 national examinations was 60,000 in Dubai and the northern emirates, with 40,000 students from public schools and 20,000 from the private schools applying the MoE curriculum.

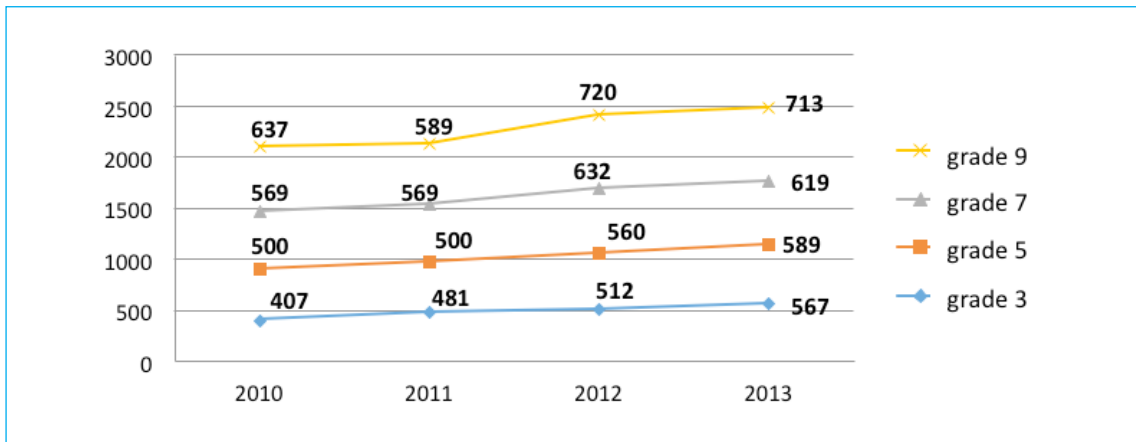
Form 3: National examinations results in the Arabic Language - reading For 2010 - 2013



Source: MoE

The previous form shows to what extent third grade students' performance in reading has progressed, as in 2013 there has been an improvement of around 26 points compared with the performance of students of the same grade in 2010, while grade five students have registered a slight improvement of 10 points. On the other hand, we noticed a gradual decline in grade 7 students' performance contrary to grade 9 students who registered a noticeable improvement since 2010 of 25 points.

Form 4: National examinations results in math for 2010-2013



Source: MoE

Based on the standards of the mathematic subject, results have proved a positive progress in students' performance; there was an improvement in the performance of grade 3 students by 160 points in 2013 compared with 2010; the performance of grade 5 students improved by 89 points and that of grade 7 by 50 points. The improvement in the performance of grade 9 students is quite important with 769 points. This is due to the steadiness of the exam where an accurate evaluation methodology has been used by repeating a number of questions to measure students' knowledge.

Form 5: National examinations results in the English Language for 2010-2013



Source: MoE

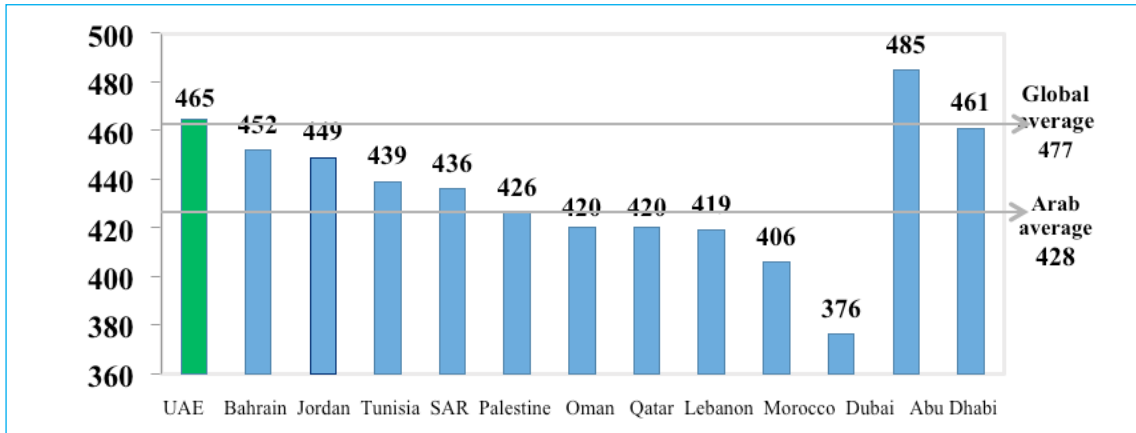
Students' performance results improved in the English reading skills in 2012 in comparison with 2011. The results also showed discrepancies and fluctuations in the level of performance of students during the other years. This diversity was clearer among males on all levels from the lowest to the highest. It is worth noting that their performance in vocabulary and recollection and memorization was better than in thinking and interpretation.

Through students' participation in international examinations, the MoE aims to study the efficiency of applied curricula and teaching methods in order to develop the education system based on students' performance level; to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the education system; assess the private education system; acquire comprehensive data and international benchmarking of the concepts and vocabulary students have learned.

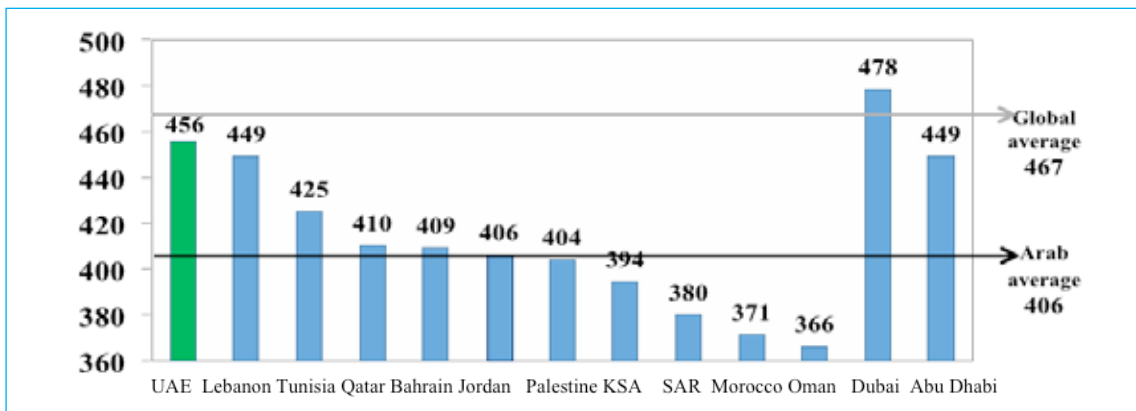
The following two forms, 6 & 7, show that eighth grade Emirati students have scored higher in science and math than their peers from all participating Arab countries. the average grade of Emirati students in science and mathematics was 465 and 456 respectively.

The same was noticed in the fourth grade. UAE and Bahrein students scored highest among participating Arab countries in TIMSS 2011. In math, the average score was 434. Interestingly, students' performance in math was closer to the international average of 500, but in science, students' achievement was not of the same standard and was only 394 points.

Form 6: Arab countries performance averages in science for grade 8 in TIMSS 2011



Form 7: Performance averages of Arab countries in Math in grade 8 in TIMSS 2011



Source: TIMSS 2011

As for PISA 2009 (Program for International Student Assessment) of the OECD, for the first time, about two thirds of 15 year old students in Dubai were assessed (5600 students from 134 schools). Dubai ranked 42 among 65 participating country in reading competencies, and 41 in math and science. Dubai had the best results in the MENA region in PISA 2009. Private schools scored higher than public schools, and the first three curricula in the examination were: International Baccalaureate (IB) and the British and the Indian curricula.

Kingdom of Bahrain



The development of education in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Principles and aims of the education system

Bahrain Economic Vision 2030 aims at having a first class education system that would allow Bahrainis to achieve their ambitions. As education is crucial to translate this vision into a reality, it has become essential to develop an education system that provides every citizen with the adequate education opportunity to satisfy their individual needs, aspirations and capacities and at the same time an adequate education for the requirements and economic needs of the Kingdom of Bahrain, an education of the highest quality standards based on students' capacities and merit.

This vision is coupled with a clear strategy to improve the performance and level of schools, vocational institutions and universities; it is based on:

- a) Focusing on teachers' development by improving teachers' employment and training, teachers' performance and their image in society, and increasing the attractiveness of the teaching profession.
- b) Providing good training in the necessary applied and advanced competencies to be competitive globally and attract new industries to Bahrain.
- c) Setting quality standards in all aspects of the education sector, in light of which the performance of education and training institutions is regularly evaluated.
- d) Promoting research and development in universities in order to create a knowledge-based economic platform.

The MoE main aims are the following:

1. Strengthen Bahraini students' patriotic stands and citizenship rights with a focus on the equal link between rights and obligations.
2. Entrench the Islamic moral values in the minds of the students in a balanced way which will have a major impact on their daily behavior.
3. Develop the personality of Bahraini students to prepare them to face life challenges and allow them to play an active role in the fields of production, construction and growth and interact with the objectives and requirements of the country and its people.
4. Provide the general basic education that is necessary for students' private and public lives and that will help them keep up with the major scientific and technological developments and the possible changes in the future.
5. Orient the education process towards adopting efficient strategies that support and deepen the concept of life-long learning.
6. Complementarity between family, school and society so that all these parties assume their responsibilities in achieving the objectives of educating the different generations.
7. Adapt curricula to the various students' requirements taking into account their individual differences and their diverse needs, tendencies and skills.
8. Promote education quality in the different majors through clear assessment standards for the education system.
9. Implement the comprehensive education quality management.

Managing the education system

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is the official entity in charge of guiding the education system at all levels and to implement the State education policy, elaborate and plan its policies, and supervise and guide its management.

Following its restructuring in 2006, the MoE was made up of seven main sectors under the supervision of two under-secretaries, one for resources and services and the other for education affairs and curricula, each sector is supervised by an assistant under-secretary that supervises a number of satellite directorates.

The new MoE organization includes a detailed description of the roles and functions and a systematic method to divide prerogatives and responsibilities. It is based on the principle of centralized planning and decentralized execution. The ministry has adopted the necessary measures to implement the system of education districts (for primary education) as of the academic year 2005/2006. This system is in the framework of the ministry's plan to create decentralized management to promote efficiency in school work; follow-up the work progress smoothly; promote the daily follow-up; facilitate school work through the coordination and integration between the central management and the education districts. The MoE implemented this system in the intermediate and secondary levels of the 2006/2007 academic year.

Box 4: Independent schools in the kingdom of Bahrain

Since the early eighties, the MoE has encouraged decentralization, the policy of consultative democracy, by creating channels of expression and the interaction between education officials which includes all education actors in the development committees, and adopt the right decisions to improve education efficiency. Many consultative committees were established.

Membership is not only limited to the ministry's officials but help can be solicited from expert employees from other ministries and universities in Bahrain.

In 1990-1991, the ministry adopted the system of considering each school as an independent education unit according to the ministerial decision no. (90/168/375) of 24th of April 1990. The annexed document to the ministerial decision identified the basic procedures, the new organizational chart of the school administration, the educational and administrative functions as well as the assessment process.

The new school organization as an independent education unit consists of the following:

The principal represents the school higher leadership as the chairman of the board. The principal takes part in setting the school general policy and is responsible of leading the school work in implementing the education policy and achieve the education aims.

The school board is composed of the principal as its chairman, an assistant chairman, a social worker, a teacher elected by experts, a specialist in learning resource center, a rapporteur and five elected teachers. The board discusses issues related to the school policy in general: school administrative and academic problems and their adequate solutions, faculty and administration staff needs, proposals and plans submitted by the school workers in relation with curricula development and teaching methods, and the proposed school budget.

Education divisions include all staff members who teach subject matters or undertake an educational activity. Each division is headed by a senior teacher responsible of developing a specific curriculum, as well as the teaching and assessment methods and the staff professional development program. The senior teacher can be elected member of the school board.

The teacher is considered the backbone of the education process. He/she takes part in the decision making process as an elected board member and contributes to the sound management of the school. The social worker plays an active role in managing school life and organizing social relations between students and between students and their parents. He/she provides students with psychological, social and professional consultations. He/she is a member of the school board. As for the learning resource center specialist, he/she is responsible of the school library and other learning sources. He/she coordinates with different sectors to provide the required services, helps and guide teachers and helps teach some lessons in library affairs and research methods. He/she is also a member of the school board.

To ensure the synergy between the school and the independent management system, the MoE set self-assessment as the best means of accountability. The essence of self-assessment is for all school staff members to partake in the assessment process – from identifying its objectives to adopting correctional measures based on the assessment outcome. In light of the above, an automatic school management system was created and since 2001/2001 the MoE has applied the comprehensive assessment of the school administration system in order to create a standardized database for student assessment so as to facilitate the implementation of the relevant ministry's decisions.

The education system in Bahrain follows the education ladder of 9 years for basic education which includes the primary and intermediate levels, and 3 years for the different tracks of the secondary education as shown in the following table:

Table 10: Educational ladder in Bahrain

Grades	Age				Religious education (primary, intermediate, secondary)
12	17	Secondary education	Standardize tracks *	Updated technical & vocational education system	
11	16				
10	15				
9	14	Basic education	Third cycle (intermediate education)		
8	13				
7	12				
6	11	Second cycle (primary education)			
5	10				
4	9				
3	8	First cycle (primary education)			
2	7				
1	6				

Pre-school education is ensured by the private sector. The MoE supervises the guided kindergartens for children 3-5 years old while the Ministry of Social Development specialized supervises nurseries for children under the age of 3.

Primary education extends to six years, cycle one and two of basic education, and includes grades 1-6. It targets children 6-11 years of age. In the first three grades (first cycle) the system applied is that of the semester teacher whereby one teacher teaches most subjects except the English language, design and technology, music education and physical education.

The third cycle of basic education is known as the intermediate level, it lasts three years (grades 7-9) and applies the system of a subject matter teacher, where each subject is taught by a teacher specialized in the matter and pedagogically qualified. Students are accepted in this level upon completing primary education or its equivalent in literacy courses. Students who pass the examination upon completion of grade 9 receive the intermediate level certificate.

Secondary education extends also over three years (grades 10-12). The system applied in the secondary technical education since 1988-1989 is the credit-hour system (known as the modules system) and in the general and commercial vocational secondary education since 1990-1991. The credit hours system was mainstreamed in 1994-1995. Secondary education offers students various curricula options: scientific, literary,

commercial, applied or technical. A student can change tracks between more than one specialization. And since 2004-2005, the MoE started applying, gradually, the system of unification of academic tracks (scientific, literary, commercial) in general secondary education and is still expanding it to all high schools by 2009. At the end of the secondary level, successful students are granted the general secondary certificate.

Religious education is only provided in institutes for boys that are under the umbrella of the MoE. This type of specialized education is similar to basic education and secondary education in public general education in terms of the number of years of study and admission age; it provides the same basic subjects as in basic and secondary education but gives more room for the different branches of Islamic studies in order to prepare the graduates to complete their university education in Islamic religious science.

Higher education is ensured by universities, colleges and higher institutes that adopt the credit hour system. At the University of Bahrain, acquiring a diploma requires 64-70 credit hours (about two years of study); a BA requires 128-131 credit hours at least (equal to four years of studies, five years in engineering, six years in medicine). A Master degree requires generally two years; a higher education diploma an additional year of study; and a PhD three years at least of study and research.

The academic year starts from mid-September till the end of June. It entails 170-172 work days (or about 34 weeks) for the primary and intermediate education and 155 work days (or 31 weeks) for the secondary. The academic year is divided into two semesters and a summer semester (elective). A semester is equal to 16 weeks; it starts on the first of September and the second of February, while the summer semester starts in July of every year.

The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements

Article 7 of the constitution (2002) stipulates that the State guarantees the education and cultural services for its citizens and that education is free of charge until the end of the secondary level. The new law no. 27 of 2005 renders basic education (9 years of education) compulsory and free for children 6-15 years of age. It consecrates the right to education for all citizens. The law also stipulates elaborating the necessary plan to fight illiteracy.

1- The development of pre-school education

The aims of pre-school education include:

- Develop children's attitudes and behavior based on the Islamic religion, faith and heritage.
- Promote children's mental, psychological, social and physical development.
- Develop children's skills and capacities.
- Encourage children's creativity.
- Prepare children for school.

One of the major legislative achievements was the Child Law no.37 of 2012 with 69 articles classified by the following chapters:

- The State guarantees child and mother protection to prepare the adequate circumstances for sound child upbringing at all levels; it guaranteed children's rights without any discrimination to sex, origin, color, disability, language, religion or faith.
- The law guaranteed child health care through guaranteed services for pregnant women, periodic child examination and vaccination; it guaranteed the right of the Ministry of Health to intervene for child protection and providing the necessary treatment when parents, guardians or treatment providers refuse to do so. It also adopted legal provisions on child food safety.
- The following chapter focused on children's social welfare and confirmed that the Ministry of Social Development is the authority in charge of nurseries follow-up, monitoring and supervision; adopting relevant laws and executive decisions; it also identified related licensing terms and areas of monitoring; and guaranteed the said ministry to close down any nursery if children's safety and health are in danger; it provided for foster services for children who are in the impossibility to keep living with their biological family.
- The law confirmed child care, education and rehabilitation services for disabled children. The State commits to providing social welfare, health and psychological care and education for disabled children; and to equip them with means to be self-dependent, facilitate their integration and participate in society.
- The articles of the law stressed upon educating and teaching children, providing children with access to preschool education (from 3 to 6 years) in order to achieve the comprehensive and full development of every child from a mental, physical, motor-skills, emotional and social perspective, provided kindergartens are subject to the MoE plans and programs and its administrative and technical supervision.
- The State guaranteed child protection against abuse or negligence and established the Child Protection Center as a central entity that assesses and follows up on cases of abused children.

Kindergartens had their own individual curricula that differed from one institution to another according to the system in place (Bahraini, British, American, etc.). Unlike other schools, kindergartens don't follow a specific time frame; children move around under the supervision and guidance of teachers and supervisors. Some kindergartens set time for reading and writing as well as individual and collective play time to meet their needs.

In the last few years, the MoE initiated the kindergarten curriculum project. A special committee was created for this purpose. It encompassed curriculum and private education specialists. The aim of the committee was to prepare a standardized curriculum document that would be submitted to the relevant authorities at the ministry for discussion; and prepare the final draft that would be disseminated to all kindergartens with the purpose of being implemented as of the academic year 2005/2006.

The standardized curriculum is divided into modules especially designed for kindergartens. This curriculum aims at preparing children for school life by teaching them a set of values, concepts, skills and competencies especially designed to meet kindergarten children's needs while respecting their individual differences.

The National Child Strategy 2012-2016 is the first strategy targeting children in Bahrain. This strategy complements the government efforts in guaranteeing children's rights and improving their conditions, creating a safe environment that would allow them to practice their rights. They are also an additional step in the government's efforts to achieve a sustainable social development especially after Bahrain ranked 42 globally and third among the Arab and Gulf countries on the Human Development Index for 2011. The strategy is based on three main pillars: respect for human rights, gender equity and integration of the disabled.

Since the early nineties, early childhood care has been gaining ground as well as efforts deployed to develop it, in line with the policy that encourages private investment in this sector, especially with the objective of providing daily care services to children of working mothers. As such, the number of nurseries increased up to 40 in 2012/2013, servicing 1567 children, compared with 33 in 2001/2002 with 872 children under 3 years of age as shown in the following table:

Table 11: Number of nurseries and registered children from 2001/2002 to 2012/2013

Academic year	No. of nurseries				No. of children		
	Independent nurseries	Joint nurseries and kindergartens	Nurseries attached to private schools	Total	Male	Female	Total
2001/2002	14	16	3	33	483	389	872
2012/2013	11	18	11	40	803	764	1567
% of change	-21	13	267	21	66	96	80

Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

From 2001 to 2012, under the encouragement of the Bahraini government, many new kindergartens were opened to absorb the largest number of children 3-5 years old. The number of education institutions that provide kindergarten education in 2012/2013 grew to 188 institutions hosting 29937 children in comparison with 156 institutions in 2001/2002 with 15506 children as shown by the following table:

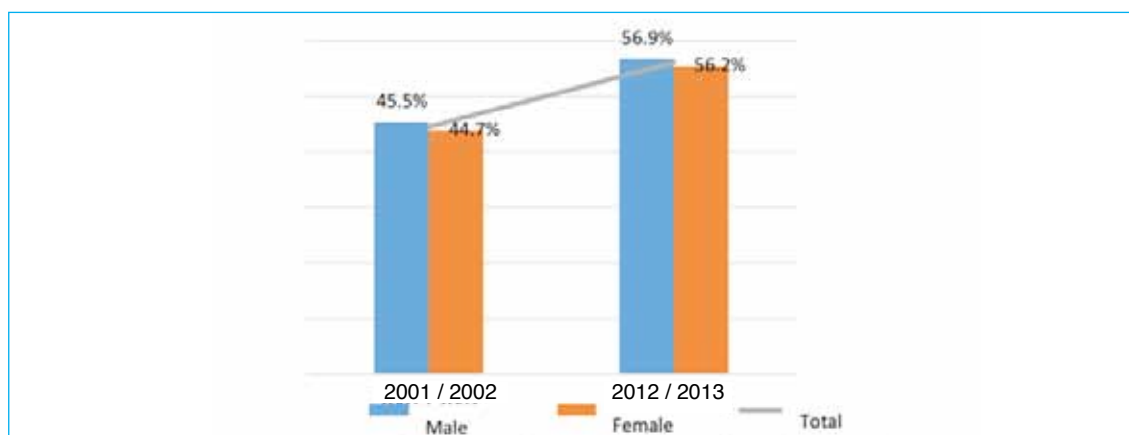
Table 12: No. of kindergartens and registered children from 2001/2002 to 2012/2013

Academic year	No. of kindergartens				No. of children		
	Independent kindergartens	Joint nurseries and kindergarten	Nurseries attached to private schools	Total	Male	Female	Total
2001/2002	103	16	37	156	8073	7433	15506
2012/2013	112	18	58	188	15307	14630	29937
% of change	9	13	57	21	90	97	93

Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

In its endeavor to provide education services that meet the growing numbers of the student population in Bahrain, the MoE was adamant in encouraging education investment by opening private education institutions and kindergartens, and inducing a qualitative development in this sector and supporting related efforts. The last few years have seen a clear increase in the number of students enrolled in early childhood programs; GER in early childhood education programs increased from 44.7% in 2001/2002 to 56.2% in 2012/2013 as seen below:

Form 8: GER in Early Childhood Development programs



Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

During the period 2001-2012, an evident development was noticed in the number of primary students who had been in early childhood programs from 72.9% in 2001/2002 to 85.6% in 2012/2013.

7- The development of basic education

The main objectives of basic education include:

- 1- Children development physically, mentally, morally, ethically, socially and emotionally and equip them with the necessary education and skills to be good citizens.
- 2- Help children acquire basic reading, writing and mathematics skills to empower them to employ their Arabic language in reading and writing, self-expression and the use of numbers in their daily lives.
- 3- Help children acquire good habits, stands and skills (such as good observation, careful listening, organized thoughts and benefits of education) to develop their gifts and hobbies and motivate self-education.
- 4- Develop labor and productivity values and positions and respect for handy-work and those who practice it.

On the 15th of August 2005, education law no. 27 was promulgated. Article 6 confirmed the right to education and compulsory education, and the country's commitment to provide education as per the kingdom's constitution; it stipulated that: "Basic education is the right of every six-year old child right from the beginning of the academic year. The kingdom commits to providing basic education and parents and custodians shall execute it for at least nine school years. The ministry shall issue the necessary decisions to organize and enforce parents and custodians execution hereof".

Article 7 of said law stipulates also that: "Basic and secondary education is free in the schools of the Kingdom".

Accordingly, many decisions were adopted to organize and execute the enforcement provision, namely:

- Decision no. 535 of 2006 on the enforcement organization and execution by the child custodian when he/she reaches the compulsory education age; it clarifies the following:
 - Registration procedures for the first grade in the MoE basic education schools.
 - The procedures preceding the request to file criminal charges in the event of non-enrolment of children in compulsory education age.
 - The procedures preceding the request to file criminal charges in the event of a student interrupted schooling for 10 consecutive or non-consecutive days during the academic year.
- Decision no. 536 of 2006 on the rules and regulations to accept children below the compulsory education age in basic education schools.
- Law no. 35 of 2009. Article one of the law stipulates than non-Bahraini spouses of Bahraini nationals and their children are to be treated as Bahraini spouses in terms of fees of electronic, health and education services and residency fees provided they are permanent residence of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Bahrain provides Education For All (EFA) opportunities. It was able to absorb all children of primary education age while the other education levels witnessed a wide spread and notable development.

Box 5: Persons with special needs in Bahrain

In 2006, the Directorate for Special Education was established for students with special needs and gifted students. The directorate elaborates relevant adequate plans and programs in public schools and implements programs in place through the Special Education Unit which operated under the umbrella of the Directorate for Primary Education according to the following detailed measures:

- Develop some of the projects in place (Learning difficulties program launched in 1986; the special care program for gifted and distinguished students launched in 1996 and the program for the integration of students with Down syndrome and mild mental retardation launched in 2001).
- Implement new projects (functional treatment project 2010-2011, the project for the integration of autistic children in public schools 2010-2011, the project of supporting teachers for the blind 2011-2012, appointing a number of social workers to follow-up on the cases of children with special needs in public schools 2012-2013, appointing behavioral specialists to follow-up on the cases of children with special needs in public schools 2012-2013, appointing speech and talk therapists to follow-up on the cases of children with special needs in public schools 2010-2011 and the project on the rehabilitation of children with mental retardation in technical education 2013-2014).

There are also specialized centers for students with special needs: Gifted Students Care Centre, psychological guidance and school health center as well as a number of civil organizations centers and institutes servicing students with special needs who are of school age; the latter work under the supervision and follow-up of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social development.

The Ministry also prepares the school environment to meet the needs of children with special needs; several measures have been adopted including: 1) allocate funds for special education classes in all its categories (autism, mental retardation, Down syndrome, learning difficulties, gifted children). 2) Install orientation boards for blind children in all schools where they had been integrated, a total of 28 schools in 2013-2014. 3) Install ramps in all schools where children with physical disabilities were integrated. 4) Provide computers and smart boards in a number of schools applying the various special education programs.

Equipment and learning aids for students with special needs were made available to overcome integration issues in public schools by providing the following: 1) the Directorate for Special Education has provided equipment and learning aids for students with special needs since 2009/2010, with a total 174 equipment for students with mobility impairment, hearing and seeing disabilities and autism through four phases e.g.: electric and manual wheelchairs, hearing aid, glasses and speakers, computers etc. 2) Provide transportation services to students with special needs; 11 special buses ensure such services.

The ministry has deployed many efforts to improve and promote services provided to this category of citizens e.g.: the success of the integration of students with Down syndrome and mild mental retardation who can be educated in public schools. This experience had a huge positive impact on their education and adaptation with their surroundings in terms of positive social integration.

The ministry has endeavored to enroll children with mobility disability in schools by preparing and continuously developing school environment, and equip them with special facilities and tools that would help this category of children to be mobile and easily move around in the school space in order to provide a helping education environment.

The ministry adopted several steps to guarantee the success of this ambitious experience by providing specialized personnel that would be rehabilitated by following yearly the Higher Education Diploma in special education at the Arab Gulf University, and MoE officials and specialists overseeing the implementation of teaching programs targeting these students; and develop the performance of teachers overseeing their education and follow-up through workshops and trainings.

The ministry also strived to improve the status of educators working with students with special needs, financially and morally, in appreciation of the role they play, in addition to the ministry's great efforts with scholarship programs.

In terms of communication with parents of this category of children and relevant CSOs, the ministry established a joint committee of experts from the ministry, parents and representatives of relevant CSOs in order to provide the best services to students with special needs.

The student population in the primary level rose to 98894 students in 2012/2013 (34.1% of which in private education) with a 23% increase compared with 2001/2002, while in the intermediate level, students' numbers rose to 44551 (26.4% in private education) with a 25% increase. The following table shows the number of students enrolled in different levels (private/public) between 2001/2001 and 2012/2013.

Table 13: Student populations in education levels (private and public) between 2001/2001 and 2012/2013

Level	2001/2002				2012/2013			
	Total students	Male	Female	Private education (%)	Total students	Male	Female	Private education (%)
Primary	80629	41341	39288	21.2	98894	50491	48403	34.1
Elementary	35767	18110	17657	17.0	44551	22944	21607	26.4

Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Primary school enrolment rate was 108.7% in 2001/2002 (109.8% for males and 107.6% for females) and 100.6% in 2012/2013 (100.9% for males and 100.3% for females).

The high enrolment rate in primary education reflects the high schooling rate of students whether they were of official school age or not. GER reflects the efficiency of the Bahrain education system and its capacity to absorb all student population of primary education age.

NER in primary education reached 99.7% in 2001/2001 (100% for males and 99.5% for females) and 95.8% in 2012/2013 (96% for males and 95.6% for females).

The decreasing NER in primary education in 2012/2013 is due to the number of students in education institutions (general or private such as special education programs) inside and outside Bahrain, which made said rate closer to reality.

The equal GER and NER percentages between males and females confirm that there are equal enrolment opportunities for male and female students.

The following table reflects GER and NER in primary education for 2001/2001 and 2012/2013.

Table 14: GER and NER in primary education for 2001/2002 and 2012/2013

Academic year	Data	Total intake (all ages) general and private (1)	Enrolled students in official primary education age (6-11) general and private (1)	Population in primary education official age (6-11) (2)	GER	NER	Gender equity index	
		Total	Total				GER	NER
2001/2002	Total	80629	74908	74150	108.7	99.7	0.98	1.00
	Male	41341	38123	37647	109.8	100.0		
	Female	39288	36785	36503	107.6	99.5		
	Total	98894	94177	98301	100.6	95.8	0.99	1.00
2012/2013	Male	50491	48026	50039	100.9	96.0		
	Female	48403	46151	48262	100.3	95.6		

(1) Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

(2) Source: Central informatics Organization, Kingdom of Bahrain.

In the intermediate level, GER was 103.9% in 2001/2002 (102.2% for males and 105.8% for females) compared with 97.9% in 2012/2013 (98.6% for males and 97.3% for females).

NER in the intermediate level was 88.1% in 2001/2002 (86.0% for males and 90.2% for females) and reached 86.8% in 2012/2013 (86.2% for males and 87.4% for females). The following table shows intermediate level GER and NER for 2001/2002 and 2012/2013.

Table 15: GER and NER in intermediate education (private and public) for 2001/2002 and 2012/2013

Academic year	Data	Total intake (all ages) (1)	Intake of students (12-14) years old (1)	Population in intermediate education official age (12-14) (2)	GER	NER	Gender equity index	
		Total	Total				GER	NER
2001/2002	Total	35767	30301	34412	103.9	88.1	1.04	1.05
	Male	18110	15248	17728	102.2	86.0		
	Female	17657	15053	16684	105.8	90.2		
	Total	44551	39465	45487	97.9	86.8	0.99	1.01
2012/2013	Male	22944	20055	23275	98.6	86.2		
	Female	21607	19410	22212	97.3	87.4		

(1) Source: Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

(2) Source: Central informatics Organization, Kingdom of Bahrain.

8- The development of secondary education

The main objectives of secondary education are the following:

1. Prepare students physically, mentally, ethically, socially and nationally to be good citizens.
2. Educate students in arts and sciences to prepare them for higher education.
3. Prepare students for life in general by arming them with sound values and knowledge of scientific trends, the capacity to solve modern daily life problems so that they become a productive force in society after receiving professional training.

The State provides secondary education opportunities to all and pays special attention to ensuring education for both boys and girls without any discrimination as it believes in the important role they play in the country's economic growth. Secondary education students can choose from various and diversified education programs, some leading to higher education while others were designed for training students and preparing them to enter the labor market. Education programs are available to both genders equally but girls prefer to enroll in general education tracks that lead to higher education although technical and vocational specializations suitable for girls do exist, e.g. computer maintenance, interior design, commercial specializations...

In 2012/2013, the number of students enrolled in secondary schools rose to 43676 (20.5% of them in private education) i.e. an increase of 54% compared with 2001/2002. Private education saw an increase of more than one third during the same period, which reveals that the private sector focuses on quality development thus attracting more students and developing secondary education.

Table 16: Students registered in secondary education (public and private) between 2001.2002 and 2012/2013

Level	2001/2002				2012/2013			
	Total students	Male	Female	Private education (%)	Total students	Male	Female	Private education (%)
Secondary	28425	13521	14904	12.3	43676	22231	21445	20.5

Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

GER in secondary education reached 89.7% in 2001/2002 (83.4% for males and 96.3% for females) and 102.7% in 2012/2013 (102.3 for males and 103.2 for females).

NER in secondary education reached 73.4% in 2001/2002 (67.4% for males and 79.7% for females) and 80.7% in 2012/2013 (78.6 for males and 82.9 for females). GEI for the secondary level almost reached gender equity though it was in favor of females in 2001/2002.

The following table shows GER and NER in secondary education for 2001/2002 and 2012/2013.

Table 17: GER and NER in secondary education (general and public) for 2001/2002 and 2012/2013

Academic year	Data	Total intake (all ages) (1)	Enrolled students in official secondary education age (15-17) (1)	Population in official secondary education age (15-17) (2)	GER	NER	GEI	
		Total	Total				GER	NER
2001 / 2002	Total	28425	23253	31693	89.7	73.4	1.15	1.18
	Male	13521	10923	16214	83.4	67.4		
	Female	14904	12330	15479	96.3	79.7		
	Total	43676	34318	42528	102.7	80.7	1.01	1.05
2012 / 2013	Male	22231	17094	21741	102.3	78.6		
	Female	21445	17224	20787	103.2	82.9		

(1) Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

(2) Source: Central informatics Organization, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Bahrain provides a number of technical and vocational tracks in the secondary level (grades 10-12). This is a reflection of the applied aspect of student education to acquire technical and vocational skills each in their own major.

TVET received 20% of the students (35% males and 6% females) in 2012/2013 compared with 15% in 2001/2002 (30% males and 3% females). Below table presents the number of secondary level students and their percentage in TVET in 2001/2002 and 2012/2013.

The MoE strives to raise girls' awareness about the importance of TVE and to encourage them to enroll in it, by introducing them to the needs of the labor market and how that will improve their household income. Such a step doubled the percentage of girls in secondary level TVE, from 3% to 6%.

Table 18: Number and percentage of enrolled students in secondary level technical and vocational tracks in 2001/2001-2012/2013

Year	No. of students				
	Gender	General and religious tracks	Technical and vocational tracks	Total	% of students in TVET
2001/2002	Total	21092	3846	24938	15
	Male	8157	3483	11640	30
	Female	12935	363	13298	3
2012/2013	Total	27770	6970	34740	20
	Male	11328	5991	17319	35
	Female	16442	979	17421	6

Source: Central Informatics Organization, Kingdom of Bahrain.

The MoE opens evening centers for drop-out students from the intermediate and secondary levels, and those who have passed the official formal education age so as to secure their right to education. Male and female students have the right to home schooling if they want to follow their education but their social and health conditions prevented them from being regularly in school.

The program designed and implemented in such a manner so as to bridge the knowledge gap in the educational ladder for learners who have completed the intermediate education in night schools. The latter were given the opportunity to follow their secondary education at night through this program that was designed to be equivalent to the formal secondary education load. The program was well received by adult learners who wanted to follow their higher education.

The MoE in the Kingdom of Bahrain developed a project to unify academic tracks to ensure the synergy with the labor market requirements. This project provides students with better opportunities to be admitted in the different universities and colleges. It promotes voluntary work, prepares efficient citizens positively engaged in community service by introducing a course on community service; it fosters extracurricular programs and activities (INJAZ Bahrain Program, Globe Program, Trade Quest Program). The development of industrial secondary education focused on building a more comprehensive knowledge base for secondary school students. The project began during the 2004/2005 academic year and was expanded to include all secondary schools in 2010/2011. Both the Religious Institute and the Jaafari Religious Institute were developed according to the credit hour requirements and the single track system.

9- Teachers provision and training

In order to improve the qualitative aspects of education and achieve excellence in education so as to reflect quality education that allows individuals to acquire necessary life skills, in conformity with Law no. 27 of 2005 with respect to Education, in accordance with the Council of Ministers' decision no. 04-1897 that approved the adoption of mechanisms and effective strategies to attract good graduates to the education field and retain good teachers according to the new teachers' framework, and review improvements made to teachers' working conditions, the MoE in Bahrain offered quality initiatives which provide academically and pedagogically qualified teachers. These initiatives aimed to overcome the biggest challenge of recruiting promising teachers who can provide quality education. For this purpose, the Bahrain Teachers College was established by virtue of Royal Decree (2008) to achieve the Bahrain Vision 2030 through national initiatives to develop education and training; it is specialized in efficient teacher training. These initiatives provide qualified and trained personnel for the educational field according to the latest and best educational methods which in turn encourage learners to achieve tangible learning levels that enhance their capabilities, preferences and life skills.

At present, this college is in charge of pre and in-service training for teachers in Bahrain. Its general policy is based on training internationally competitive teachers who are equipped with enough competencies to properly interact and fully respond to the modern requirements. This teacher training program gives a Bachelor's degree in education to high academic achievers of the general secondary education, following 4 years of studies, during which they are trained and provided with the required knowledge, competencies and values.

The MoE has identified the academic and educational qualifications that teachers should have to engage in this profession at the different levels, as follows:

- Teachers must hold a BA in Education (Classroom Teacher Program) to be eligible to teach in elementary schools (first cycle of basic education) which rely on the classroom teacher system.
- Teachers of the second cycle of basic education (grades 4 to 6) must hold a BA in one of the following literary fields (Arabic, Social Studies or Religious Education) and have a good academic background in the other two subject areas or a BA in one scientific subject area (Chemistry, Physics, Biology or Mathematics). They should also have a good academic background in the other three subjects (the training program includes courses which enable graduates to pass level tests in the other non-specialized subject areas).
- Teachers must hold a BA major degree and a minor in education to be eligible to teach in intermediate and secondary schools.

Ministerial decree no. (1281) of 2007 determines the number of classes to be taught per week:

- a) 22 classes per week for primary and intermediate teachers.
- b) 20 classes per week for secondary teachers.

- c) 24 classes per week for teachers in technical and vocational schools and institutes.
- d) 20 classes per week for physical education teachers at all levels, but after school student training should be equivalent to 4 classes per week.

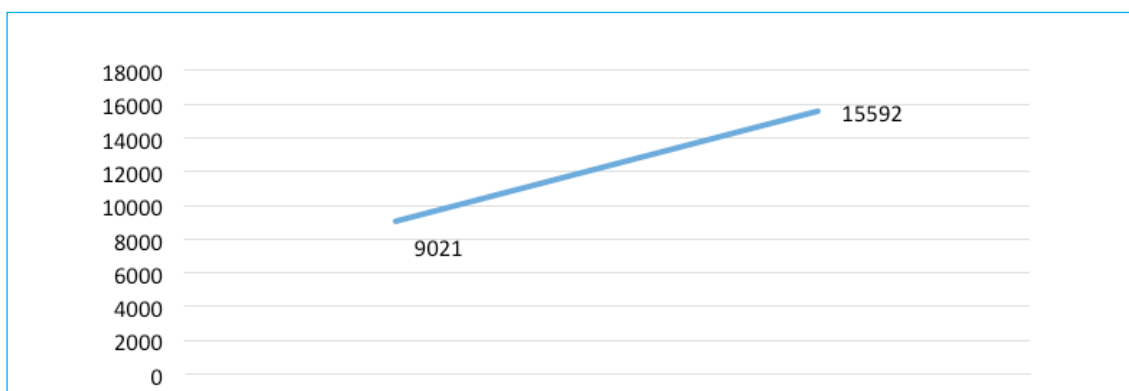
The MoE developed a training program for in-service teachers and specialists to improve their competencies and skills and provide them with new teaching techniques. This training program is based on the concept of continuous training (under the supervision of the Directorate of Training and Professional Development) in academic institutions or through the participation in conferences and workshops organized or approved by the MoE. In this context, the training program is mandatory; it is part of the job requirements: specialized teachers are also obliged to attend short and long education seminars approved by scholarship and training committees because they help teachers develop their professional skills.

The MoE offers several incentives to attract students to join the Teachers Training College among which: a full financial grant subject to an increase during study years, a possibility to continue studying free of charge, a training program that respects international standards and practical applications, and a guaranteed teaching position for graduates (MoE, 2008).

Thanks to these incentives, the percentage of teachers holders of a Bachelor degree rose to more than 98.5% in 2012/2013 (98.9% for males and 98.3% for females) compared with 83.0% in 2001/2002 (82.4 for males and 83.4 for females).

The number of teachers increased by 73% at all levels, from pre-primary to secondary education between 2001/2002 and 2012/2013. It rose from 9021 teachers to 15592 teachers as shown in the following form.

Form 9: No. of teachers in all levels in 2001/2002-2012/2013



Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

The growing number of teachers helped improve the pupil to teacher ratio, from 18 pupils per teacher in 2001/2002 to 11 pupils in 2012/2013 in the primary education; and with every education level further up the education ladder, the pupil to teacher ratio dropped.

10- Adult learning programs

In 1973, the Ministry of Education (MoE) assumed the responsibility of eradicating illiteracy and providing adult education. It created an administrative organization known as “the Literacy and Adult Education Control” that later became “the Literacy and Adult Education Body” and then the “Adult Education Administration”. The MoE then changed the name once more in 2005 into “the Continuous Education Directorate”, so as to clearly reflect the required shift in the next phase of developing services provided to the Bahraini society and the effective contribution in accelerating development. It also reflected the significant positive results that were achieved in recent years in fighting alphabetical illiteracy.

Informal education includes the following literacy, adult learning and continuous learning programs:

a. Literacy programs: literacy programs extend over six years of study, divided as follows:

← Literacy stage:

This is the basic stage for those unable to read and write. It extends over two years of study in which Islamic education, Arabic language and Mathematics are taught. It is equivalent to the fourth grade of formal primary education.

← Follow-up stage:

This stage is equivalent to the sixth grade of formal primary education and extends over two years as well. Those who have obtained a certificate of completion of the literacy stage can be enrolled. It aims at reinforcing the basic skills that learners had acquired in the literacy stage to ensure that he/she does not fall back into illiteracy again. The student then receives a completion certificate that is equivalent to the completion of the sixth grade of formal primary education. Islamic education, Arabic language, Mathematics, Science, English language and Social Sciences are taught in the follow-up stage, and these are the same subjects taught in the fifth and sixth grades of formal primary education. These subject areas were tailored to suit the needs of adult learners.

← Consolidation stage:

It comes after the follow-up stage and is equivalent to the intermediate stage of the formal education system. Students who have completed the follow-up stage and wish to continue their studies, or those who have dropped out of formal education for one reason or another, can be enrolled. The curriculum of the third cycle of formal basic education (intermediate stage) is adopted at this stage after modification of the content to cover basic subjects taught in two years instead of three, so it is equivalent to basic education. Six subjects are taught at this stage: Islamic education, Arabic and English languages, Mathematics, Science and Social Sciences (History and Geography).

b. Continuous education programs: the Continuous Education Directorate organizes several programs that fall under the continuous adult learning programs which include: living languages, specialized courses to enhance professional, technical, cultural and educational efficiency, in addition to specialized courses to enhance the professional qualifications of kindergarten female teachers.

The latest illiteracy data in the Kingdom of Bahrain are based on the general population census of 2010. It suggests that illiteracy rate has dramatically declined among Bahraini population during the ten-year interval between the 2001 and 2010 censuses, as a result of the exerted educational efforts. In fact, Bahrain managed to reach the desired goal, with a 50% increase in adult literacy levels as shown in the following table:

Table 19: Illiteracy rates among Bahraini citizens (1981-2010)

Year	No. of illiterates (15 years and above)			Illiteracy rate (15 years and above) (%)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1981	17709	33486	51195	25.2	48.1	36.6
1991	12707	27438	40145	13.3	28.7	21.0
2001	9684	21885	31569	7.5	17.0	12.3
2010	6259	17993	24252	3.2	9.3	6.3

Source: Kingdom of Bahrain: Central Informatics Organization, Directorate of Statistics

Bahrain also attained the highest literacy rates in the 2010 census, as a result of the implementation of the compulsory education law, with illiteracy rate dropping from 36.6% in 1981 to 6.3% in 2010. This improvement reflects the efficiency of primary education, adult literacy and continuous education programs, which enabled a high percentage of the population to acquire the ability to use the written word and perform calculations required in their daily lives.

11- Programs supporting quality education:

The Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET) was officially established in 2008 by virtue of the Royal Decree No. 32, amended by the Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. It is an independent national authority overseen by the Council of Ministers. Its objectives are the following:

1. Set indicators, processes, mechanisms and guidelines for measuring and reviewing the performance quality of education and training institutions.
2. Set and implement national exams to assess the performance levels of the basic primary, intermediate and secondary education levels.
3. Review the performance quality of education and training institutions in light of the guidelines set by the Authority.
4. Emphasize on transparency and accountability by publishing reports on the general status of the education and training system in Bahrain, as well as the performance and results of educational institutions.
5. Issue an annual report that includes the Authority's view of the education system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and identify areas of strength and improvement needed.
6. Review and update indicators and standards along with reviewing and assessing the mechanisms in place to keep up with the latest developments in education and training in line with international standards based on the Kingdom's requirements.
7. Cooperate with other regional and international quality assurance agencies in order to facilitate quality assurance processes and exchange of information.

The QAAET-affiliated National Examinations Unit (NEU) conducts independent national exams in basic levels of primary and secondary education in the major subjects such as mathematics, science, Arabic and English language. National exams for third and sixth grades were carried out for example in all public primary and intermediate schools for the first time in 2009, with nearly 21000 students from the ninth grade. Third-grade students took the Arabic language and Mathematics exams, while sixth-grade students were tested in the Arabic language, Mathematics, Science and English language and subject areas that covered the entire curriculum. In 2010, nearly 32000 students from grade 9 took the test.

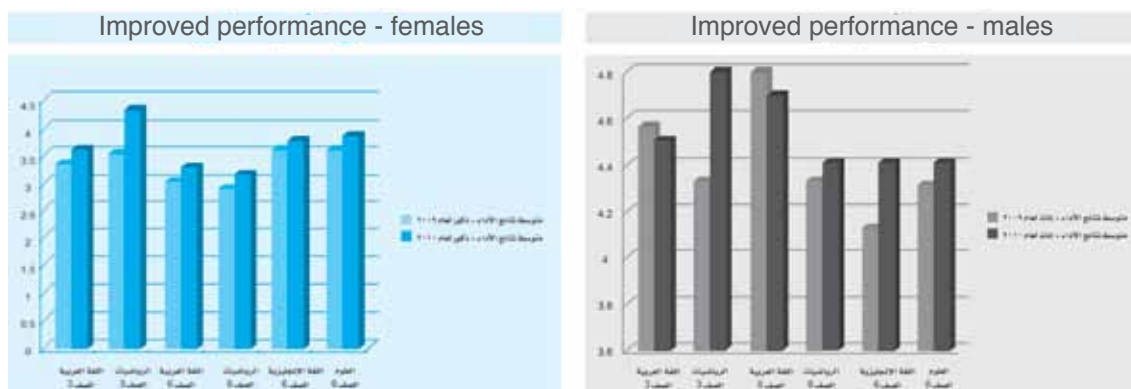
From 2005 to 2014, the MoE made several achievements. The recommendations of the follow-up visits made by the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training show that the education performance enhancement program in Bahrain has made significant progress over the past six years, from the 2008 academic year to 2014, in line with the MoE general objectives, with the aim of ensuring: the improvement of school performance based on the outcome of performance and national examination review by the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training; the continuous professional development of leaders, teachers and MoE employees; the development of employees' performance management through the PMS system; the development of education and school leadership, behavior management and student discipline systems; develop work methodologies of educational administrations to support school performance which gave way to the specific goals of improving professional development programs according to professional needs; full implementation of performance management system and the consolidation of the self-assessment culture in education establishments.

Mindful of the process of continuous assessment, the Ministry established the Measurement and Evaluation Center (MEC), an administrative body that assesses the Ministry's activities, programs and projects in all their administrative, educational and learning aspects. The MEC supervises the Ministry's inputs and processes and assesses its output and performance levels. The MEC is in fact essential to assess education quality and output, and to enhance its efficiency and teachers' performance and administrative authorities.

Much evidence from school reviews and national exams suggests that the performance of primary school students in Language is the weakest in writing skills, while their listening and reading skills appear to be better. This applies to both the Arabic language and English language. In addition, school reviews generally show that progress is higher in third grade than in sixth grade. This can be seen in the results of national examinations in mathematics, as the overall performance decreases between third grade and sixth grade. This however does not apply to the Arabic language, and school reviews suggest an overemphasis on recovering information in the teaching and learning process, and a lack of sufficient opportunities for the development of thinking skills.

Moreover, school reviews outcome reveal that females surpass males, a fact confirmed by national examination results in all third grade subject areas (Mathematics and Arabic Language) and sixth grade (Mathematics, Arabic language, English language and Science). It is noteworthy that the gender gap reaches its peak in sixth grade Arabic language and extends as well to grade 6.

Form 10: Student capacity in answering national exam questions for 2009-2010



Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

In general, promotion rate from the primary to the intermediate and from the intermediate to the secondary level remained high as seen the next table, which reflects the level that education has reached in Bahrain and the capacity to enroll all students in all education levels to which they transition. Primary to intermediate level promotion rate in 2001/2002 was 96.2% and reached 99% in 2012/2013. The same applies to the promotion rate from the intermediate to the secondary level with an increase from 88.5% in 2001/2002 to 97.2% in 2012/2013.

Table 20: Promotion rates to intermediate and secondary education (%)

Academic year	Data	Primary to intermediate	Intermediate to secondary	GEI	
				Primary to intermediate	Intermediate to secondary
2001/2002	Total	96.2	88.5	1.04	1.15
	Male	94.3	82.2		
	Female	98.2	94.4		
2012/2013	Total	99.0	97.2	1.01	1.03
	Male	98.4	95.8		
	Female	99.6	98.5		

Source: Educational Statistics Section, MoE, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Reviewing the input of the education process, its practices and output is an integral part of the quality assurance of the education system. National examinations provide a diagnosis of the education and learning processes and the performance of education and learning outcome. When assessing student achievement levels, school external audit teams take into consideration student performance in external examinations such as national exams organized by the Directorate of National Examinations under the umbrella of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training, and their performance in MoE examinations, school examinations, and most importantly their achievement and progress levels in observed courses, and examining students' work over time by audit teams.

Republic of Yemen



The development of education in Yemen

General principles and aims of the education system

The twenty five year strategic vision (2000-2025) seeks to improve the level of human development so that the Republic of Yemen would be a medium human development index (HDI) country. As such the living standards of the Yemeni society and people would increase ensuring a decent life for them and their families. Reaching this goal requires improving democracy and health conditions, eradicating illiteracy, increasing access to basic education especially for girls, and raising the per capita income to middle-income levels by adopting a diversified GDP rather than relying almost totally on natural gas and oil. This in turn requires on the one hand, identifying growth sources and promising sectors, and on the other, creating job opportunities and boosting exports. The 2025 Strategic Vision of the Republic of Yemen therefore focuses on “the transition of the Republic of Yemen to the group of medium human development countries with a diversified economic and social, cognitive, cultural and political development”.

The Strategic Vision outlines education trends and aims as follows:

- 1- Fight and reduce illiteracy to less than 10% by 2025.
- 2- Achieve Education For All, spread and guarantee education for females, especially in rural areas, and bridge the gender gap by enforcing compulsory basic education and raising awareness about the importance of female education, increase the enrolment capacity of girls in schools and reduce waste.
- 3- Introduce a radical change to the education system structure and curriculum to stay abreast of scientific and technical progress and development needs.

In light of the 2025 Yemen Strategic Vision, several sector-wide strategies were developed:

The National Basic Education Development Strategy: In May 2003, the government adopted The National Basic Education Development Strategy which aims at “reforming and developing basic education systems to provide equal quality basic education opportunities to all children between 6 and 14 years of age. Quantitatively, this strategy aims at providing basic education for 95% of Yemeni children aged 6-14 years, and reducing the gender gap and the gap between urban and rural areas by 2015”.

The National Strategy for Literacy and Adult Education: in 1998, the government adopted The National Strategy for Literacy and Adult Education which was reviewed and enforced in 2009. The strategy aims at fighting illiteracy among 10 to 45 years old, in addition to the new illiterates whose numbers are expected to increase during the implementation of the strategy as a result of dropouts from literacy centers, readmitted learners and dropouts from basic education.

The National General Secondary Education Development Strategy (2007 – 2015): In

July 2007, the Yemeni government adopted The National General Secondary Education Development Strategy. It aims at enabling the Republic of Yemen to have a just and equal general secondary education system in terms of education opportunities, quality education and diversified tracks to enable graduates to pursue efficient higher education or enter the labor market. Thus, the strategy seeks to provide general secondary education opportunities for graduates of basic education level while respecting the principles of justice and equality in enrollment, quality education, diversified tracks and output efficiency; and achieve an estimated 56% graduation rate by 2015.

The National Strategy for Early Childhood Development (2011 – 2015): As a result of the multitude of early childhood authorities, the Higher Council for Mother and Child fostered the development of the National Strategy for Early Childhood in 2009. The Strategy was adopted by the Yemeni government in 2010. Its strategic vision is to provide a safe and empowering environment which would ensure a comprehensive, integrated and equal growth for Yemeni children aged between 1 and 8. The vision was defined as “achieving a comprehensive, integrated and equal growth for all Yemeni children aged between 1 and 8 and meeting their different needs by providing various distinguished services that reflect the culture and identity of Yemeni society”.

The National Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development: the aim of the Strategy is to balance between secondary and tertiary education on the one hand, and technical and vocational education and training on the other. It seeks to upgrade TVET programs and curricula and improve their effectiveness and efficiency.

Managing the education system

The education system consists of three levels supervised by the Ministry of Education, the Provincial Department of Education and the Local Department of Education. The MoE is in charge of managing the education system at the central level and implementing the government education policy. The Provincial Department of Education reflects the central administration structure. It is responsible for supervising education in all seventeen provinces of the country. The Director General of Education heads all provincial and local departments which supervise the education institutions operating under their authority.

The education ladder consists of 9 basic education years and 3 secondary education years. Secondary education students choose between the literary or scientific track as of the second year of study. And for vocational and technical education, an independent ministry was established: the Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Pre-primary education is optional and is intended for children between 3 and 6 years of age. It consists of three levels: the first for children 3-4 years old, the second for 4-5 years old children and the third for 5-6 years old. As for basic education, it is compulsory and free; it extends over 9 years. The average admission age is six years.

All students who have successfully received a basic education certificate are admitted into secondary education which lasts 3 years. According to the first year results,

students are oriented towards a scientific or literary track as of the second year. Students can also pursue a secondary technical and vocational education for 2 or 3 years and receive a certification equivalent to a high school diploma. School starts officially in late August or early September and ends in mid-June. One school year consists of 36 weeks in total - 18 weeks per semester.

The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:

Forty years after its establishment, the education and training system has made remarkable qualitative and quantitative progress. The number of students increased and education institutions are now spread across the country. Post-basic education training and education opportunities were provided in general, tertiary or higher education, as well as technical and vocational training. The State endeavored to provide the necessary inputs to operate and run educational institutions, from teachers and school management to equipment and furniture and learning and education means. Efforts were also exerted to establish literacy, adult and non-formal education programs in an attempt to achieve literacy goals and provide basic training opportunities for adults.

Yemen's efforts to create education opportunities were not restricted to children and youth, they extended to education and training opportunities for adults. The attention was on establishing literacy, adult and basic training programs, providing education and training opportunities for residents who could not enroll in formal training and education systems or for dropouts.

1- The development of preschool education

The main objectives of preschool education include the following:

- Develop spiritual, religious and human values and patriotism in children, teach children about tolerance and respect, and develop their language and handy skills.
- The most important reforms introduced lately to kindergartens are as follows:
 1. In 2002, Law no. 45 on the Rights of Children was issued. It included children's' legitimate rights, civil rights, right to health care, educational and cultural rights, social care, care for pregnant and nursing women, care and protection for children exposed to risks and abuse...
 2. Develop and integrate annual plans for kindergartens in the framework of the MoE annual plan.
 3. Design, discuss and edit kindergarten guides.
 4. Elaborate kindergarten regulations.
 5. Develop a clear vision and plans to raise awareness about the importance of kindergarten, and implement part of these plans to date.
 6. Integrate kindergarten database in the MoE standardized education information system.

7. Prepare the special guide for field visits, to assess the performance of education and learning processes in kindergartens.
8. Establish the Early Childhood Development Center in cooperation and coordination with the UNESCO Cairo office and the Arab Gulf Program for Development (AGFUND), under MoE decision no. 133 of 2009. The center was tasked with submitting a proposal about early childhood education in terms of expansion, raising staff performance efficiency, diagnosing the current early childhood situation and identifying challenges and obstacles faced by workers in this sector. It also sets and implements education and learning plans and programs to advance early childhood and build the capacities of field, administrative and technical staff.
9. Create the Early Childhood Development Center, in conformity with the Prime Minister's decision no. 527 of 2010; appoint a Director General for the Center and prepare relevant laws and regulations.
10. Prepare early childhood education and learning curricula and guides which were reviewed by experts of the UNESCO Cairo office in line with modern and sophisticated ways and means of practicing and applying early childhood education and learning activities.
11. Complete the five-year National Strategy for Early Childhood Development (2011 – 2015) which targets children between 0 and 8 years of age; complete the strategy review by experts from the UNESCO Cairo office, and adopt the strategy at the government level in 2011.

The Yemeni government focused its attention on kindergarten education as it helps improve basic education efficiency. According to 2001/2002 – 2012/2013 education indicators and data, early childhood education witnessed tangible progress. In fact, the number of children enrolled in kindergartens rose from 12505 - with 5917 girls - in 2001/2002 to 29459 - with 13493 girls - in 2012/2013 i.e. with an overall increase of about 136%.

Table 21: Early childhood indicators between 2001/2002 and 2012/2013

Indicator	Indicator - base year 2001/2002			Achieved indicator till 2012/2013		
	Male	Female	Average	Male	Female	Average
GER	0.55	0.53	0.54	0.64	0.59	0.68
Percentage of students in private education	46.3	44.1	45.3	47.7	44.3	46.1
Percentage of trained educators	100	100	100	100	100	100
No. of children per educator			14.1			13.8

Source: General Directorate of Statistics and Planning, MoE, Sanaa. (National EFA report team)

Above table reveals the following points:

1. The expansion of early childhood education is limited and primarily restricted to urban areas and main cities. Therefore, it is worth noting the limited scope of achieved objectives, enrolment rates remaining stable at around 0.54% in 2000-2001 and 0.68% in 2012-2013.
2. The percentage of children enrolled in private schools reached 46.1% in 2012-2013 whereas it was 45.3% in 2001-2002.
3. All staff involved in early childhood received pre-service training.

12-The development of basic education:

The main objectives of basic education are the following:

1. Acquiring Islamic principles, rules and rituals and understanding the relevant values pertaining to education and behavior.
2. Mastering the Arabic language for communication purposes.
3. Acquiring basic knowledge of the history and civilization of the Yemeni people as part of humanity, in general, and of the Arab and Islamic Nation, in particular.
4. Acquiring expression and communication skills and competencies.
5. Acquiring foreign language skills.
6. Understanding the love of the Nation, family and society, as well as responsible behavior.
7. Understanding handicraft practices and the capacity to use them at school, at home and in daily life.
8. Acquiring substantive knowledge about nature, the environment and geography of the Republic of Yemen, Arab nations and the world.
9. Understanding the importance of physical fitness and the expression of technical and esthetic values.

Primary/elementary schools are spread throughout all governorates. However, most of them have a multi-shift system: girls in the morning, boys in the afternoon and adults in the evening.

The Yemeni government accorded significant importance to basic education and invested in a number of local and foreign resources to develop training and curricula. It also earmarked financial and human resources to provide the necessary tools for quality basics. Moreover, exerted efforts to achieve the objective of free and compulsory education were illustrated by the increase of the gross and net enrolment ratios in basic education. Within this framework, high gross and net enrolment ratios were recorded, as shown in the following tables:

Table 22: Development of intake and enrolment rates between 2001-2002 & 2012-2013

Indicator	2000-2002			2005-2006			2012-2013		
	M	F	Average	M	F	Average	M	F	Average
GIR	106.4	83.7	95.4	119.3	104.3	112.0	130.4	118.4	124.6
NIR	55.5	42.9	49.4	47.3	40.0	43.8	56.9	50.3	53.6
GER	79.6	49	64.7	85.8	62.8	74.7	98.8	80.3	89.8
NER	76.6	46.7	62.3	75.1	57.6	66.7	91.5	75.3	83.6

Source: General Directorate of Statistics and Planning, MoE, Sanaa (EFA National Report Team)

The previous table shows that, although reaching NER of 95% by 2015 as stipulated in the national strategy for the development of basic education was not achieved, a mere improvement of 21 percentage points was registered with an 83.6% rise in 2012-2013 in comparison to 2000-2001. Upon undertaking the annual review of objectives achieved included in the basic education strategy by 2010, the MoE has realized that the objective set in the basic education strategy was ambitious and cannot be achieved by 2015. Therefore, it amended this objective in the 2013-2015 medium-term plan with the new objective becoming NER of 90%.

As for the gross intake rate, it surpassed 100% for the six-year old age category in 2012-2013, due to the great number of students admitted in grade 1 – basic education for children over six years old in rural areas, because schools are distant from their home and they were late to enroll in schools, whereas in urban areas, a great number of admitted students in grade 1 are less than six years old (between five and six).

13- The development of secondary education

The main objectives of secondary education include the following:

1. Understanding Islam, its principles and rules and behaving according to Islamic laws.
2. Obtaining sufficient knowledge about Islamic and Arab culture.
3. Mastering the Arabic language, orally and written.
4. Mastering one foreign language at a minimum.
5. Educating students about national challenges and the struggle of Yemeni citizens and those in the Arab world and Islamic Nation; and education on conduct that leads to socio-political and economic progress in Yemen.
6. Performing duties and seeking to advocate one's rights and the rights of others.
7. Working within a collective and unified spirit.

8. Acquiring the fundamentals and the principles of democracy and understanding international issues.
9. Acquiring basic skills and know-how in arts and handicraft professions.
10. Understanding basis for knowledge, methodological education and ways to implement it.
11. Acquiring skills to use mathematics concepts.
12. Preserving a clean environment.

The following table shows the development of secondary education between 2001-2002 and 2012-2013.

Table 23: Secondary education enrolment rate in 2001-2002 and 2012-2013

Indicator	2001-2002			2005-2006			2012-2013		
	M	F	Average	M	F	Average	M	F	Average
GER in Secondary Education	43.0	22.8	32.9	43.0	22.8	33.4	45.1	32.1	38.8
NER in Secondary Education	24.2	14.9	19.6	24.2	14.9	19.7	32.2	23.8	28.2

Source: General Directorate of Statistics and Planning, Statistical information Bulletin 2001-2002 and 2012-2013 (EFA National Report Team)

Table 23 reveals a slight increase in the Gross Enrolment Rate in Secondary Education; from 32.9% in 2001-2002 to 38.8% in 2012-2013, i.e. an uplift of 5.9 percentage points. The increase in GER for females in secondary education was higher than that of males, with a rise of 8.9 percentage points, whereas GER of males did not exceed 2.1 points for the same period.

Regarding vocational and technical education, it is considered as an intermediary step between basic education and university studies. It meets the development requirements; therefore, the State seeks to encourage basic education students to enroll in higher numbers in secondary vocational and technical education.

Vocational and technical education and training provide training of different levels in 20 governorates, including the capital. The number of training institutions providing formal education amounts to 135 institutions, out of which 95 are governmental institutions and 40 are private institutions authorized by the Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education and Training spread throughout the 20 governorates. There are also 175 training institutions providing continuous training programs, two of which are public institutions and 173 private institutions authorized by the TVET Ministry. Formal education is provided at 5 educational levels: Bachelor of Applied Sciences, three-year technical diploma, technical diploma, technical secondary education and vocational training diploma.

The following programs are available:

1. First level: Bachelor of Applied Sciences (technical instructor) the study duration of which is four years following general secondary education or vocational secondary education. This level is available in Sanaa and Aden whereas the technical institute is available in Al Mukalla.
2. Second level: Technical diploma the study duration of which is three years following secondary education. The condition of admission in this level is a general secondary degree or a vocational secondary degree. This level is available in 17 public community colleges and 25 private colleges, with several public colleges under construction.
3. Third level: Technical diploma the study duration of which is two years after the secondary level. The condition of admission in this level is a general secondary degree or a technical secondary degree. This level is available in 46 public and private technical institutes delivering a technical diploma in ten fields.
4. Fourth level: Technical secondary education. The condition of admission is a basic education degree. Said curriculum is available in 37 educational institutions. The technical secondary education is provided in six fields.
5. Fifth level: Vocational training diploma. The condition of admission is a basic education degree. This curriculum is provided in 37 educational institutions. The vocational training diploma is granted in three fields.

In addition to the previous curricula, the TVET Ministry provides the following programs:

- Continuous education: It is a short-term training in some professions and for professionals who have expertise, of those who wish to obtain a vocational degree that would help them compete in the labor market.
- Cooperative education: It is a joint vocational training between the Ministry, the private sector and production companies.

In addition to governmental efforts, there are several private centers and institutes that provide short-term training (up to six months) in the fields of: administration, accounting, marketing, IT and mechanical maintenance. There are also training centers and institutes following public institutions under the indirect supervision of the TVET Ministry, such as health institutes that fall under the Ministry of Health.

14- Teachers provision and training

The government efforts to train teachers in basic education to secondary education continued, the government being aware of promoting teachers' qualification level. Therefore, the Ministry had to closely follow the training needs of all categories of teachers to improve education quality. Out of necessity, teachers were appointed without any

preliminary training. Therefore, it was essential to provide them with in-service training. It was also fundamental to provide continuous training programs. In this context, distant learning was set up to provide an added-value to primary school teachers, particularly those who work in remote areas. Distant learning used to support teachers through lessons broadcasted on radio and television. Assist teachers to assimilate parts of the difficult school curricula to enhance their level of knowledge and competence. Meetings were held between teachers, students and educational consultants on the premises of the educational administrations to assess the scope and the impact of said program. Since 1996, all candidate students applying for a teacher position have to receive training in the Faculties of Education for four years.

The number of educators working in kindergartens increased by two and a half times, from 886 male and female educators, out of whom 863 females in 2001-2002 to 2132 male and female educators, out of whom 2083 females in 2012-2013. The pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) reached around 14.1 children in 2001-2002 and decreased to 13.8 in 2012-2013.

The number of basic education teachers increased by 35%, going from 170428 male and female teachers in 2000-2001 to 229393 in 2012-2013. Moreover, the percentage of trained teachers increased from 51.8% in 2001-2002 to 66.8% in 2012-2013, i.e. a rise of 15 percentage points. The increase in the rate of trained female teachers was higher than that of male teachers.

PTR remained unchanged with 24 pupils for every teacher. This is attributed to the urgent need to recruit new teachers to keep pace with all new schools being built to provide education in accommodation for population growth throughout the Republic of Yemen.

The percentage of university qualified teachers or teachers with a higher qualification was around 45.8% in 2012-2013 compared to a lower number in 2001-2002 which did not exceed 30.6%. If we deem that university qualification is the lowest qualification required to work as a teacher in general schools, this means that there is more than half of the gross number of teachers with qualifications lower than those acceptable to teach in basic education.

15- Adult learning programs

Due to an increasing number of illiterates, the government ratified in 1998 the literacy and adult learning program and the national strategy for literacy and adult learning both of which represent a significant impetus to combat and uproot illiteracy and free citizens from alphabetical illiteracy. Said program is divided into four executive phases as follows:

1. Phase of preparation by surveying the illiterates, training teachers and implementing a media campaign to raise awareness.
2. Phase of eradicating illiteracy in the main and secondary cities while focusing on women and coinciding with the third five-year plan.

3. Third phase: Targeting illiteracy in rural and remote areas (illiterates who were not included in the previous phase, the duration of which is 10 years).
4. Fourth phase: Targeting the completion of the literacy program, the duration of which is five years.

The strategic vision of the Republic of Yemen asserted combating illiteracy and aiming at reducing it below 10% by 2025 by focusing on wiping out illiteracy sources, i.e. the decrease of enrolment rate in basic education and the increase of school dropout, particularly among females.

In 2009, the national strategy for literacy and adult learning was reviewed and enacted in order for the objectives and programs of literacy and adult learning be focused on implementing the following policies:

1. Consolidating compulsory education and eradicating sources of alphabetical illiteracy.
2. Providing literacy and adult learning programs by opening new centers in demographic communities; rural and urban areas.
3. Encouraging enrolment in literacy and adult learning programs and increasing the number of enrolled students in rural and urban areas, particularly women by providing food incentives and others.
4. Developing literacy and adult learning curricula in their alphabetical and functional dimensions and implementing training and rehabilitation programs for workers in the training and teaching sectors.
5. Diversifying and modernizing women-specific and basic training programs which provide technical knowledge and life skills that help rural women to integrate into labor market and become self-reliant, especially poor women.
6. Involving local councils, civil society organizations and local communities in the establishment of literacy and adult learning courses and promoting the role of multimedia to raise awareness about the risks of illiteracy.
7. Civil and non-civil governmental bodies implementing literacy programs for their illiterate members.
8. Provision of teachers and trainers, particularly women, to fill the gap while improving their wages.
9. Promoting coordination mechanisms with the MoE to mitigate the dropout phenomenon.

The government endeavored to go on with the policy of giving priority to literacy programs. It also sought to combat ignorance and transform “neglected human capacities into productive capabilities” to take part in the economic development of the country. It is noteworthy that informal education in the Republic of Yemen is a term that includes literacy programs in schools, underprivileged youth and adult learning.

Box 6: Literacy and adult learning programs

- The general objectives for literacy and adult learning programs resulted in three programs providing relevant services. These programs were set by the literacy and adult learning law No 28 in 1988:
- 1. The alphabetical literacy program: This program aims at combating adult illiteracy by providing basic education skills (reading – writing – calculation) and reintegrating young children in schools to continue their education in the following education levels.
- The objectives of this program are achieved through the following three education levels:
 - Basic level: the duration of the study in this phase extends for two school years, at the end of which the illiterate is granted a literacy certificate which corresponds to grade 4 of basic education. The delivery of said certificate enables him/her to join the follow-up level or grade 5 of basic education.
 - Follow-up level: the duration of the study in this level is one year. This level targets people newly freed from illiteracy to prevent them from drifting back into it and young children willing to pursue education. At the end of this level, students reach the level of grade 6 in basic education.
 - Completion level: it is an educational level which lasts for two school years, corresponding to grade 9 of basic education and targets those who wish to complete the basic education level.
- 2. The training and rehabilitation program: it aims at providing illiterates or illiteracy-free learners, males and females alike, with the opportunity to acquire technical and handicraft basic skills which are needed by the labor market, in order to assist them in obtaining a job thereby improving their living conditions.
- This program provides training services through two types of centers:
 - Basic training centers: These centers are specifically designed and appropriate to provide special training for men in six specializations: auto mechanics, electricity, carpentry and furniture, scrap and metal work, and plumbing.
 - Female training centers: These centers are designed for women specifically, providing training in six specializations: tailoring and sewing, knitting, handicraft, embroidery, typing, and housekeeping.
- 3. The mass education program: This program targets all adult illiterates, aiming at raising awareness in the following fields:
 - Religious education
 - Legal, political and socio-economic education
 - Demographic and domestic education
 - Health and environment education
 - Agricultural education

The results of the household budget survey for 2006 revealed a decrease in illiteracy rate to 40.7% for both genders; 21.3% for males and 60.0% for females, whereas the rates were in 1999, 55.7% with 36.0% for males and 74.1% for females as shown in table 24 below. In rural areas, the illiteracy rate was higher, amounting to an average 64.4%, with 71.4% for males and 84.2% for females.

According to the results of the 2004 census, the illiteracy rate for both genders amounted to 45.3%, with 61.6% for females and 29.6% for males. In urban areas, the rate for both genders amounted to 25.7%, with 36.3% for females and 16.7% for males. The results of the census also revealed that the ratio of those literates to the general population was more than ten of the overall number of residents, amounting to 31.7% in comparison with the overall population, thus rendering more than three quarters of the population below the basic education level.

Table 24: Illiteracy rate for males and females and urban areas

Survey	Urban			Rural			Overall		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1999 household budget survey	19.7	47.8	33.9	71.4	84.2	64.4	36.0	74.1	55.7
2004 demographic census	16.7	36.3	25.7				29.6	61.6	45.3
2006 household budget survey	11.6	35.4	23.5	25.3	69.9	47.7	21.3	60.0	40.7

Source: Central Statistical Organization, Household budget survey for 1999, 2006, and the results of 2004 census.

16- Programs supporting education quality

Due to the rise of challenges confronting education in the Republic of Yemen and with the government focusing its efforts during the previous years on responding to the huge demand for education, there was more focus on providing education rather than improving it and enhancing its quality. The debate over the declining level of students' achievement in the different educational levels and the lack of link between the education output and the labor market needs heated up. Therefore, the government started to pay significant attention to qualitative aspects by undertaking several studies to diagnose and determine students' achievement at the national level and compare their achievement to global levels. Among the studies which examined students' achievement in basic education:

- MLA survey undertaken in 2002 and 2005 for grades 4 and 6 of basic education in four subjects: sciences, mathematics, Arabic language, and life skills. The results revealed that students' average scores slightly improved in 2005, compared to 2002, but remained within 50% in four subjects, except for life skills which were around 60%.

- TIMSS – Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study undertaken for grade 4 in 2007, as well as grades 4 and 6 in 2011. The six Arab countries taking part in TIMSS ranked last with the Republic of Yemen coming in the last place among the 36 participating countries. Yemeni students scored 224 points in Mathematics, i.e. below the required performance standard of 500 and below the Arab average of 332.

The following table reveals the evolution of some quality indicators:

- The rate of qualified teachers in basic and secondary education increased, going from 50.1% in 2001-2002 to 68.0% in 2012-2013, i.e. by 17.9 percentage points. This is attributed to the fact that the newly recruited educational staff members are holders of university or higher degrees, except for the recruitment of female teachers in rural areas. The latter was recruited from a group of holders of secondary degrees and trained through post-secondary prior to officially becoming permanent teachers.
- The pupil-teacher ratio did not change and remained as it was between 2001-2002 and 2012-2013, due to the large expansion in building schools in rural areas, marked by demographic expansion and the need to recruit a great number of teachers to work in these schools.
- The student-book ratio reached 1-1. Every student at all educational levels has the required textbooks, with no exception. However, the only problem may be a delay in the distribution of some books to the students at the beginning of the school year.
- The proportion of spending on books and educational material, as a percentage of expenses related to both basic education and secondary education, dropped from 8.3% in 2001-2002 to 4.0% for basic education and to 4.7% for secondary education. This drop is attributed to the significant change in budget allocations to salaries given the multiple increases in salaries for the different educational staff during the past three years while the budget earmarked to goods and services within the current budget for basic education and secondary education did not follow suit.
- The share of teachers' salaries in basic education to total expenditures increased from 72.7% in 2001-2002 to 85% in 2012-2013, due to the increase of teachers' benefits during the past years, while the rate of teachers' salaries in secondary education remained unchanged because most secondary education teachers are considered part of basic education. In fact, there are only 320 secondary schools which are independent in the Republic of Yemen whereas the remaining schools are joint schools with secondary education.

Table 25: Some indicators of the quality of basic and secondary education between 2001-2002 and 2012-2013

Indicator	2001-2002		2005-2006		2012-2013		
		Basic	Secondary	Basic	Secondary	Basic	Secondary
Number and % of qualified teachers	No.	85407		109887		155874	
Two-year diploma: post-secondary and higher	%	50.1		57.9		68.0	
PTI		24	22	24	22	24	22
Student-book ratio		100	100	100	100	100	100
Books and educational material share of total level expenditures		8.3	8.3			4.0	4.7
Share of teachers' salaries of total level expenditures		72.7	72.7			85	72.7

Source: Public Administration for Statistics and Planning, Ministry of Education, Sanaa (EFA National Report Team)

As for the future trends which will be reflected in the national vision for education and represent an umbrella strategy for the education sector as a whole and a strategy for general education and literacy development for the years 2016-2030 to be developed by the MoE, they are as follows:

- 1- Considering education as an integrated system to be developed in an exhaustive and integrated manner and restructuring the input and operations of the educational process accordingly.
- 2- Developing education in Yemen, granting a greater role to decentralized levels (provinces, governorates, directorates and schools) in the administration of the educational process.
- 3- Paying attention to and focusing on providing education to underprivileged and marginalized categories, persons with special needs and out-of-school children, by increasing the distribution of family incentives and raising social awareness about education.
- 4- Focusing on promoting the education quality by improving students' reading, writing and mathematics skills in the first grades of basic education.
- 5- Pursuant to a student-centered approach in the educational process, the required standards of students will be set by grade and subject area; developing curricula, textbooks, teaching methods and teachers' capacities to help students acquire the required standards. Included also in the basic education curricula, life skills which contribute to achieving the life-long education concept and basic education the output of which will enable post-education capacities or accessing the labor market; taking into consideration the current educational trends in educational supervision, ensuring ongoing support to teachers in schools and assessing schools as a fully integrated entity; ensuring quality in providing educational services and granting schools a greater role in the process of planning, execution, follow-up and assessment of the educational process to be able to respond to the needs and requirements of the surrounding community.

State of Kuwait



The development of education in the State of Kuwait

General principles and objectives of the educational system

Education in the State of Kuwait is a right of all citizens, the aim of which is to prepare individuals to become active and productive in society, in their public and private lives. The strategy of the State of Kuwait in the field of development asserts the role of educational institutions in developing these characteristics and training individuals as part of the qualified human capital. Education is considered to be the main tool to build high-performance staff in society at the institutional, cultural, economic and social levels. Therefore, education has a role in the following fields:

- a- Achieving balance between maintaining the cultural identity of the State, on the one hand, and preparing the citizens to confront changes within the country and at the regional and international levels, on the other.
- b- Providing basic skills.
- c- Preparing citizens to face technological development.
- d- Preparing students to confront practical life.

The strategic objectives and goals to be achieved within the Education Strategy (2005-2025) are as follow:

- 1- Contributing to the achievement of interaction with the current requirements, as the freedom of thinking, and responding to the dynamics of change, without a conflict with the cultural identity of the society.
- 2- Contributing to the enhancement of the values of faith in the importance of dialogue, respecting human rights among students and providing the basis for a sound democratic life.
- 3- Anchoring the concept of wealth production and protection of the environment and the resources of the country.
- 4- Enhancing the basic requirements of school curricula in the general education system to ensure the achievement of the State's objectives and principles.

The 2005-2025 Strategy takes into consideration the educational objectives of the Gulf Cooperation Council, particularly:

- Building sound Islamic faith among students, the principles of which orient the way of thinking to maintain the Islamic Arab heritage and allegiance to the Islamic Arab identity.
- Developing scientific thinking, free innovative thinking skills and life-long education.
- Raising awareness of learners about the importance of globalization, information technology, and modern communication means, and exploiting these elements for the benefit of the individual and the community, and protection from any negative impact to the identity and values of Kuwaiti society.
- Providing learners with positive skills of interaction with other cultures, tolerance and co-existence with others.

Management of the educational system

The management of the educational system lies within the joint responsibility of the MoE which is supervising education in schools, the Ministry of Higher Education supervising post-secondary higher education or the equivalent, and the Public Authority for Applied Education & Training. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor supervises the role of nurseries and kindergartens.

The Public Authority for Applied Education & Training (PAAET) was created in order to provide and develop the national labor force to overcome the deficit in the national technical labor force and respond to the development requirements of the country. The PAAET works, in cooperation with major governmental and non-governmental institutions in the labor market, to link academic programs with the need of the community. It is also the only body in charge of all the aspects of applied education and training in the country. Colleges and institutes affiliated with the PAAET grant secondary education graduates a diploma degree in two-year programs and in four-year programs leading to a Bachelor degree.

The State seeks to strike a balance between centralization and decentralization in educational management. Central management is charged with the responsibility of planning, supervising and following the development of education, whereas decentralized mechanisms (administrations of educational districts) implement, supervise and assess the executive operations in schools.

The National Commission for Education was established by virtue of Ministerial Decision no 95/30, issued by the Minister of Education on July 1, 1995 to raise the level of education and encourage educational projects. It is a permanent commission composed of a great number of experienced teachers and other figures in Kuwait society. The Commission is financed through in-kind and monetary contributions from public and private sources. In addition, it has the right to invest part of its revenues to generate income for its projects.

As for the new educational ladder which was created on the basis of Ministerial Decision No 76 of 2003, it is composed of five years of primary education, four years of intermediate education and three years of secondary education. The new organization was implemented starting 2004-2005, with the extension of the compulsory education duration from 8 to 9 years (including primary and intermediate education).

Pre-school education (kindergartens) is not compulsory, but is available for free to Kuwaiti citizens. The admission age is four and the duration of the program is two years whereas the duration of primary education has become five years (grades 1-5) since 2004-2005 opposed to four years in the past. Primary education is compulsory and children are admitted into school at the age of six.

Intermediate education lasts for four years during which students who successfully complete this cycle are granted the intermediate cycle degree, enabling them to enroll in secondary education. The PAAET also provides two-year programs granting an assistant technician degree to intermediary schools graduates. Following the changes which were introduced into the structure of the educational system in 2004-2005, the

duration of secondary education has become three years (opposed to four years in the past). Once students finish their general secondary education cycle, they undergo a final exam, in view of the results of which a general secondary education degree is granted.

Higher education includes university and post-secondary education. Technical training is provided at the post-secondary level under the supervision of the PAAET and takes place in technical institutes and training centers. Centers deliver a technical degree for two years for holders of a secondary degree. At the university level, the Bachelor degree requires eight regular study semesters (or four years) for all programs, except for engineering (nine to ten study semesters) and medicine (seven years of study). Regarding higher education, the duration of programs is 2-3 study semesters yielding a high diploma. There are Masters programs in sciences and engineering, philosophy, and medicine, lasting from one to two years following the Bachelor degree. As for PhD programs, they last for three years at a minimum.

The academic year is composed of 168 calendar working days in the primary cycle (or around 34 weeks) and 151 days in intermediate and secondary cycles (or around 30 weeks).

Main quantitative and qualitative achievements:

When analyzing education status and indicators in the State of Kuwait, we find that education has significantly moved forward during the past decades, thus showing the increasing interest in education and in the right to education in the Constitution according to which education is a main pillar for the advancement of society, ensured and guaranteed by the State.

During the past fifty years, the State of Kuwait succeeded in expanding education opportunities and despite the ongoing challenge of the fast demographic growth, the equal distribution of educational services and activities among the different centers in all the regions of the State continued. The ongoing evolution of students' registration at all educational levels was significantly noted. Education is compulsory and free for all Kuwaiti children by virtue of Law No 1, of 1965, from grade 1 of basic education (6 years) till the end of intermediate education. Said law compels the State to provide school buildings, textbooks, teachers and all that is necessary in terms of human and physical resources to ensure the success of compulsory education.

Since that time several regulatory laws concerning education, be it about its general structure or its content, have been enacted and all indicators reflect that these efforts have indeed been made and have contributed to the improvement in students' enrollment rate in primary education, gender equity, eradicating illiteracy, life-long education and others.

1- The development of pre-school education

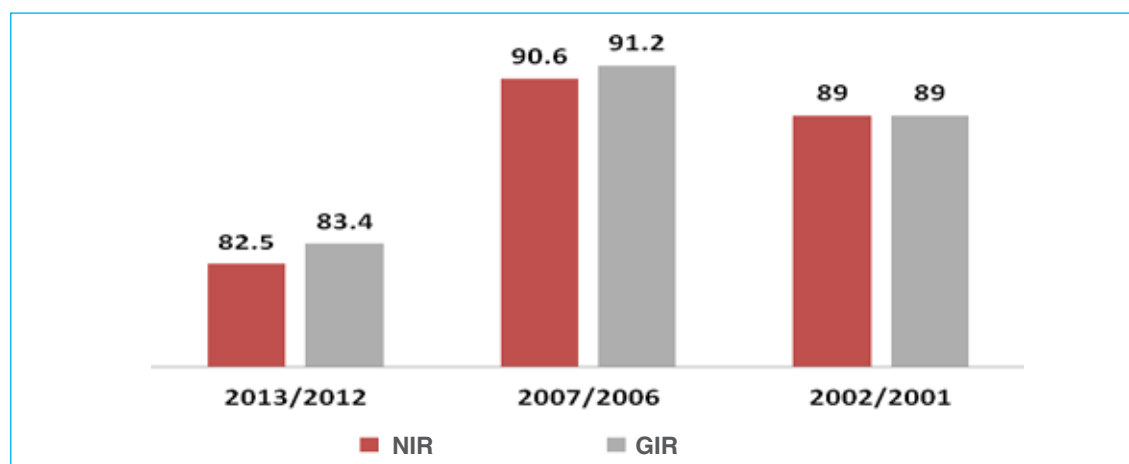
Kindergartens endeavor to ensure the appropriate conditions for the growth of children, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and socially, according to the capacities and needs of the child, and aim at developing the children's capacities to achieve interaction and communication, encourage them to discover their environment, and provide them with social and moral guidance in a safe environment.

Among the top concerns of the Ministry of Education as reflected in its educational policies, is to pay a great deal of attention to kindergarten, a phase where a child transitions from the environment of his home and family to a new society. The State of Kuwait is considered a pioneer state in kindergartens, providing this educational service and diffusing it in all the regions of the State, thus ensuring just and equitable access to all Kuwaiti citizens.

Parents do register their children in kindergartens, considering this level as an important and fundamental phase in the education of children, although it is not compulsory. This is reflected in the net enrolment rate of 82.5% in 2012-2013. Kuwaiti students represent 66% of the total number of children enrolled in kindergartens. In general, there is a steady increase in the number of Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti children between 2001-2002 and 2012-2013. In 2012-2013, the number of children enrolled in public and private kindergartens amounted to 83044 children, out of whom 44381 in public education, i.e. 53.4%, and 38663 in private education, i.e. 46.6%.

Form 11 reveals that the apparent (or gross) and net intake rates in kindergartens in 2001-2002 and 2012-2013 are high compared to other countries of the region. But a drop was noted, last year.

Form 11: apparent (or gross) and net intake rates in kindergarten



Source: MoE

The decrease in the two previous indicators despite a rise in the number of children in this age group for this cycle is attributed to several reasons, among which:

1. This cycle is not compulsory, although free.
2. Children adhering to nurseries which include kindergartens.
3. Being outside the State of Kuwait, like the children of diplomats, delegates, and others.
4. Children with special needs or with severe disabilities enrolled in special education schools.

17- The development of basic education

Basic education is a nine-year educational cycle, starting with grade 1 and extending till grade 9 according to the new educational ladder of the State of Kuwait. It is a free and compulsory cycle for all Kuwaiti children, males and females alike and is divided into two levels:

1. The first cycle of basic education, including primary education (5 years).
2. The second cycle of basic education, including intermediate cycle (4 years).

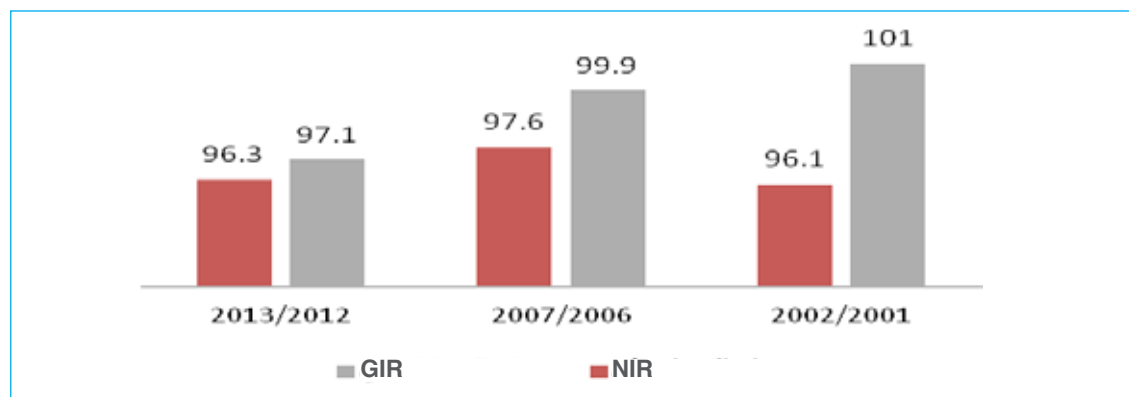
Primary education aims at developing the child's spirit and brain and strengthening his/her personality in accordance with the principles and concepts consecrated in Islam, providing him/her with basic knowledge in reading, writing and math and helping him/her develop a feeling of social awareness, cooperation and responsibility.

Intermediate education aims at orienting the student's capacities and preparing them for secondary education. The general objectives of this level are as follows:

1. Helping students acquire, understand and know their national identity through the following subjects: Arabic language, social studies, basic sciences, mathematics and English language.
2. Providing opportunities to students to acquire technical know-how and expertise in the practical issues of life.
3. Developing students' thinking capacities to develop their innovative spirit.

The net intake rate in primary education is quite stable, as shown in Form 12, it is also high due to legislation in force by virtue of which primary education is compulsory and fundamental; the law sanctioning the violating parent with imprisonment or a fine. The intake rate includes students enrolled in public education (general-religious) and private education. Some students are enrolled in educational institutions for children with special needs, but there is no classification for them according to the different educational levels, except for motor, visual and hearing disabilities, with a very low rate for mental disabilities and others.

Form 12: Apparent and net intake rate in primary education



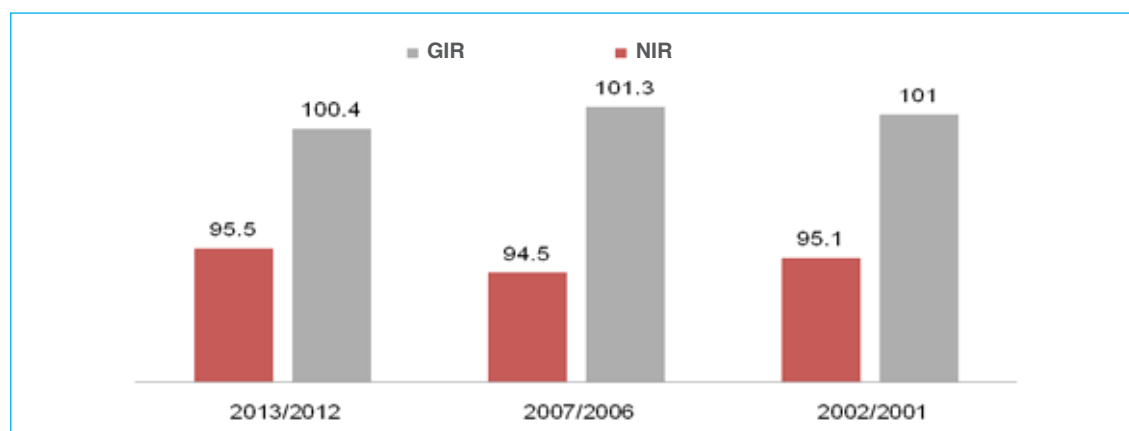
Source: MoE

The MoE allows some children aged 5 and one half years to enroll in grade 1. As such, they enroll in grade 6 before turning 11 and are thus outside the age category of this cycle.

Form 13 reveals that the apparent and net intake rate in intermediate education was steady between the years 2001-2002 and 2012-2013, an increase of the apparent intake rates being attributed to the following reasons:

- - Increasing the rate of success in primary education.
- - Students being out of the age category for this level, since students are prohibited from being enrolled at the age of 10 and one half because the legal age for this level is 11.
- - Parents violating the law are sanctioned, as this level is compulsory, thus the rate remains quasi-steady.

Form 13: Apparent and net intake rate in intermediate education



Source: MoE

Box 7: Civil Society Organizations working in primary education

Some institutions that contribute to and support the educational process in basic education in the State of Kuwait are:

Center for Child Evaluation & Teaching (CCET):

The Center was founded in 1984 due to the efforts of a group of Kuwaiti women who noticed that their children were suffering from learning difficulties. Then, this group in particular noted the importance of creating a center in Kuwait to diagnose the cases of children with learning difficulties and provide them with appropriate learning treatment. Therefore, the center was established and registered as a public interest organization to assist children with learning difficulties.

The problems of these children are, in general, difficulties in reading, spelling, writing and math. Many of them are confronted with obstacles because of reading difficulty (dyslexia), motor coordination difficulty (dyspraxia), writing difficulty (dysgraphia) or calculation difficulty (dyscalculia). It is quite often a complex mixture of these cases. Some children also suffer from other difficulties in focusing, paying attention, hyperactivity, social, behavioral and emotional problems. Services are not limited to support those with learning difficulty only but extend to include their families, teachers and other relevant professions to overcome the challenges of learning difficulties.

Programs offered by the centers:

-Morning educational program:

The morning education program is a therapeutic intervention program provided by the Center in cooperation with the MoE. The curriculum applied in general education schools of the Ministry of Education is taught by means appropriate to the students' capacities and difficulties. The morning educational program started in the academic year 1994-1995 and is still in place to date.

The program ensures facilities to Kuwaiti students or children of Kuwaiti women enrolled in public schools who have a psycho-educational report from the diagnosis unit of the Center, certifying that they have learning difficulties and have a disability certificate delivered by the Higher Council for the Disabled.

The morning educational program aims at enabling students to coexist with their learning problems and find ways that will help them achieve that, then integrating them in schools once they become capable of keeping pace with their peers and relying on themselves in the learning process. The program aims at enhancing a child's self-esteem and confidence, since we believe that a child that is self-confident and happy is the most successful of learners.

-Evening educational program:

The evening educational program provides opportunities in specialized learning for students with learning difficulties who do not have the chance to join specialized programs during morning school.

It also provides students with behavioral treatment services and speech therapy for those with specific learning difficulties, as well as diagnostic tests in major subject areas: (Arabic language, English language, Mathematics) in cooperation with the diagnosis unit.

-Services of the program:

The Center offers several services, among which therapeutic personal lessons according to the nature of the case, in addition to holding therapeutic sessions whether to change behaviors or in case of speech problems for those with learning difficulties. There are also diagnostic tests in basic subjects.

The Center has also an early diagnosis unit for the cases which largely contribute to providing advice and appropriate therapeutic strategies to deal with the child's difficulties, in addition to a test development unit, which endeavors to design and develop educational and psychological tests to be used by the diagnosis unit, as well as set and regulate such tests to detect specific cases of learning difficulties.

Science club:

The Science Club is considered a highly distinguished public interest association. It is a non-profit organization, affiliated with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. It aims at holding scientific activities, raising scientific awareness, improving talents, and lifting the scientific level in cooperation with various scientific clubs and institutions. It also takes part in scientific seminars, camps and competitions, as well as exchange visits and expertise with other scientific clubs.

3. The development of secondary education

The intermediate education cycle is aimed at guiding the capacities of the students and preparing them for the secondary cycle. The general objectives of this cycle are as follows:

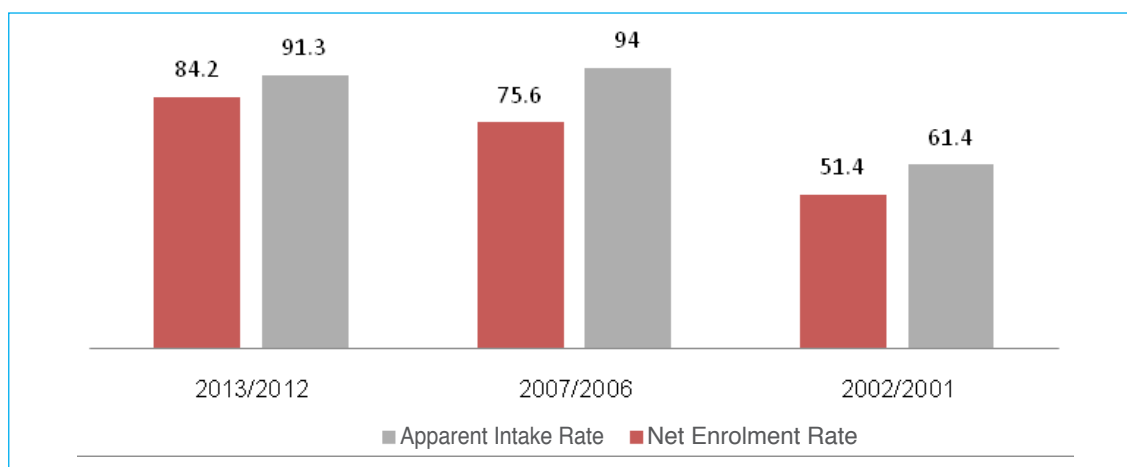
- Assist the students in understanding and getting to know their national identity through the following subject matters: Arabic language, social studies, basic sciences, mathematics and the English language.
- Create opportunities for students to acquire the technical know-how and experience in life soft skills.
- Improve the capacities of students to think of developing their creative skills.

The main objectives of secondary education are as follows:

- Guide the capacities of the students in preparing for tertiary or higher education level.
- Encourage them to discover their sense of identity through developing their capacities, knowledge and skills.
- Prepare the students for practical life and additional tertiary or higher education studies, through encouraging and guiding them towards professional areas of interest, as well as awakening their sense of civic duty based on the comprehension of their rights and obligations.

The number of students has increased by 2.6% during the period of 2001/2002–2012/2013. Form 14 demonstrates the increase in the enrolment rate in secondary education during said period from 61.4% in 2001/2002 to 91.3% in 2012/2013. This is due to the fact that secondary education comes after the compulsory and basic cycles.

Form 14: Apparent Intake Rate and Net Enrolment Rate in secondary education



Source: Ministry of Education

The State has given great importance to making religious education as one type of education for those who want to be enrolled in it. It was classified in line with the general education cycles; the duration of study in secondary education extends along four years from grade nine to grade twelve; while its curriculum differs slightly from that of the general secondary education, for it focuses more on the Arabic language and Sharia matters. Moreover, students with scholarships from Asia, Africa and Europe are transferred by the Kuwaiti National Committee for Education, Science and Culture, to the religious education institutes, where studies are distributed into two cycles: Introduction and preparation cycle, equivalent to intermediate cycle, after which students reach the secondary cycle, after which they enroll in tertiary education inside or outside Kuwait depending on their averages.

The technical training sessions held by the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training have been an opportunity for the students who dropped out of general education so that they can acquire qualifications that would prepare them to enter the job market. This category is concentrated within secondary cycle graduates who have not obtained averages that qualify them to enroll in higher education levels. Other training sessions of a duration of four years were also designed for students with learning difficulties in the compulsory levels, provided they are not above thirteen years old.

The training sector in the Authority prepares and rehabilitates the national labor force based on general knowledge and skills that would qualify the graduates to work in more than one specialization within the professional area; hence, the sector is in charge of the basic organized training to prepare new staff. The following table shows an increase in the number of students in a specialized technical program and a decrease in their number in a technical or handy-work program.

Table 26: Number of students enrolled in technical and handy-work sessions

Number		2001/2002		2006/2007		2012/2013	
		Number	Growth	Number	Growth	Number	Growth
Specialized Technical	Male	3457	4614	33.5	5819	26.1	
	Female	1537	2373	54.4	3681	55.1	
	Total	4994	6987	39.9	9500	36.0	
Technical	Male	2745	2994	9.1	3003	0.3	
	Female	4457	4685	5.1	2253	-51.9	
	Total	7202	7679	6.6	5256	-31.6	
Handy-work	Male	331	918	177.3	945	2.9	
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	
	Total	331	918	177.3	945	2.9	

Source: Ministry of Education

Specialized technical program: from the high school campaign; it is considered as post-secondary and pre-tertiary education.

Technical: from the ninth grade graduates; it is considered as vocational training.

Handy-work: from the primary cycle graduates who are 13 years old with many learning difficulties; it is considered as vocational training.

4- Teachers provision and training

The Faculty of Education within the University of Kuwait and the main Faculty of Education are the principal institutions that train teachers in the State of Kuwait. They offer a four year program that ends with a Bachelor degree and includes training for both classroom teachers and teachers of specialized subjects.

The main Faculty of Education trains primary school teachers and kindergarten teachers, as well as other technical staff. The training program contains three areas: the cultural training with 48 credit hours (38%), the academic training with 40 credit hours (32%) and the vocational training with 38 credit hours (30%).

While the Faculty of Education within the University of Kuwait offers three training programs to kindergarten teachers, one program to primary school teachers, another program to train intermediate and secondary school teachers and two diploma level programs: the educational training diploma and the educational counselling diploma. The Faculty has also established a center for education development to encourage research, publications and translation. In addition to their academic and research duties, Faculty members also provide consultations, seminars and lectures in public education institutions.

In the framework of its efforts aiming at training qualified Kuwaiti professionals, the Faculty seeks to reach a number of goals that encompass offering studies at the Masters and PhD levels, training psychological counsellors at all educational levels, educational awareness raising and introduction of new specializations, such as technical education, information technology (IT), household economy, library, communications, education technology and special education. The Faculty also trains specialists in areas of educational planning, curriculum development, evaluation, academic rehabilitation for those who do not have academic qualifications, as well as educational and other service delivery within the social activities of educational character.

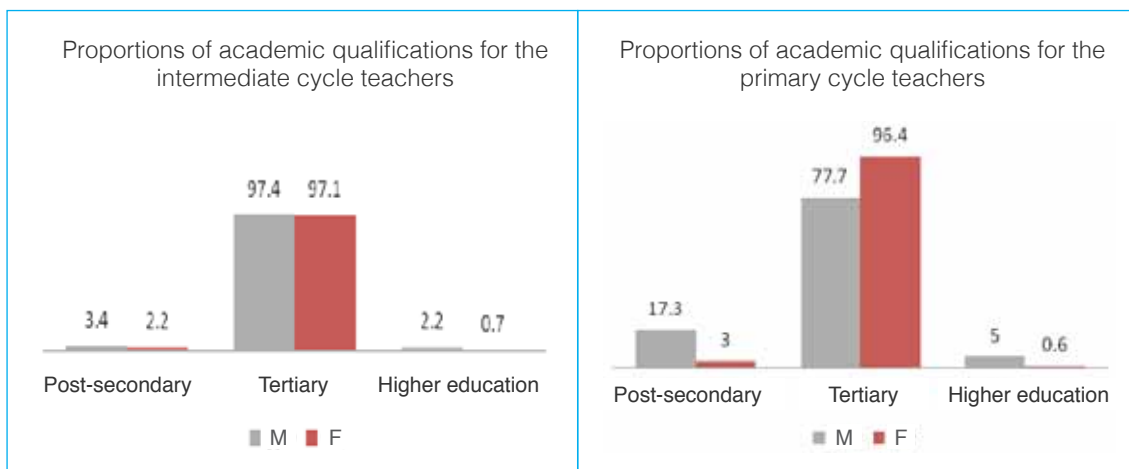
The pre-service training curriculum includes basic knowledge of specialized subject matters, basic knowledge of professional orientation, defining the basics and principles of self-learning, ongoing learning and in-depth knowledge of linguistics.

The most recent available data show that the number of education body members in both public and private education has doubled, with an average growth of 82.6%, since there were 4401 teachers in 2001/2002 versus 8038 in 2012/2013.

In the same period, the number of primary cycle education body members in both public and private education has been constantly increasing; in 2001/2002, there were 10940 teachers, versus 27801 in 2012/2013. This two-fold increase has had a positive impact on the pupil/teacher ratio.

The number of intermediate cycle education body members in both public and private education has increased by 84.4%, from 11643 teachers in 2001/2002 to 21471 in 2012/2013.

Form 15: Proportions of academic qualifications for teachers in primary and intermediate cycles



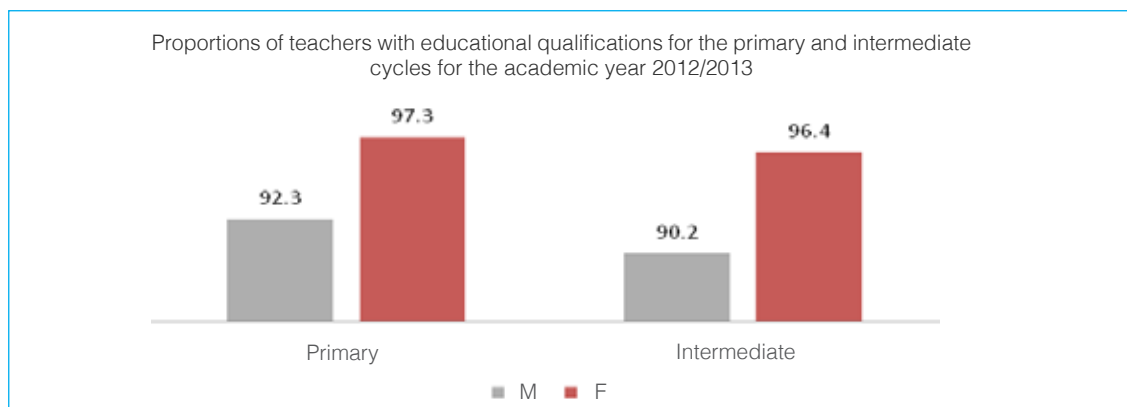
Source: MoE

Most of the teachers in primary and intermediate cycles, as shown in Form 15, are holders of university degrees. Whereas the proportion of those holding a diploma is declining for all cycles and specializations, after the Ministry of Education had stopped appointing those who hold a post-secondary degree in public education and kindergarten. This is due to the fact that all faculties of education have switched to the Bachelor degree, with the condition that the duration of educational specialization studies should not be of less than four years. The higher tertiary qualifications, such as the Masters or PhD degrees, are optional for teachers and they can obtain them while they are in-service.

The Ministry is preparing an annual training plan for all the education bodies, the management of schools, and the civil service management within the education sector in order to accompany the latest developments in education, as follows:

- At the beginning of the academic year, training sessions are held for new teachers so they get to know the rights and obligations accorded to them.
- Ongoing technical training sessions about improving teachers' teaching skills are held.
- Sessions are also held to prepare teachers for supervisory positions (to become head of department for the subject matter).

Form 16: Proportions of teachers with educational qualifications for the primary and intermediate cycles



Source: Ministry of Education

Form 16 shows the proportion of teachers with educational qualifications who hold a Bachelor degree in Education from one of the faculties of education, whether it is the main Faculty of Education affiliated to the Public Authority for Applied Education, the Faculty of Education affiliated with the University of Kuwait or others. In the primary cycle, they account for 97%, 92.3% males and 97.3% females. In the intermediate cycle, the proportion of teachers with educational qualifications is 93.6%, 90.2% males of the totality of male teachers and 96.4% females of the totality of female teachers. While the proportion of teachers with educational qualifications in basic education is 95.5%.

5- Adult education programs

The law number 4 of 1981 about eradicating illiteracy makes it compulsory to every Kuwaiti man between 14 and 40 and every Kuwaiti woman between 14 and 35 to engage in literacy programs.

The Ministry of education is interested in adult education that is considered to be general education not so different in essence from the general education programs. Since most of the students come from professional groups, this sector should be directed towards functional education programs. This was tried at the outset with male civil servants and housewives, while enrolment was kept open to all adults who would like to continue their studies. The legislative and regulatory development of the long-term future vision has led to a tremendous improvement in adult education and literacy curricula and subject matters. Some of its most important aspects are the following:

- An advanced quantum leap in allocating subject matters based on textbooks and courses with a character specific to literacy and adult education cycles.
- Modifying and improving the lesson plans for both cycles of literacy and adult education.

The State of Kuwait has been successful in lowering the illiteracy rate. The number of students in literacy centers has decreased by 30.2% in average, which led to a decrease in the number of teachers by 66% in average. Form 27 demonstrates the decrease in illiteracy rate to 3.8% in 2012/2013, thanks to the efforts made by the State and the procedures it has taken to eradicate illiteracy. The rest is concentrated in the category of inhabitants of age 60 and above, most of them being women. This is why it was useful to concentrate on illiteracy for the category of age between 15 and 59 years in the literacy programs.

Table 27: Development of the illiteracy rate

	Men's illiteracy %	Women's illiteracy	Overall rate
2010/2011	3.7	5.4	4.4
2011/2012	3.4	4.8	3.9
2012/2013	3.3	4.5	3.8

Source: MoE

Moreover, due to the changes and updates to education in the past years, it was noticed that a number of students who had dropped out of general (morning) education went to adult (evening) education to continue their studies. Thus, the number of students in adult education centers has increased by an average of 61.1%, which has led to increasing the number of centers by 45%.

6- Programs supporting quality education

The improvement of the quality of education was accomplished in the part related to providing human resources as teachers. So most teachers hold university degrees now and they constitute 96.5% in basic education. The Ministry of Education has also been keen on offering ongoing training sessions to teachers, in order to improve their performance and increase their skills; in addition to computer literacy sessions for the same end and to assist the State in setting out conditions and basics for the teaching certification. Furthermore, the education buildings were provided with sanitation facilities, learning sources and other requirements to create an environment that is convenient to students and to learning and teaching processes.

However, the real challenge facing education in the State of Kuwait lies within the low achievement of students, where achievements are still limited. In the past few years, grade 4 students in the State of Kuwait had the lowest level among the countries that participated in the international studies TIMSS and PIRLS in 2011. The same goes for the results of the national study MESA for the measurement and assessment of the education system outcomes in the State of Kuwait, since the results were not up to expectations and aspirations.

The ongoing assessment aims at measuring students' capacity to follow and understand subject matters within the curriculum; it uses oral and written tests for the assessment, in line with the nature of the concerned subjects, as well as research and written homework. In addition to measuring the academic performance of students, the assessment also includes their interaction with the teacher in the classroom and homework performance.

In 2013, the NCED conducted a diagnostic study, in cooperation with NIE in the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore. The aspects covered by the study encompass the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching and learning process (curricula, methods of teaching and evaluation), technology, human resources policies, training of teachers (pre and in-service), training in school leadership (pre and in-service) and some managerial aspects.

It was noticed that tests do not constitute a challenge for students, especially when it comes to complicated problems or to applying knowledge and skills. Test questions require short answers or multiple choice answers. The use of essay questions or "questions that require higher thinking skills" are limited. Such tests encourage lecturing and memorizing the curriculum content by heart. Consequently, this examination system allows the majority –not to say everyone- to be promoted to advanced education cycles with degrees of success that are clear but misleading. For example, 92% of students in grade 12 have passed the examinations of year 2012, but it seems they do not have the expected levels of knowledge and skills.

Currently, work is ongoing on implementing strategies that aim at improving the quality of education and increasing the outcome level of the Kuwaiti education system, and at going towards quality instead of quantity. The mechanisms that are being developed to improve the outcomes of education have relied on setting out criteria for the curricula, their improvement and a better quality; the objective was also to create a quantum leap based on the international standards and basics related to curriculum making, to use technology in education through integrating electronic curricula in education for all the subject matters, to work on rehabilitating the teachers, as well as to engage all stakeholders in education for all (EFA) and take their opinion about the degree of quality in the educational system into consideration.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



The development of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

General principles and aims of the education system

The government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) gives special attention to all types and cycles of education, for it is convinced that education is key to development, improvement and progress, elements that are essential to the State's functionality. Consequently, while the KSA education policy was being prepared, it was made sure it was comprehensive and in line with the State's policies and its Islamic constitution, as well as able to completely accomplish the education objectives and development plans. This policy has encompassed all education levels, from kindergarten to university and higher education, including the different technical training aimed at preparing a generation proud of its nation and always endeavoring for its progress and improvement. Hence, the current education policy is balanced and has a strategic dimension.

The general aims of education in KSA seek to promote students' understanding of Islam in a correct and comprehensive way, to instill and reinforce Islamic faith in their spirits, to provide the students with values, teachings and ideals, to help them acquire the different skills and knowledge, to improve their behavior towards constructive direction, to improve society at both economic and cultural levels, and prepare individuals to be useful in the construction of their society and nation.

The comprehensive vision that guides the strategic plan of the Ministry of Education (MoE) (2004-2014) is reflected in the upbringing of the young generation, both males and females, and in the reinforcement of Islamic values in their spirits, theoretically and practically. This way, they would master the necessary knowledge, skills and correct orientation, would be able to give positive responses, interact with the latest developments, work easily with the state-of-the-art technological inventions, and develop their capacities to face international competition on both scientific and technological level in order to become capable of effectively participating in general growth and development, through an efficient and practical education system able to reveal capacities and energies and to create a serious working spirit in an education and training environment abundant with education and progress.

In the framework of the MoE strategic plan, education is considered as the main source of human capital formation that constitutes the key element in all the aspects of economic development, namely in reaching high economic development rates. This means the education process is not just a service that is delivered to fulfill the demands of society, but also an investment aiming at improving the individual's standard of living and achieving socio-economic development for society.

The ninth development plan 2010-2014 confirms the pivotal role of education in achieving and promoting human resources development, for education widens the scope of choices available for citizens to acquire knowledge and skills. Consequently, it enables citizens to benefit from the acquired capacities. This plan aims at improving the general education teaching environment in order to fulfill the quality and quantity requirements, design advanced curricula that ensure to students a comprehensive de-

velopment that enables them to contribute in building their society, improve quality competency for education human resources to be capable of grasping the new curriculum objectives and ensuring quality extra-curricular activities to build a balanced Islamic whole personality for students at the service of their religion, society and nation.

The ninth development plan has also focused on developing human resources in the different education fields and on reducing unemployment. The plan has actually identified twenty goals to reduce unemployment and improve the national professional labor force. The goals encompass support the exertion of efforts seeking alignment between the outcomes of education and training systems and the job market requirements, criteria for technical and vocational training, support to ongoing education and training of national labor force, follow-up of updates in science and technology for skill development, and support to efforts seeking to continuously improve the productivity of the qualified national labor force.

Managing the education system

The MoE supervises all cycles and forms of general education (primary, intermediate and secondary, private tutoring, adult education and literacy), while the Ministry of Higher Education supervises the Saudi public and private universities. The MoE is also moving towards delegating all operational and managerial responsibilities to faculties in regions and districts. Consequently, the Ministry's central departments will focus on strategic matters, in addition to planning and supervision over development activities. The regulations pertaining to the managerial areas were amended through decisions made by the Minister of Education. Thus, the number of education authorities in the regions and districts became 45 in 2006. Said decisions were accompanied by relevant sub-laws for the education regions and districts along two main lines: the relationship among the faculties in regions and districts, and creating education boards in all regions. The education boards in every education region aim at giving a democratic character to the decision making process in education, to promote relationships among educators at all levels, and to open doors towards society. The education board is made of a General Director of Education as a chief, district directors and three members at least from the education body in tertiary institutions and faculties of education. One of the main tasks of the Board is to effectively participate in all matters related to improving education, namely what pertains to shedding the light on the role of education in society and preparing development programs.

The Saudi National Childhood Committee is drafting a general policy on the needs and activities related to children in the country, and coordinating the efforts of all agencies concerned with children affairs. The Committee regulates relationships between governmental entities, national associations and childhood institutions within the Kingdom, in order to reach complementarity and avoid duality; to formulate a national childhood strategy to assist the competent authorities in the Kingdom in promoting the different aspects of children's well being; to propose programs and projects for children to be implemented by public and private entities; to create a database containing all children related aspects within the Kingdom as well as update and exchange its data

with all relevant entities; to monitor the implementation of recommendations and decisions issued by the Supreme Council of Planning and the Follow-up Committee; and to monitor the activities of the regional and international childhood organisms and institutions and encourage researches and studies.

Moreover, the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (formerly known as the General Organization for Technical and Vocational Education and Training) is now supervising over technical and vocational education, as a result of the integration of training institutes and centers that were in the past under the supervision of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, so that all technical and vocational training institutions become under one umbrella. The decree promulgated by the Cabinet in 2005 has also merged women's training sector within this institution. The new decree stipulates that one of the institution's objectives is to develop national human resources in order to meet the job market needs through training.

Preschool education:

Kindergartens receive children between 3 and 5 years old and are not a part of the formal education ladder, for attending them is not a pre-requisite for enrolment in the first grade of primary education. Moreover, some private institutions have gotten technical and financial assistance from the State.

Primary education:

Children commence primary education at the age of six, and the duration of this cycle is six years. Some exceptions could be made for children who need three months to become six years old, especially if they were enrolled in pre-school education. It is worth noting that schools are not mixed and that ongoing evaluation is the system used in all primary education grades.

Secondary education:

The intermediate cycle follows the primary cycle and its duration is of three years (grades 7 to 9). Children who successfully complete this cycle obtain the intermediate cycle degree. Then comes the last cycle of general education, that is secondary education; it is made of three years (grades 10 to 12). During the first year of secondary education, students study the general curricula. However, in the second and third year, they can choose one of the following tracks: management and social sciences, natural sciences, or Sharia and Arabic studies. At the end of secondary education, the successful students obtain the secondary education degree. The technical and vocational education also provides training programs in the fields of industry, commerce and agriculture, usually for three years.

Higher education:

Universities, faculties and higher education institutions offer a range of programs and specializations in many areas. The technical faculties offer post-secondary training programs that result in a diploma (two-year programs) or a Bachelor degree (three-year programs). Usually, the duration of university programs that qualify students to obtain the Bachelor degree is of four years (five years for engineering, agriculture, pharmacy,

veterinary medicine, 5-6 for dentistry, six years for medicine and law). For postgraduate studies, usually a one year program is added to obtain a postgraduate diploma in education or the qualifying degree for teaching, while Masters' programs need two years and Ph. D programs three years.

The academic year in the KSA starts in September and ends in June. In the primary and intermediate cycles, the academic year is made of 160 working days or about 36 working weeks of five days each.

The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:

The consecutive development plans in the Kingdom have given a paramount importance to the human resources development, through supporting ongoing growth in the primary, intermediate, secondary and tertiary cycles. The same goes for pre- and in-service TVET.

1- The development of preschool education

The main aims of pre-school education include the following:

- a. Taking care of children's instincts as well as their moral, mental and physical growth in a normal environment similar to their families, and complying with Islam teachings.
- b. Getting children used to the school ambiance and preparing them to school life.
- c. Teaching children the basics that are convenient to their age and link them to their environment.
- d. Developing children's imaginary thinking, refining their taste and guiding their energy.
- e. Protecting children from danger, treating signs of unwanted behavior, and addressing childhood problems the right way.

Kindergartens have remarkably improved in the past years, thanks to the national policies and decisions that have called upon upholding kindergarten cycle and joining it to the educational ladder so it would become an independent cycle, with buildings separated from those of general education cycles. This way, they will be expanded, and effective curricula will be designed to reach their objectives, while benefiting from the private sector in contributing in their achievement.

To stress the importance of the kindergarten cycle, a series of new decisions was promulgated to found the necessary structure for expanding these kindergartens and improving their quality, based on the requirements of the labor department. In 2010, a supreme committee headed by the deputy Minister of Education for girls' affairs was formed to activate the aims of this cycle, via a strategic plan through which the goals of the Ministry's plan and development plan would be achieved. It has had a great impact

on monitoring challenges, improving the performance of the cycle and supporting its roles, among which:

- a. Encouraging the private sector through common programs to invest in kindergartens, such as the strategy for increasing the contribution of the private sector in pre-school education.
- b. Implementing awareness raising programs about the importance of this cycle in educational regions and districts until the aim is achieved.
- c. Many community partnerships working on raising awareness about the importance of investing in and activating this cycle.

The increase in social demand for kindergartens, the permanent position kindergartens got on the formal educational ladder and giving kindergartens all this importance predict an increase in the general enrolment rate. This also means an increase in the number of children enrolling in kindergarten that not only have to expand their capacity but, more importantly, to improve the educational and curriculum practices delivered to children.

In response to this expected expansion and these high hopes, it has become important to give more attention to qualitative competency, in order to ensure a quantitative expansion that would meet quality standards that scientific studies consider to be a pre-requisite to draw any benefits from kindergartens.

Box 8: Kindergarten development plans

Kindergarten curriculum project

Program description:

The program aims at providing kindergartens with curricula aligned with international standards and capable of building children's basic skills and preparing them for the study cycle; building the capacities of the Ministry's staff, female teachers, directors and kindergarten supervisors so that to apply the new curricula in all kindergartens throughout the Kingdom, in compliance with KSA's culture, and to provide the necessary support for the effective application of such curricula.

Most important achievements:

- Implementing pilot curricula in a number of kindergartens all over the Kingdom.
- Training the supervisors of educational regions in diverse standards.
- Training 580 female directors and supervisors in the basics of kindergarten.

Kindergarten curriculum development project:

One of the ten goals of the education development strategy is to "ensure early childhood education for all". This goal focuses on providing distinguished early childhood education, which is a key factor in developing quality education. Under this goal, there are other important goals that include expanding kindergartens, developing specialized curricula and ensuring professional development opportunities to female teachers.

Hence, the kindergarten cycle development program has progressed towards initiating the first project to achieve this goal, that is developing kindergarten curricula to apply the curriculum with high quality via cooperation with experts in the matter, by accomplishing the following:

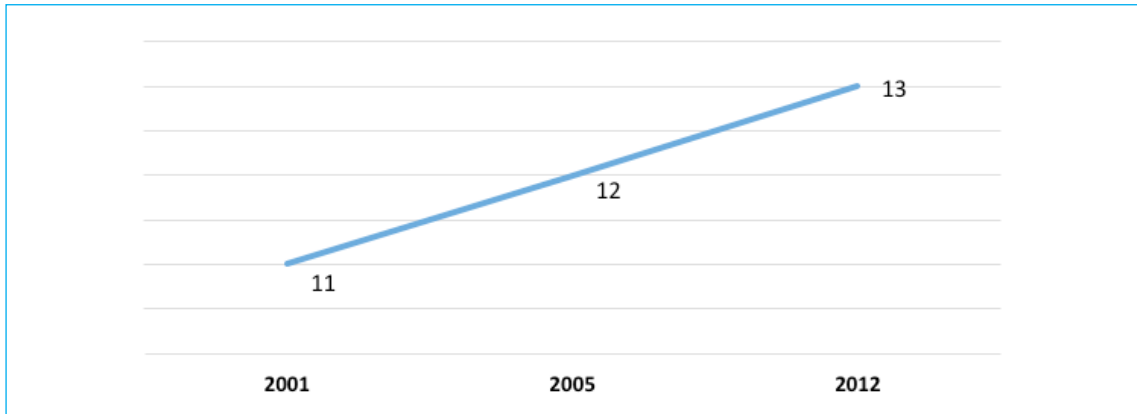
- Applying three curricula in five educational regions containing 50 kindergartens.
- Training 1000 female trainees, from female teachers, kindergarten leaders and supervisors of curriculum implementation, which account for 32 training sessions.
- Assigning a scientific team to measure the impact of curricula on the components of the children learning environment.

Project for designing kindergarten cycle development standards:

Due to the need for standards specific to kindergarten cycle that are built with the participation and accreditation of an entity that is specialized in the matter, and for building professional leaderships who would contribute in promoting and improving quality education within this cycle, an agreement was concluded with the NAEYC as follows:

- Elaborating a document for kindergarten developmental standards from 1 to 6 years old.
- Building the professional capacities of the kindergarten leaderships.
- Promoting quality education in the kindergarten cycle based on education accredited standards.
- His Highness' approval was given to expand and open 1500 kindergartens, which would receive 150 thousand children in the framework of the education development project (80 billion Riyals), as well as appoint 3500 female teachers. In the past two years, the number increased from 509 to 1548 for the public without the private, and the amount of the coupons paid to enroll in kindergartens was 10 million Riyals. This year, the approval was also given to grant 10 million educational coupons to enter private kindergartens under specific conditions that would guarantee justice and equilibrium.

Form 17: Gross enrolment ratio development in early childhood development programs (2001-2012)

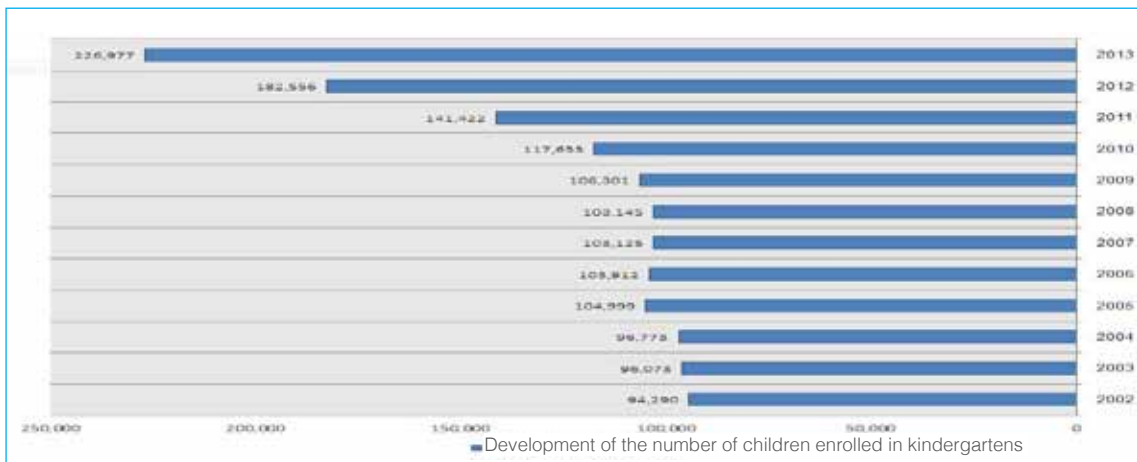


Source: 2001-2005 mid-decade report (2007), UNESCO 2012

The form clearly shows a minor increase in the gross enrolment ratio of children enrolling in kindergartens from the totality of children aged between 3 and 5 from 11% in 2001 to 13% in 2012. Although there was an increase in the number of enrolled children, this ratio still does not meet the expectations and aspirations of education officials in the Kingdom. This is why more attention is given to this cycle, through providing environments convenient for the implementation of advanced programs and female and male teachers specialized in early childhood. Decisions were made in view of considering kindergarten cycle independent with its buildings and equipment, which would help in the future increase of the enrolment rate.

The following form shows the increase in the number of children enrolled in kindergarten in an ascending way through the past three years. The number has increased by 55%, from 117653 children in 2010 to 226977 in 2013, while this increase has not gone beyond 25% in the past decade when the number was around 94290 children in 2002.

Form 18: Development of the number of children enrolled in early childhood



Source: MoE

18- The development of primary education

Primary cycle education aims at achieving many objectives, including:

- a. Instilling the correct Islamic faith in children's spirits and providing them with an education and feelings of belonging to an Islamic Nation.
- b. Developing the different basic skills, namely language, writing, calculus and physical skills.
- c. Developing a sense of responsibility to understand the rights and obligations within the limits of children's age and the specificities of their developmental phase, as well as promoting love of nation and loyalty to its rulers.
- d. Creating the will for children to learn and train to benefit from their spare time.

The Cabinet's decision number 139 was promulgated on 26/4/1425 H, making education compulsory between the ages of 6 and 15. The result would be equal opportunities, for this age category, for both Saudis and non-Saudi residents, which would block illiteracy sources, activate international declarations and conventions, and achieve education opportunities for both males and females without discrimination.

This law was accompanied by a number of procedures, including:

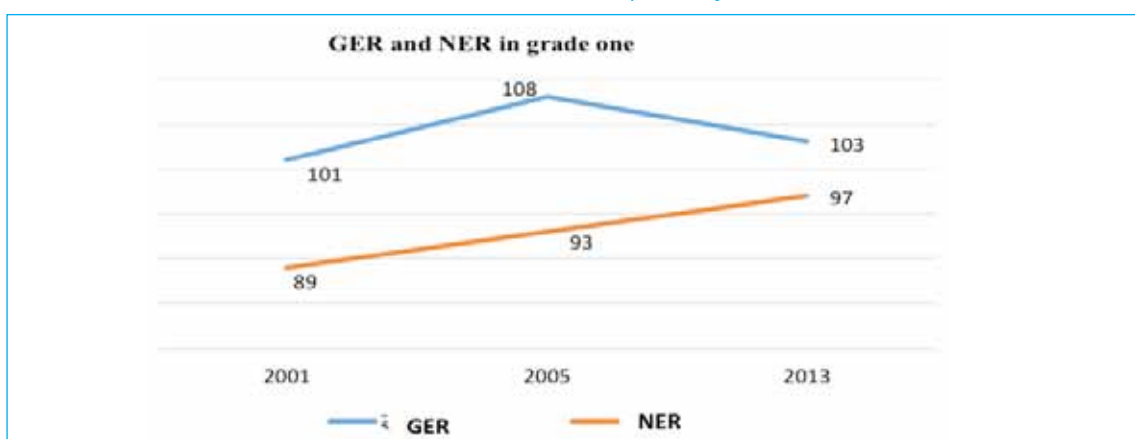
1. The guides and instructions of acceptance have contained the procedures that facilitate the acceptance of the category of students who do not have formal identities.
2. Adequate mechanisms were set out to solve the issues and problems of students with special needs that are accepted in schools, in a way to ensure their enrolment.
3. Preserving the child's rights in education in case of dispute between the parents.
4. Accepting the girls and boys of other religions in the public and other schools, without any discrimination.
5. It is compulsory that female students with special needs enroll in primary education within the general education. There are now 1703 institutes, with 5351 courses and 27439 male and female students who have hearing, sight or intellectual disabilities, autism or multiple disabilities.
6. Providing the necessary care to deprived children or children with special conditions.
7. The State supporting private education that requires paying tuition fees, through being responsible for a part of these fees. It also directly supervises private education to ensure quality.
8. The Kingdom has approved a safe school transportation system for students from both genders, to transport them from their place of residence to school.

The net enrolment rate (NER) shows the coverage of more than 100% of the necessary seats to receive all six year old children, which means that a part of the seats is occupied by younger or older children, due to early enrolment or repetition. The net enrolment rate also shows that the real participation for most of the six year old children reaches 94%, knowing that some children enroll early in the first grade.

Through the follow-up of the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in primary education in the past years within the Kingdom, it becomes clear how much efforts the Kingdom has put into improving the enrolment rate in primary education, such as facilitating the student enrolment procedures and their acceptance in all educational cycles, as well as ensuring transportation, rewards and aids to students. The KSA has also been working on providing school buildings, educational facilities and necessary equipment, in order to contain the increasing numbers in general education cycles.

The data in the following form show a remarkable increase in the gross enrolment ratio which covers the totality of students in the primary cycle that encompasses grades one to six in the Kingdom, with a capacity of 100%. Moreover, the number of children above or under the formal age in the primary cycle was reduced in the second half of the past decade to the benefit of the age category 6-11.

Form 19: GER and NER in primary education



Source: 2001-2005 Mid-decade report, UNESCO 2013

The NER expresses the reality of participation in primary education by children of the official age analogous to the age category of primary education, with a rate of 97% in 2013 including males and females, which is considered a quantum leap in comparison with 2001 when the rate was 89%.

Among the Ministry's priorities the optimal use of resources consecrated to ensure high quality education to all members of society. To this end, the necessary educational support was provided, such as reducing the numbers in overcrowded classrooms, training teachers, supplying textbooks and educational means, in order to diminish the wastage caused by grade repetition or drop-outs without acquiring reading and writing skills. The results of such support were manifested in the decrease of repetition rates and increase of retention rates until completion of primary education.

19- The development of secondary education

The main objectives of secondary education include the following:

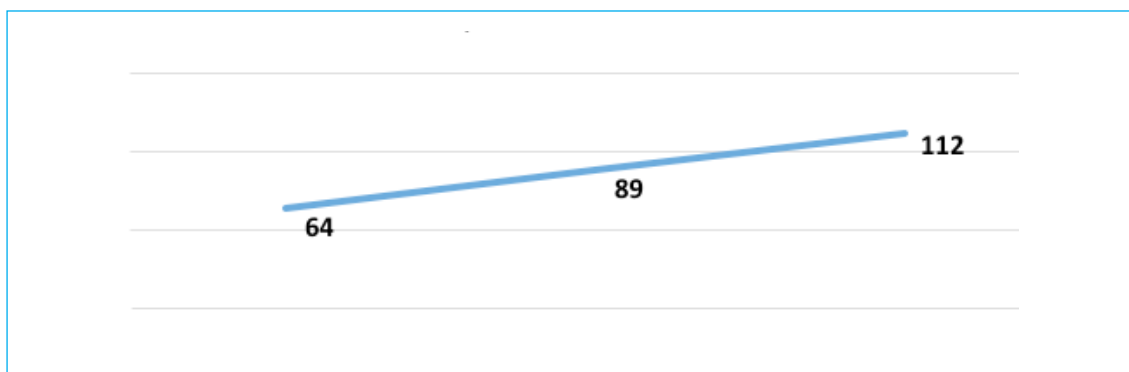
1. Provide students with the skills and knowledge convenient to their age and enable them to learn education general principles and basic rules.
2. Motivate students to search for knowledge through scientific thinking.
3. Develop, guide and refine students' different intellectual capacities and skills.
4. Raise the students according to Islamic social life, as well as cooperation, the feel of duty and assuming responsibility.
5. Motivate the ambition of students to recuperate the glory of the Islamic Nation they belong to, and resume the journey on the path of dignity and glory.
6. Develop students' scientific thinking, and instill the spirit of methodological research and analysis in them as well as the use of references and practice of good academic methods.
7. Make opportunities available to students and enable them to continue their studies in all specializations in institutes and universities.
8. Train students on investing their time in useful reading and religious activities.

There are different choices in secondary education: religious studies and the Arabic language, managerial and social studies, natural sciences and applied (technological) sciences. There are secondary education schools with a religious orientation (Memorizing the Holy Quran schools), such as the schools affiliated to the Islamic University of Imam Muhammad Bin Saud, secondary Quranic schools and Dar Al-Tawheed secondary school. In addition, 34 vocational training centers offer two-year training programs in different areas.

The State seeks to satisfy the needs of youth within the system that is preparing human resources in technical and vocational areas, since there is more need to rehabilitate Saudi youth in technical and industrial areas. There is also an urgent need for national staff with international qualifications to be able to implement the requirements of the State's ambitious plans, which is why it is necessary to give more attention to technical education in the technical faculties and open higher education tracks in order to fulfill the needs and demands of the youth.

Widening the basis of secondary education is considered a guarantee of the basic education success. When it is spread in all the regions of the KSA, parents will understand why it is useful to send their children to school, where they will have the chance to complete their post basic education, especially girls. In secondary education, students' critical and creative thinking skills are refined, which enables them to acquire sophisticated knowledge that qualifies them to pursue higher education.

Form 20: Secondary education enrolment rate



Source: Ministry of Education 2001, UNESCO 2005-2013

The form above shows the quick expansion of secondary education, since the capacity of secondary education institutions is higher than the volume of inhabitants in age of secondary education. In 2013, the NER was 112% with an increase of 23 percentage points compared to 2005. The same trend is noticed in the development since 2001. This development reflects the efforts by the Ministry to provide secondary education that is equal to the development in basic education.

Although the KSA is continuing to promote technical and vocational education to fulfill the needs and demands of the youth, through the establishment of the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation, it remains that technical education has not yet met the level of attention given to general secondary education. Consequently, the available data show that the enrolment rate in technical and vocational education has not exceeded 4%.

The Technical and Vocational Training Corporation is in charge of preparing, rehabilitating and developing the human resources in the Kingdom. Thus, it needs to accompany the requirements of the era and its quick changes. The Corporation has conducted many studies in partnership with international experts, which led to adopting many developmental initiatives that would contribute in the Corporation's work and take it to the level of advanced countries. The result was the creation of the Program Management Office (PMO) to implement a number of strategic initiatives in cooperation with international experts, based on the following initiatives:

Table 28: PMO for technical and vocational training

Establishing international faculties that would be a new framework for the partnership between the public and private sectors	<p>Leadership in this kind of faculties for service providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First group of training service providers to establish the faculties within the new model starting September 2013 • Come up with new funding mechanisms
Developing strategic partnerships	<p>Leadership of this kind of faculties for the private sector enterprises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure the mechanisms of search for employers in order to create strategic partnerships • Training is delivered by international service providers
Improving the existing technical faculties	<p>Develop mechanisms to increase competence and improve services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop trainers' capacities • Develop managerial processes • Develop training curricula
Establishing the National Center for Evaluation and Professional Accreditation	<p>Develop standards for national skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply institutional accreditation to all training units • Apply benchmarking tests to all graduates • Evolve society's perception of vocational and technical training

4- Teachers provision and training

Universities are playing their role fully in preparing and training teachers. The faculties of education within these universities have aimed at preparing qualified staff and promoting the educational and professional levels of general education teachers as well as school principals and directors, through delivering different training courses in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

Universities also train teachers in different specializations, hold training sessions to primary and intermediate school principals and provide sessions to teachers who do not have the necessary qualifications. The minimum required to teach in all educational levels is a Bachelor degree after four years of study. The faculties of education in Saudi universities ensure curricula that are rich with theories and methods of teaching. They also include sections specialized in mathematics, physics, biology, English language, Arabic language, Islamic studies, etc.

Aware of the importance of material and social incentives and of their big role in motivating teachers, a special staff was appointed for education personnel, including teachers, schools principals and their deputies, laboratory technicians, library curators and student counsellors. Moreover, the maternity leave for female teachers was extended to two months fully paid.

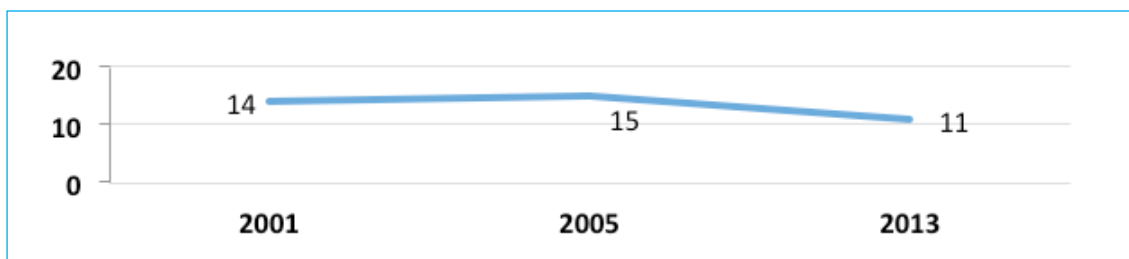
The educational system in the Kingdom is distinguished by the fact that all male and female school teachers hold qualifications that enable them to teach following the ap-

pointment requirements. The levels of required qualifications have gone through many developments that reflect the general improvement of education in the Kingdom. The currently applied standards are more advanced and of better quality for male and female graduates who would like to enroll in education as a profession, such as the condition of having educational university qualifications, where they represent more than 90%.

The MoE is preparing long term plans to train male and female teachers while they are in-service. The annual growth rate of the training budget for both males and females is actually high in view of achieving these objectives. In addition, there is ongoing development of male and female teachers' performance evaluation standards to improve their performance level. In the Kingdom, there are no teachers who volunteer to teach in public or private schools. They are all officially appointed, since the KSA is fully committed to public financing of education and to subsidies to the private education sector.

The number of male and female teachers in the KSA has rapidly grown in the past years. In the past ten years, the number of primary education male teachers has increased by 20%, the number of female teachers by 15%, the number of male students by 5% and female students by 11% only, which means an improvement in the pupils to teacher ratio.

Form 21: Pupil to teacher ratio

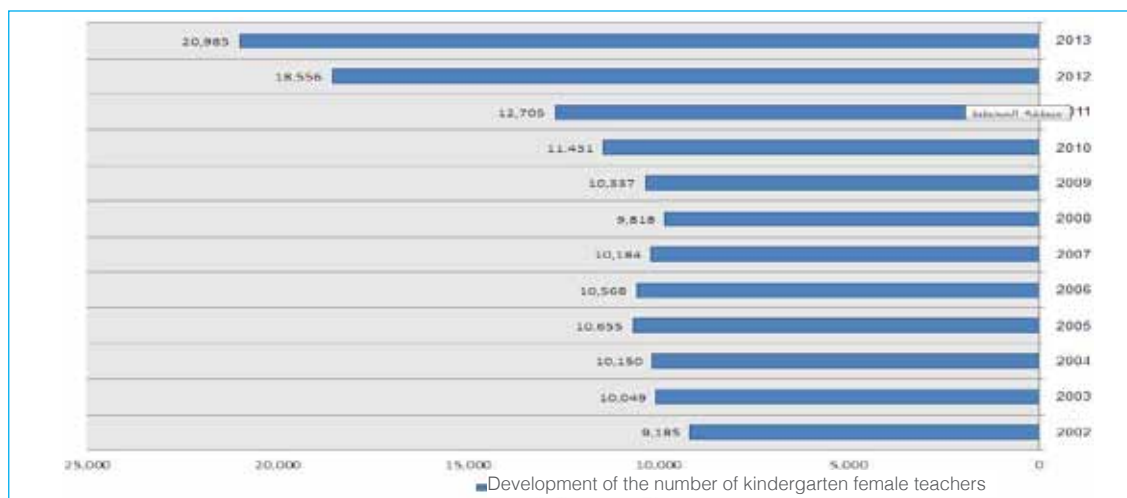


Source: 2001-2005 Mid-decade report, UNESCO 2013

The data in the form above show an improvement in the pupils to teacher ratio in the primary cycle by three points since the launching of education for all in 2000. So in 2013 a ratio of 11 pupils to a teacher was registered. This ratio is an incentive to improve the quality of primary education, where the teachers were able to provide some kind of individualized tutoring to male and female students, where they could consider their individual differences, which increases their chance of acquiring skills, sciences and knowledge adequate to their capacities and their mental, emotive and physical growth.

Due to the increasing influx of children enrolling in kindergartens, it was necessary to provide enough female teachers to preserve the quality of the educational environment as shown in the following graph.

Form 22: Development of the number of kindergarten female teachers



Source: MoE

Consequently, the number of female teachers in the same period has increased by 84%, from 11431 in 2010 to 20985 in 2013. While this increase had not exceeded 24% in the past decade when there were about 9185 female teachers in 2002.

This big effort of providing a big number of female teachers during a short period was reflected in the quality of learning environment. This also shows the great attention the MoE pays to this education cycle, for it has made sure that the female pupils to female teacher ratio would not exceed 11 pupils/teacher. In 2013, this ratio was fixed at 10 female pupils/female teacher.

5- Adult education programs

Literacy is essential to adults' socio-economic well being and that of their children. For the implementation of policies and strategies designed by the State for adult education and literacy, the MoE has taken several measures, including:

▲ **Establishing the General Directorate for Adult Education**

The General Directorate for Adult Education was established within the MoE. The first regulations about adult education were issued via a Royal Decree in 1392 H. The main task of the Directorate is designing literacy programs.

▲ **Providing adult education and literacy all over the KSA**

Both Directorates for boys and girls literacy programs conduct on a yearly basis a field survey by education directorates for the places of agglomeration of male and female illiterates; determine the needs from the literacy and adult education centers; and open these centers to the illiterates under the relevant regulatory controls.

▲ **Disbursing motivating rewards to male and female illiterates to engage in education**

The Ministry of Finance allocates yearly around 190 million Riyals. The more the growth of literacy and adult education programs increases, the more this figure increas-

es. A part of it is disbursed as motivating rewards for illiterates who have completed the literacy and adult education program; non-employees get one thousand Riyals, while employees get 500 Riyals each.

Box 9: Direct and indirect incentives for adult education

Convinced of the importance of all kinds of incentives in the success of literacy and adult education programs, the State has ensured a number of incentives, including:

- a. 1000 Saudi Riyals to every person who successfully passes one of the informal literacy programs.
- b. A financial reward of 1000 Saudi Riyals to every person who successfully completes the formal literacy program in the “Literacy Center”.
- c. The learner obtains a Certificate of Completion of the “Society without illiteracy” program after having completed one of the informal literacy projects, and obtains a Primary Education Certificate after having successfully completed the formal literacy program.
- d. The illiterate who completes the primary cycle will have the chance to enroll in adult intermediate and secondary cycles.
- e. The law on adult education of 1392 H has given society the opportunity to participate in financing literacy and adult education programs, and in offering incentives and rewards through the contribution of Ministries, governmental departments and private institutions, while opening the door of volunteership before individuals and CSOs.

▲ Benefiting from ongoing evaluation results

The evaluation of literacy and adult education programs is used in addressing negative points and strengthening positive ones, until these programs achieve their objectives and those of the people enrolled in them.

▲ Seeking diversified programs that would fit the needs of the illiterates

The MoE is seeking for diversified programs that would fit the needs, capacities and potentials of the illiterates, achieve their ambitions, and allow them to enroll in these programs characterized with flexibility and easy access to illiterates wherever they are.

▲ Awareness raising campaigns about literacy

They target a category of the society that lives in the Badia and remote areas, and which life is characterized by instability. They are offered educational, religious, cultural, social and health programs to improve their level in all areas.

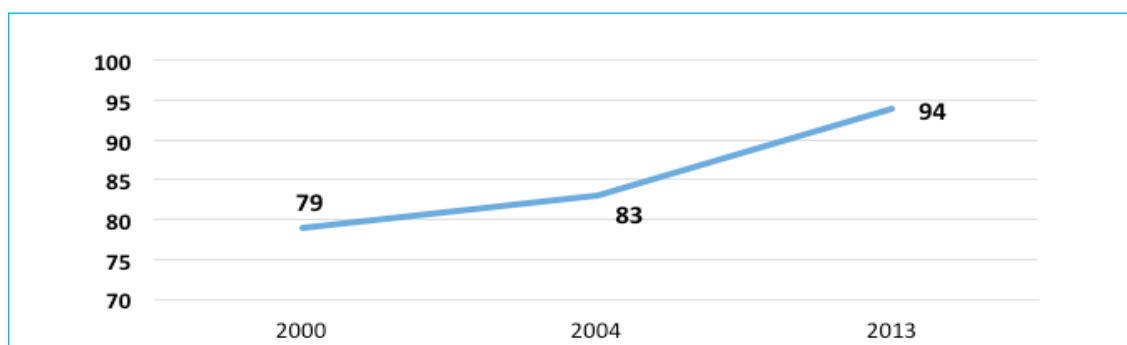
▲ Improving the qualification level of male and female teachers working in literacy and adult education

This is carried out through cooperation with universities to open sections for adult education and find compulsory hours to be taught by students in faculties of education specialized in adult education and ongoing learning, in view of raising their compe-

tency and capacities, as well as providing them with necessary skills, knowledge and updates pertaining to adult education and literacy.

All these measures aim at eliminating illiteracy, which is proven by the increase of adult literacy rates. This shows the human wealth the KSA has and that it is capable of achieving development and socio-economic wellbeing.

Form 23: Adult literacy rate



Source: MoE

The data of the form above show an increase in adult literacy rate (15 years and above) that has reached 94% in 2013, which means that illiteracy touches only 6% of the totality of inhabitants of the said age category, while it was 21% and 17% consecutively in 2000 and 2004. This development means that the KSA has exceeded the target of the EFA's fourth objective that has set the reduction of illiteracy rates by half.

This clear growth in literacy rates demonstrates the great attention the State pays to literacy and the huge efforts made by the MoE to improve these rates. Literacy programs constitute an advanced priority in KSA educational project, offer incentives that encourage adults, specifically women, to enroll in literacy schools, and conduct yearly summer campaigns aiming at eradicating illiteracy in the Badia in-situ, through executive plans prepared to this end. All of this confirms that the Kingdom, represented by the MoE will continue working on spreading education and literacy all over its territory, through the yearly executive plans that are designed to this end.

6- Programs supporting quality education

Quality education is the ultimate objective of every educational system seeking to generate a human wealth capable of improving socio-economic development and achieving well being. Being convinced of this objective, the Cabinet's decision number 120 of 22/4/1434 H was made to establish and regulate the General Education Evaluation Authority and its tasks. The decision stipulates that the governmental authority has an independent legal status and is the regulatory body in charge of public and private general education evaluation processes in KSA. By virtue of this decision, the Authority is linked to the Prime Minister and under the supervision of the Board of directors headed by his Excellency the Governor of the Authority. Its members come from all parties

related to the educational process, in addition to the specialists and representatives of the private educational sector.

The Authority, through its Board of directors, works in partnership and positive institutional interaction with relevant public and private entities on issuing regulations, laws and certification, and on setting out the necessary standards for evaluation processes in all their different levels within the relevant laws.

The Ministry of Education has started working on plans aiming at raising the standards for student evaluation specifically and the evaluation standards generally. The main objective of the whole school evaluation program is to acknowledge the contribution of schools in improving the students' achievement level, behavioral patterns and skills, as outlined in the Kingdom's educational policy. Thus, the General Directorate for measurement and evaluation has set out a number of diagnostic tests including Arabic language and mathematics to grades 1 to 3, in order to determine the learning difficulties students face in Arabic language and mathematics, prepare remedial programs and adequate teaching methods, and train teachers on using additional means and methods to identify their students' problems.

The goals and objectives of the project rely on the basics and principles of the Kingdom's educational system, as well as on the content and objectives of curricula. Topics covered by these tests include the subjects of Islamic education, Arabic language, mathematics and sciences. The Ministry has set out a list of basic requirements (knowledge and skills) the students are supposed to achieve by the end of the primary cycle. The lists of requirements are based on analysis of teaching subjects' content in the classes of the primary cycle. These requirements are not limited to curricula in grade six only, but encompass basic knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire whether they were in grade six or former grades. Based on this analysis, a list of specifications was produced, in addition to three patterns of tests.

This curriculum has created an overall improvement in repetition rates in the primary cycle grades, due to the interest in this cycle. It has also led to the improvement of the student evaluation quality. Hence, the ongoing evaluation regulations were improved, in addition to ameliorations in curricula, buildings and adequate equipment. Moreover, the provision of a sufficient number of teachers in a ratio that does not exceed 11 pupils to one teacher is considered an incentive to improve quality education, since the teacher would be able to ensure some kind of individualized tutoring to students.

Furthermore, providing improved water as well as sports and sanitation utilities in each school ensures adequate learning conditions. The MoE has set out conditions and standards in public and rented schools, in order to guarantee a healthy educational environment. In addition, the Ministry provides the necessary textbooks to all students and for free.

Concerning KSA participation in international evaluations, the results of TIMSS 2011 show that the Kingdom ranks in the middle among Arab States in sciences and less in mathematics. However, they have shown a remarkable improvement compared to the total of students' scores in the performance at the last test in 2007.

Sultanate of Oman



The development of education in the Sultanate of Oman

General principles and objectives of the educational system

In accordance with the Statute of the Sultanate, which went into effect in November 1996, "Education is the cornerstone in the progress of society, sponsored by the State, seeking to disseminate it and make it available to the public. The purpose of Education is to raise the bar and develop the general cultural level; strengthen scientific thinking and to enrich the quest for research; respond to the requirements of economic and social planning; create an environment for a strong generation that is physically and mentally fit, proud of its nation and heritage and one that will defend its achievements. The State is the purveyor of public education, combatting illiteracy and encouraging the establishment of private schools and institutes under its supervision in compliance with the provisions of the law" (Article 13).

As for the Vision for the Omani economy (Oman: 2020), it calls for the provision of basic education free of charge for all citizens through an efficient and cost-effective system; the exertion of efforts to improve the quality of basic education by increasing the number of study hours in scientific subject matters such as mathematics, natural sciences, telecommunications, English language as of primary school; and for the need for providing and promoting technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for the graduates of general education in all of its aspects in order to address the needs of the labor market insofar as the various technical specialties.

The Vision of the Ministry of Education (MoE) indicates the need to improve the educational environment for the administration staff, teachers and students in schools with the view of setting the stage for them to collaborate towards the creation of a solid next generation. This generation will be have a good work ethic, be loyal to the nation, able to pursue on-going education, co-exist with others and respond to the needs of the labor market with commitment and responsibility in order for the Vision to accomplish its mission in preparing the next generation that can achieve social and economic growth for society through the improvement in teaching methods and learning, school management; the supply of human and financial resources; curricula and facilities; high quality assessment tools; premium care for the various segments of students during the school year along with the deployment of high technology to keep pace with the Oman digital society and granting a bigger role to the private sector and the local community in promoting educational services.

The Vision of the Ministry of Manpower also indicates the need to provide and develop technical and vocational education and training (TVET); expand the educational and training programs and disciplines and tie them directly to the needs of the labor market; the development of training curricula in accordance with professionally accredited standards and levels; grant qualifications and encourage in-service training; follow-up with graduates to advise them of employment opportunities; contribute to the national effort to provide guidance programs and vocational counseling; increase the awareness related to the value of employment and its practices; foster a spirit of the individual citizen initiatives (Website of the Ministry of Manpower).

Included in these goals sought by the eighth five-year plan are the following:

- The development of the education system in accordance with quality standards consistent with the educational goals and policies.
- Develop a study plan and curricula to ensure an learning outcome consistent with growth aspirations and the labor market demands.
- Raise the efficiency of the student performance assessment to upgrade their learning achievement.
- Raise the efficiency of human resources and upgrade their skill level
- Expand the use of technology to keep pace with the strategy of Oman's digital society.
- Increase the enrollment rate in pre-school education by 50% for the age group 3.5 to 5.5.
- Reduce current illiteracy rate by 50%.
- Raise the efficiency of the psychological, social, health and professional programs offered to the students.
- Expand the achievement rate by providing equal educational opportunities for persons with disabilities, special needs and gifted students.

Management of the Educational System

The MoE, Ministry of Higher Education and Sultan Qaboos University are the authorities responsible for the preparation, design and implementation of educational policies in the Sultanate. The MoE operates on three levels: the central level, the local level represented by the educational departments at the governorates and school level. The school is considered an independent administrative entity subject to the direct supervision of the local educational authority.

The Ministry of Higher Education supervises post-secondary education in universities, institutes and colleges; it also oversees the award of scholarships abroad, meanwhile the Ministry of Manpower is in charge of technical industrial colleges in the post-secondary level as well as vocational training institutes. The Ministry of Social Affairs supervises kindergartens that are managed by voluntary organizations, while private kindergartens that are managed by the private sector are under the control of the MoE, keeping in mind that nurseries are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Development.

The MoE also implements a number of central tasks such as planning educational policies, defining educational goals and implementing the strategies, plans and projects that lead to the achievement of such goals. The Directorate General of curricula which is part of the Ministry has the sole responsibility of developing the national curricula that

are applied in all public schools. The private schools have a choice in implementing the Ministry's curricula or adopting accredited curricula that are affiliated with international programs. The MoE also supervises and controls both levels; local and school in order to ensure that the educational policies are implemented in accordance with its plans.

The organizational structure of the Ministry contains three main branches: an executive branch focused on the implementation of key activities, an advisory branch focused on monitoring activities and a support staff branch. Recently a central Human Resources Development Department (HRDD) was established in order to plan, implement and follow-up in-service training opportunities according to the reform plan. At the local level, the Ministry established training centers in every local educational center to oversee training activities.

The Ministry supports decentralization of management and encourages decision-making at the local level in order to improve performance and ensure quick response time and immediate action instead of waiting for central directives. In this regard, the establishment of local departments of education took place throughout the eleven different regions; these departments are empowered to manage and implement the education system. The MoE has also formed a council consisting of local department managers and director generals from the ministry to study issues related to the process of education in the country. In addition, parents councils participate in matters related to the process of education within its own districts at the local level.

In 1993, the ministry delegated the responsibility of school administration to local educational administrative bodies and school staff. Consequently, the school administration was formed to include a school principal, assistant principal, teachers, administrative staff and non-specialized staff. In order to ensure compliance with the principles of participation in the management of the school, the school charter calls for the support staff that consist of the school administration council, student councils, parent-teachers associations to support the school principal in the management of the school with the view of achieving the educational goals.

Ministerial Decree Number 2/2006 permitted schools to self-manage and enabled them to self-govern in administrative, financial and technical related matters. The objective of establishing self-managed schools is to give a greater role to the schools and their staff in the planning, implementation and follow-up of activities and propose programs that improve school performance.

In the school year 1998/ 1999, the Ministry introduced a new educational system for a period of ten years to be gradually implemented encompassing basic education in two cycles, then followed by post-basic education for two years.

The Board of Education that was established by Royal Decree No. 48/2012 plays a major role in the coordination amongst the institutions charged with the implementation of educational programs. The Council is focused on the design of the overall policy of education in its various forms and levels and the work to provide direction to the educational system in line with the general policy of the state and the requirements of comprehensive development in order to achieve the cultural, social, economic and scientific objectives of the Sultanate. The Board of Education is required to coordinate with the

relevant councils and develop a strategy for education in the framework of the general policy of the state, follow-up and assess the quality of education in its various forms and levels, take all necessary measures to ensure the quality of education outcomes, review and approve of the establishment of educational institutions in various forms and levels and follow-up on implementation in coordination with the competent authorities. The Board includes two representatives from all agencies charged with education in the Sultanate and holds regular meetings.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) includes nurseries which commences at the age of three months until three and a half years and is supervised by the Ministry of Social Development, then kindergarten and preschool which start at the age of three years and two months to the age of five years and two months and are supervised by the MoE. The implementation of this type of education is carried out either through the private sector by supporting and facilitating its activities in the establishment of nurseries and private schools for this cycle or through some government agencies that provide nurseries and private schools or through some volunteer organizations such as the Omani Women and some CSOs. The MoE has begun to establish preparatory grades in basic education schools starting at the age of four years and eight months.

Primary education lasts for six years whereby children are enrolled at the age of six and in accordance with the new system, basic education lasts for ten years organized in two cycles; the first one includes grades 1 to 4 and the second grades 5 to 10 whereby basic education is free for all followed by secondary education lasting for two years.

Public education which prevailed prior to the application of the basic education system lasts for 12 years of general education and includes grades one through twelve. This system started to regress with the expansion of universal basic education therefore; the Ministry sought to narrow the gap between the two systems through standardization of curricula, teaching strategies, assessment methods and the unification of the educational environment including tools and systems that help teachers in performing their mission.

Higher education is offered in Sultan Qaboos University and several colleges and institutes that specialize in post-secondary education. The Omani national qualifications framework (ratified in 2005 and revised in 2008) allows for one-year programs to yield associate degrees, two-year programs to university diplomas while three-year programs to higher diplomas. Bachelor's degree studies usually last four years (five years in the case of architecture and engineering while medical degree studies last for no less than five and one-half years). Postgraduate diplomas require an additional year of study beyond the Bachelor's degree and two years for a Master's degree; two to four years are required for doctoral degrees.

General education consists of thirty-six working weeks (180 working days) and is divided into two semesters separated by a mid-year break.

The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:

The statute of the state and the future economic vision of Oman (Oman 2020) each indicate the State's commitment to provide educational services for all, according to the principles of justice and non-discrimination among citizens through the provision of efficient and effective free basic education for all (EFA) to all citizens.

1- The development of pre-primary education

In 2008, The Sultanate prepared a preliminary draft of a comprehensive strategy for Childhood however; the progress of work in the completion of this strategy stopped as the Ministry of Social Development started preparing a comprehensive national strategy for social work that encompassed Childhood and other sectors' strategies. It was also part of the preparation of the Supreme Council for Planning of a strategy for social policies. All of these efforts come together to form the Social Observatory Research Program.

But in 2013, work on the National Strategy for Children was reenacted in collaboration with the various government and private agencies through thematic studies that contain various information and data related to the childhood sector in the Sultanate, and expose the needs that require intervention and plans and programs requiring development to advance the level of services, programs and activities offered to the children of the Sultanate. In preparation of this strategy (2015- 2025) simultaneously with the two five-year plans, the ninth and tenth workshops were held to discuss the objectives and strategic axes.

The targets of pre-school education can be summarized as follows:

1. To promote intellectual, spiritual, emotional, social, and ethical development suitable for the child's personality.
2. To promote Islamic principles, promote the Arabic language and develop children's affiliation to their country and its traditions and various attributes.
3. To promote positive behavior, attitudes and the spirit of cooperation among children.
4. Develop children's tendencies towards the arts.
5. To prepare children to exercise their minds in terms of intellectual and social skills, such as the abilities to classify, compare and comprehend chronology.
6. To provide opportunities for children to achieve their greatest potential in the expression of their feelings.
7. To prepare children for school education.

The tools of the developed Omani curriculum for the kindergarten cycle are based on the teacher's guide which has 6 components: the curriculum of self-education for kindergarten; the curriculum of operations, opportunities and outcomes; guidance of children's behavior; organization of the rural environment; achievement of the children's program; and the development of an interactive system between Kindergarten and home.

As part of its efforts to develop education and improve learning outcomes, the MoE is working to develop advanced curricula for the Kindergarten level based on self-learning and teaching the Omani children to respect their environment, cultural and heritage.

The enrollment rates ratios in Kindergarten for children 4 to 5 years old evolved; the net enrollment rate in pre-school ranged between 6.5% and 8.2% between 2000/2001 and 2005/2006. These ratios pertain only to students in private schools which are supervised by the MoE. There are also students enrolled in other centers like the associations of women, homes for child's development, and Kindergarten centers for the police and air force amongst other services. Data from these centers were not available for these academic years but in aggregate form. Detailed data became available starting in 2006/2007 at which time it was noted a rise in the NER from 21.9% in 2006/2007 to 41.7% in 2011/2012, as shown in the following table.

Table: 29: Preschool enrolment rates for children 4-5 years old

Academic year	GER			NER		
	M	F	Average	M	F	Average
2000 /2001	7.8	7.0	7.4	6.9	6.2	6.5
2005 /2006	11.2	10.4	10.8	8.5	7.9	8.2
2006 /2007	39.1	41.4	40.2	19.4	24.6	21.9
2010 /2011	54.2	54.7	54.4	41.2	40.9	41.0
2011 /2012	54.0	54.0	54.0	42.0	41.4	41.7

Source: MoE. Statistics and Indicators Administration

In November 2008, the MoE launched a national awareness campaign in collaboration with various stakeholders in the Sultanate on Early Childhood Education (in collaboration with UNICEF and the private sector) which lasted for an entire year to raise awareness about the importance of education in early childhood as a way to increase the averages in enrollment rate of children in this cycle.

In 2013 the MoE issued the Ministerial Decree No. 771 forming joint teams for the implementation of the activities of the national campaign for early childhood (0-8) in collaboration with UNICEF and other agencies in the state that will work on the development of the strategic plan for the implementation of the national pre-school education campaign. These teams will have overall supervisory responsibility in cooperation with an expert organization to carry out the campaign; prepare scientific and media related material for the campaign; and oversee the preparation of IT profiles for the pre-school education cycle.

2- The development of basic education

The basic education program (for ten years) is aimed at the development of the various personal aspects of the student in a comprehensive and integrated framework of the principles of the Islamic faith and the elements of the cultural identity of Oman.

The main objectives of the curriculum can be summarized as follows:

1. Develop a balanced personality of the student physically, mentally, socially, spiritually and emotionally.
2. Entrench the principles of Islamic values in the mind of the students; raise their practice of worship and their commitment to proper Islamic conduct.
3. Solidify the students' pride in the Arabic language and develop their ability to use it properly.
4. Raise awareness as to the importance of social controls and respect for public and private property.
5. Develop students' communication skills by learning a foreign language (English).
6. Develop the student's skills in terms of continuous self-learning.
7. Develop the critical thinking method.
8. Provide the student with basic skills needed to interact with modern science and technology.
9. Enhance the ability to develop creativity and innovation and to deal with the future.
10. Provide students with values and practices that preserve the environment.
11. Enhance the spirit of creativity and aesthetic taste.
12. Promote the values of tolerance, mutual understanding, peace and coexistence.

Basic education has nearly reached all Omani citizens whereby enrollment averages in are high among Omani citizens compared to middle-income countries. The averages in school enrollment in the Sultanate of Oman have risen significantly over the past four decades and the MoE has exerted a great deal of effort from the time that it made its commitment to the six EFA goals. The progress has become evident in the growth in the adjusted net enrollment rate (ANER) for children (1-6 years) from 91.7% in 2000 to 98.1% in 2011/2012 which means a significant expansion has taken place in the provision of educational services and the establishment of schools in rural areas.

Table 30: Basic education enrolment rates (1-6)

Academic year	GER			NER			ANER		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
2000	102.6	98.0	100.3	90.2	89.2	89.7	92.0	91.3	91.7
2005	100.1	99.5	99.8	89.3	90.2	89.7	91.7	92.9	92.3
2010	102.9	102.0	102.5	95.9	95.1	95.5	98.4	97.2	97.8
2011	103.1	102.3	102.7	96.1	95.4	95.8	98.6	97.5	98.1

Source: MoE. Statistics and Indicators Administration

The expansion process in universal basic education of high quality requires renewed efforts in the establishment and opening of new schools to accompany the trend in population growth and the needs of educational development at the same time. The close cooperation between the MoE, the Ministry of Health and the Directorate General of Civil Status at the Royal Oman Police (birth and mortality statistics) has contributed in the availability of important statistics related to birth and mortality rates which in turn contributed to the promotion of educational planning accuracy and the ability of the education system to accommodate the growing numbers of children enrolled in the educational system in various educational provinces.

3- The development of secondary education

Post-basic education is a two-year system of schooling, following the basic education cycle which takes ten academic years. Secondary education aim at continuing the development of basic and professional skills and career path for students and prepare them to be productive members of society able to take advantage of educational, training and job opportunities upon graduation.

The main objectives of the post-basic education cycle can be summarized as follows:

1. Promote a sense of belonging to the nation, the community, the Arabian Gulf and the Islamic world.
2. Ensure adherence to the principles and values of Islam and the consolidation of spiritual values in the minds of students.
3. Develop pride in the Arabic language, the expansion of education and mastery of arts along with sufficient skills in an international communication language.
4. Raise awareness about global trends, benefit from the experience of others in the light of Islamic values.
5. Develop intellectual and cognitive skills, problem-solving skills, employ science in practical life and appropriate decision making.
6. Develop positive attitudes towards productive and volunteer work and respect of property.
7. Develop the spirit of continuous learning and search for knowledge.
8. Develop the ability to interact with others in peace, social participation on the basis of enlightened awareness of the rights and social obligations and high spirit of responsibility.
9. Raise the level of awareness for health and environmental issues.

It is noted in the following table a rise in the gross enrollment rate in post-basic education (grades 11-12) to 95.6% in the academic year 2011/2012 compared with 73.4% in the academic year 2000/2001. The adjusted net enrollment rates (ANER) indicate that 89.2% of the population aged between 15 and 17 years are enrolled in the public and private education systems in 2011/2012, with a natural preference for males in all of the last five years in terms of demographics.

Table 31: Enrolment rates by grades (7-9) and (10-12)

Academic year	grades	GER			ANER		
		M	F	Gross	M	F	Gross
2000	Grades (7-9)	101.6	93.4	97.6	91.3	88.9	90.1
	Grades (10-12)	69.7	77.3	73.4	76.3	76.1	76.2
	Gross rate	85.6	85.3	85.5	83.8	82.5	83.2
2005	Grades (7-9)	99.9	93.5	96.7	88.9	89.9	89.4
	Grades (10-12)	85.6	82.0	83.8	82.0	75.5	78.8
	Gross rate	92.7	87.7	90.3	85.5	82.7	84.1
2010	Grades (7-9)	99.4	98.7	99.1	95.6	94.8	95.2
	Grades (10-12)	96.2	94.9	95.6	89.3	89.0	89.1
	Gross rate	97.8	96.8	97.3	92.5	91.9	92.2
2011	Grades (7-9)	99.5	98.9	99.3	95.7	95.0	95.4
	Grades (10-12)	96.2	95.1	95.6	89.3	89.1	89.2
	Gross rate	97.8	97.0	97.4	92.5	92.1	92.3

Source: Source: MoE. Statistics and Indicators Administration

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector in the Sultanate of Oman experienced a qualitative leap after the second UNESCO World Conference on Technical and Vocational Education and Training, which was held in Seoul in 1999. The Conference emphasized the importance of TVET as a key element to economic and social development and at which time guidance was provided on TVET reform to meet the growing challenges of globalization of economies and labor markets and the societies of the twenty-first century. In order to implement the strategic objectives of human resources development, the Ministry of Manpower enacted a number of executive procedures to further develop the vocational education in the Sultanate, so in 2012 the following took place:

1. Determine three tracks of vocational education in the Sultanate consisting of a group of educational programs, namely: (formal education, apprenticeships, and short courses).
2. Include vocational education programs in the system of the Higher Education Admission Centre serve as scholarships for higher education.
3. Issue a Ministerial Decree making the vocational diploma functionally equivalent to diplomas of technical colleges in terms of financial classification in accordance with the civil service system.
4. Create a vocational training centre in Al Buraimi governorate and admit the first group of students in this centre as of November 2012 in accordance with the path of a vocational education diploma.
5. Form specialized committees, numbering 22, for technical and supervisory purposes to review and track the system of vocational education in its various stages.
6. Admission of females to enrol in most training specialties in the various centres and institutes.

Box 10: Oman Challenge - (Outward Bound Oman)

The Oman Challenge (Outward Bound Oman Challenge program seeks since its inception in 2009 to take advantage of the energies of young people and enable them to develop their skills in the field of self-discovery, teamwork and management, where a number of regular trips were made to different places in the Sultanate, including Green Mountain, White valley and the sands of Al Wahiba, with the participation of a number of students from various provinces. The aim was to highlight the sense of adventure and challenge and how to use scientific methods to overcome such challenges with the help of specialists in this field, in order to equip them with a set of skills related to self-confidence, determination, struggle, problem solving ability, as well as effective communication skills, time management, decision-making and teamwork.

The program is implemented by the MoE which is represented by the National Career Guidance Center in cooperation with Outward Bound Oman. Outward Bound is the organizing company of the Oman Challenge program which is an international program implemented in 39 countries. Oman is the only Arab country applying this program given the unique landscape of the Sultanate, from the mountains to the desert and seas, rendering it a suitable environment for such a program.

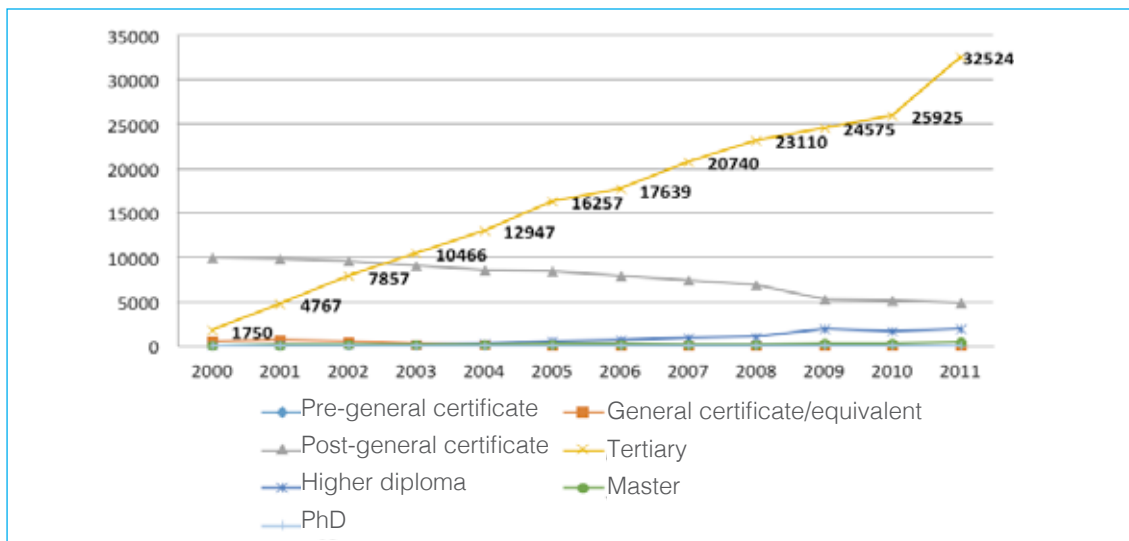
Since the launching of the program, its team has been following a well-established plan of increasing the number of students from different social backgrounds who are benefiting from the program - there has been a steady increase on yearly basis. Last year, the number of courses rose to 44 varied courses covering mountainous areas and deserts in the Sultanate, with around 792 students from different governorates. The program is aiming during the 2013/2014 academic year to raise the number of courses in order to guarantee the efficiency of the program, and encourage students to develop their leadership skills and self-confidence or other, which will prepare them for their future professions.

In one of the trips, the program targeted a number of disabled students from Amal Deaf School to ensure equal opportunities between students with disabilities and their peer who are not disabled students, to enable them to develop their interactive skills alongside their colleagues, teach them life-skills and take them outdoors to a different environment and life style from what they are accustomed to. The aim was to transfer them to the world of challenge and depend on themselves. The participants proved they were able to interact well and were not prohibited by their disabilities from achieving the program targets. They were able to discover themselves and their potentials through the education programs that will enable them to face and overcome their daily challenges in the future.

4- Teachers provision and training

Teachers in the Sultanate of Oman enjoy a very good and distinguished social status; they are well respected by students and parents alike. Teachers of all grades are selected out of university graduates. They follow a four-year training in Faculties of Education where they receive academic and pedagogical courses. Only selected and trained candidates are allowed to work in the education sector. As shown in the following form, the number of teachers holding university degrees is increasing steadily. Classroom teachers for grades 1- 6 more than tripled between 2000 and 2011/2012 from 12265 teachers to 39699.

Form 24: Progression of the number of teachers by qualification in grades 1-6



Source: Statistics and Indicators Administration, MoE

Teacher pre-training programs include the following: full mastery of their major, educational and professional skills, high inter-personal skills and other competencies related to the new trends (multi-cultural education, values, environment, health, population, new technologies, arts, development etc.)

Training programs introduce teachers to the education philosophy and objectives of the Sultanate as well as the foundations and methodologies based on which the curriculum was designed. Teachers are also informed of the aims of each level and curriculum. Teachers follow integrated courses in pedagogy and psychology to develop their teaching and education competencies.

The MoE is in charge of pre-service training. It prepares and designs the teacher training kit for new teachers prior to their hiring. The kit includes 75 training hours that cover three axes: the first axis is about introducing the new teacher to the education philosophy of Oman, the study plan, curriculum philosophy, teachers' rights and obligations according to relevant laws and regulations; the second axis covers the educational aspect: working papers are presented on teaching and assessment methods and some aspects related to classroom management and teaching tools; the third axis covers the specialization aspects of each subject area and each teacher is provided with a hardcopy of a guide of documents a teacher would need pre-service.

Teacher pre-service training in Oman was completely transformed. There is a number of institutions that ensure pre-service training to teachers, mainly, the Faculty of Education at Sultan Qaboos University. The university also provides a training program for administrators and supervisors. Around 15% of teachers graduate from Sultan Qaboos University, while the rest graduate from special training institutions inside and outside the Sultanate; in addition to what is known as practical education which is considered an important part of teacher pre-service training.

The MoE policy on in-service training can be summarized as follows: upgrade teacher professional standards, achieve the objectives of each level, complete the

training of teachers who had not completed it in the past; prepare teachers through training to meet the needs of students throughout their different phases of development, and provide theoretical and practical studies of relevant levels; upgrade teachers' skills in their field of specialization so as to prepare them to face the modern life challenges and be informed of the latest innovations; train teachers to prepare field and procedural research; develop text books; provide teachers with theoretical and practical training on leadership in education and train teachers on scientific research methods and self-development in their major.

Every year, a professional development plan is prepared to all MoE teachers based on training needs. 1298 teacher training programs were organized as part of the 2009 professional development plan in all education districts. They targeted 39400 teachers from different fields of specialization. And in 2010, the professional development plan covered 1186 teacher training programs targeting 29608 teachers of all specializations and from all education districts. The 2011 professional development plan statistical data show that 71% of the total number of its programs were focused on teachers, with 869 centralized and decentralized training programs in all teaching majors and in different education districts. 41906 teachers are expected to receive training.

It is worth nothing that training budget increased significantly. Professional development budget increased three-fold compared to 2012, which contributed to quality improvement in training programs and an increase in the number of trainings and beneficiaries.

The MoE ensure various in-service training programs such as:

- 1- Short-term programs: such programs include one-week sessions, workshops and seminars.
- 2- Medium-term programs: they target primary education teachers who receive their university degree while teaching. These programs aim at preparing teachers to teach in the intermediate level.
- 3- Specialized sessions: they are organized to meet the training needs of directors, assistant directors, teachers, librarians, lab technicians and other MoE staff.

Public school teachers work in conditions similar to other public servants of same qualifications and expertise. However, the total salary of a teacher, including bonuses, is higher than the other employees because they receive teaching remunerations and school administration remunerations for school principals. Noteworthy is that male and female teachers receive equal pay; they enjoy same work conditions and other facilities ensured by the ministry. In-service training is a right to all teachers as well as promotion opportunities, as teachers are promoted based on their expertise or their performance which is assessed in the annual performance report.

5- Adult education programs

The journey of literacy and adult education in the Sultanate started formally during the school year 1973. It was followed by the decree (302) of 1975, establishing the literacy system, amended in 1981, and the Oman Economic Vision on literacy and human development, which called for establishing additional literacy centers, expanding the different programs and projects, such as learning villages, the cooperative school project, and employing general education graduates to teach literacy classes.

The literacy program was designed for 3 years, to liberate students from the shackles of illiteracy, and allow them afterwards to enroll in adult education programs (7 to 12). Literacy programs are centered on everyday activities, tackle the real needs of students and let them apply the theories they were taught in their daily lives, ensuing students' keenness to learn and study. The major educational needs of adults are literacy, numeracy and religious concepts, as well as other everyday activities that would aid them uphold their duties to their families and communities.

Educational programs responded favorably to the changing needs of learners through the elaboration of special literacy curricula conveying the latest educational developments and breakthroughs and by providing health, religious and social programs as well as other highly innovative programs such as the learning villages and the cooperative school programs that support literacy learners.

According to demographic estimates conducted by the National Center for Statistics and Information in 2013, literacy among Omanis surged over 90% for the age group (15-79).

Table 32: No. and percentages of literate Omanis in 2013 of the age group (15-79)

Age Group	Male literates		Female literates		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
Population (15-79)	670850	94.47	606576	87.10	90.82

Source: Demographic estimations of the National Center for Statistics and Information

For the Omanis of the age group 15 and older, between 2003 and 2010, the exerted efforts yielded the desired results: illiteracy dropped to 14.1% in 2010, compared with 21.9% in 2003. The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders in the Sultanate, exerts tremendous efforts to eradicate illiteracy. The MoE elaborated a strategic plan to eradicate illiteracy by 2030. Literacy surveys are used periodically and continuously to assess the plan's performance. A periodic assessment of literacy programs is conducted through the continuous follow-up of the provinces' education supervisors and through reports determining the required aspects of support or adjustment.

A number of modifications and adjustments were introduced to the literacy program since 2000. These policies and measures better meet the changing education needs, by:

1. Raising learning level from 2 to 3 years.
2. Introducing English in the second and third grades of literacy courses.
3. Hiring general education graduates to teach literacy courses.
4. Elaborating and reviewing all literacy curricula to convey the latest educational breakthroughs.

Box 11: Requesting the assistance of Omani Women Associations in implementing literacy programs

The program was launched in 2009/2010. Omani Women Associations, spread across the Sultanate, were deployed to eradicate illiteracy through the establishment of literacy centers (in the framework of these associations or outside of it) and supervising their management, or by acts of volunteering of their members to teach, in return of a financial reward, or by raising society's awareness and encouraging it to cooperate in order to tackle this very serious problem.

The program's goals:

1. Laying the foundation of cooperation and communication between the MoE and the Ministry of Social Development.
2. Benefiting from Omani Women Associations in the quest to eradicate illiteracy in the provinces where these associations or their adherents are active.
3. Establishing cooperation and communication between Omani Women Associations and local society.
4. Allowing illiterate Omanis in the provinces where these associations are active to reach the educational level that would allow them to pursue their education and an on-going education.
5. Aiding illiterates to meet their needs in society and to enhance their education level.
6. Planting the seed of active participation in society and the concept of shared responsibility.
7. Encouraging cooperation among the associations' members and the surrounding community.
8. Establishing cooperation between the town's population and making them share in common responsibility.
9. Reducing illiteracy rates in the Sultanate by 50%, by 2015.
10. Expanding literacy activities.

Programs supporting quality education

In 2002, the Ministry of Education decided to establish the Education Evaluation Department (EED), with the key responsibility of assessing the different aspects of the educational system and providing the ministry with a prognosis of its performance at different levels while focusing on the assessment of students' learning.

The ministry established as well the Education Supervision Department (ESD) to provide technical support for teachers through the continuous follow-up mechanism. Education supervision activities encompass as well assisting teachers to correctly implement curricula, issuing pertinent publications, analyzing field reports and identifying the training needs of teachers and educational supervisors.

The ministry took several measures in terms of assessment and examinations, such as the establishment of the Higher Committee of Examinations conceived to supervise all aspects of the assessment system. The main goal of this committee is to enhance

the level and competence of assessments. The committee is formed by a number of regulation experts from the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), teachers training colleges and experts from the MoE.

The Ministry of Education conducts the Continuous Formative Assessment (CFA) to measure students' learning in all educational cycles. This type of assessment relies on the continuous diagnosis of the improvement of students' learning performance by applying different methods and tools such as short and final examinations, research and reports, as well as projects, reviews, etc... Students from grade 5 to 12 should face final examinations prepared by the school (grades 1-4), at the level of educational province (grade 5-9), or at the centralized level of the ministry (grades 10-12).

The Sultanate participated between 1993 and 2001 in 4 Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) studies in grades 4, 6, 9, and 10 sponsored by UNESCO and UNICEF. Performance in Arabic, math, science and life skills in grades 4, 6, and 9 was examined, while in grade 10, students were assessed in Arabic, math, physics, chemistry and biology. Results showed low learning performance in all subject matters, especially math in grade 6.

Another study was conducted in 2003/2004 in the first cycle of basic education (grade 4 students) where 7700 students, male and female, of all regions, took Arabic, English, math, and science tests. Results showed that students were lagging on average by one year based on international standards. The number of students suffering from reading difficulties tripled compared with international standards. Boys and girls performance varied widely, to the detriment of boys, especially in Arabic.

The Sultanate of Oman decided to take part in the fourth Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 2007 and 2011, to obtain indicators that support the participation in this 4th study, in order to identify the positive aspects of the education system, and tackle shortcomings.

In this context, the Sultanate participated in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), to test the performance of 4 graders in the Sultanate in comparison with other participating countries, take the necessary measures to enhance the education process in terms of reading, conduct a comparative study between different education provinces, connect the diverse variations present in the study's results and conclusions and holding comparisons between students' levels in Arabic in basic education curricula and private schools curricula.

The analysis of students' performance in international tests shows the great need to focus on highly cognitive activities such as applying, analyzing and assessing, especially since these tests showcased that students lacked these capacities. The study showed that girls' performance is higher than boys'. In PIRLS, girls' average performance scored 411 compared with 371 for male students. In TIMSS, average female performance in science in grade 4 was 453, compared with 405 for males. In grade 8, the average of female performance was 458 while males' average was close to 380. In fourth grade math, females scored 398, compared with males' 372. In grade 8, females recorded 397 and males 340.

In addition to international tests, the ministry established national examinations with 4 basic subjects: Arabic, English, math and science. These examinations were launched in 2006/2007, and target students in grades 4, 7 and 10.

Box 12: E-learning

E-learning covers all educational aspects, publishes digital texts, electronic books, educational visual and sound effects among other education materials, and seeks to achieve the different forms of distant learning.

This system is founded on the principle of self-learning and virtual classrooms. It aims at presenting educational content interactively, in a nonconventional manner that respects seriousness, excitement and quality of this cognitive subject matter that the student is learning. Students could also follow the progress of their learning through different reports. They could also benefit from diverse activities and the knowledge of different sources by connecting to the International Information Network (Internet) to enrich the subject matter, and finally achieve the comprehensive e-curricula. The Oman Educational Portal plays a major role in this regard.

An educational portal is an interactive educational system and a digital environment that connects the educational process elements electronically (learner, teacher, parent, school and the ministry) through the internet, and through a plethora of programs and computer systems, in order to facilitate the educational process and present it more successfully and enthusiastically. It helps as well to organize and follow-up administrative activities through messages and electronic archives. The educational portal is considered a mean of communication between the ministry's databases and relevant stakeholders (administration or teaching faculty in all sectors such as the ministry, educational province and the school), or even between learners and parents and relevant society members, to provide administrative or educational digital services.

The project leads as well to the following:

1. Transforming some school curricula into interactive electronic content.
2. Providing schools with interactive portals, as well as training and encouraging teachers to use them.
3. Equipping school laboratories with computer-connected microscopes.
4. Encouraging schools to cooperate and activate digital education.
5. Participating in a number of regional and international competitions.
6. Encouraging initiatives of learners, teachers and school administrations.

State of Qatar



The development of education in the State of Qatar

General principles and aims of the education system

The national vision of the State of Qatar for 2030 is based on 4 pillars: human, social, economic and environmental development. It restated that future economic success would be increasingly centered on the Qatari's population capacity of handling the new international order, established on the basis of knowledge and stiff competitiveness. The State of Qatar aims at establishing a modern international education system providing students with first class education. Through its first pillar, "Human Development", Qatar aims at creating an education system that meets modern international standards, equal to the best education systems in the world. This system would provide the opportunity for citizens to develop their abilities, and offer them the best training to succeed in an ever changing world with high scientific requirements. It also encourages analytical and critical thinking, develops the capacity to innovate and create, enhances social cohesion, respects the values and heritage of the Qatari society, and calls for positive and beneficial relations with the world.

The goals of the education and training sectors are the following:

1. An educational system up to the level of distinguished international educational systems, meeting the needs of citizens and Qatari society.
2. A national network of formal and informal education equipping children and Qatari youth with the required skills and high motives to contribute in building and advancing the society.
3. State-of-the-art, independent and accountable education organizations, run independently with competence and in compliance with the central authority's guidelines.
4. An effective system of funding scientific research based on the principle of public-private partnership, in cooperation with relevant international bodies, and distinguished international research centers.
5. An active international role in the cultural, intellectual and scientific research spheres.

The Education and Training Sector Strategy identifies 20 key outcomes and 29 pertinent projects, and encompass the following:

First, tackling education and training problems through:

1. Elaborating and implementing a comprehensive 10-year strategic plan to all relevant stakeholders.
2. Promoting the values of Qatari society, national identity, Arab and Islamic culture in all cycles of education and training.
3. Elaborating a plan to develop the local work force and associations (developing special regulations and organizations in the education and training sector).

4. Combining ICTs in educational, administrative and development operations.
5. Engaging key stakeholders to create an advanced database in education and training, this could help in elaborating policies.
6. Communication and raising awareness of the importance of education.

Second, enhancing public education through:

1. Generalizing high quality K-12 education.
2. Providing high quality K-12 education.
3. Supporting K-12 students to accomplish their ultimate potential and capability.
4. Providing adequate education options to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
5. Promoting guidance as well as vocational and academic orientation regarding the required skills in the work place of the future.
6. Enhancing societal participation and increasing the participation of society's sectors in public education.
7. Offering various alternatives to the adult education programs.

Third, enhancing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) through the following:

1. Developing an organizational model in the technical and vocational education and training sector, and the pertinent capacities.
2. Developing an organizational model in the technical and vocational education and training sector to meet the needs of the labor market.
3. Adjusting the programs of technical and vocational education and training to meet the needs of the Qatari society and the labor market.
4. Showing the importance and statute of technical and vocational education and training programs.
5. Enhancing scientific research by achieving a higher level of scientific innovation.

Managing the education system

The Supreme Education Council established in 2002, was organized by virtue of Emiri decree (19) in 2009. The council became the highest authority in developing education. Of the council's tasks, the following:

1. Elaborating the national education policy, connecting it to the goals, plans and education programs in light of Qatar Vision 2030.
2. Elaborating plans, programs, supervision and follow-up systems required to implement the national education policy.

3. Adopting high quality standards for the performance of all facilities and the providers of public and private education services.
4. Adopting the organizational charts of the council's institutes and instruments and other pertinent bodies, and approving their required budget in the council's budget.
5. Elaborating an investment system of the council's funds.

The council encompasses 3 main institutes: education, evaluation and higher education institutes. Each institute has a given set of specialities and tasks. An array of offices and supporting units were established to back the council's work: the Office of Information Technology, the Shared Services Department and the Office of Research and Policy Analysis.

The State provides different types of education:

General public education: includes public kindergartens (free and optional), schools from grade 1 to 12 (compulsory and free), under the administrative, financial and organizational supervision and follow-up of the Supreme Council of Education.

The general education ladder encompasses the following cycles: kindergartens (2 levels); primary education (6 grades): 3 grades of elementary education, and a secondary education composed of 3 classes, branched into a set of academic paths after grade 10. The following table shows the education ladder of the general public education.

Table 33: Education ladder of general public education

Cycle	Grade	Notes
Children Kindergartens	Kindergarten	Starts with age 4
	Preschool	
Primary	1	Starts with age 6
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
Elementary	7	
	8	
	9	
Secondary	10	After grade 10, the student chooses the adequate academic path from a set of educational options
	11	
	12	

Private education: In the context of the State's keenness to establish partnerships with the private sector and allow it to contribute and invest in the education sector, individuals, associations and companies were allowed to open state schools, in addition to diaspora and international schools. This type of education encompassed kindergartens and general education. Private education is of 3 categories: (international schools, diaspora schools, and schools that implement local Qatari curricula standards).

Private education in the State of Qatar is witnessing a surge of students and schools. Students in private education represent 56% of total enrolled students in Qatar.

The most important qualitative and quantitative achievements:

Article 49 of the constitution stipulates that education is a right of every citizen; hence, the state must intensify the exerted efforts aiming at achieving free, compulsory general education in accordance with the applied laws and regulations in the state. The law on compulsory education no 25 of 2001, amended in 2009, stipulates that education is free and compulsory from primary education to elementary education, or until the child reaches the age of 18, whichever comes first. In order to guarantee that everyone has access to high quality basic education, the National Development Strategy 2011-2016 envisages compulsory kindergarten to all Qatari children until the age of 3, as well as a compulsory secondary education (Secretariat General of Development Planning, 2011). Of the major achievements supported by these laws, we mention the following:

1- The development of preschool education

The State has given great importance to early childhood education, elaborated a strategic plan of early education, established kindergartens annexed to independent primary education and equipped them according to the latest international standards, achieved a safe and stimulating environment for children's creativity, elaborated special curricula for early cycles education, and imposed clearly defined standards for safety and security in public and private kindergartens.

The Strategic Plan 2011-2016 includes the enhancement of early childhood education programs in kindergartens. Of the major goals of the early childhood education axe is containing unenrolled children in kindergartens, so enrollment rates would peak to 100%, building public kindergartens to absorb the largest number of children, making kindergartens a part of the education system, making children enrollment compulsory, forming highly qualified cadres, and providing land for the private sector to build kindergartens.

School curricula were centered on the desired results of early childhood education in the State of Qatar, aiming at supporting children's development and growth. Thus, five learning areas were defined in the curricula: communication (in Arabic and English), exploration (it includes science and mathematics), creative expression, identity development. Each area has a set of clearly defined goals and learning outcomes.

Early childhood education witnessed robust development in the past decade, as shown in the following table:

Table 34: Gross Kindergarten Enrolment Ratio from 2000/2001 to 2011/2012

School year	Male	Female	Average (Male- Female)	Gender Equity Index GEI
2000/2001	28.1	26.5	27.3	0.94
2005/2006	-	-	42.5	0.94
2011/2012	73.55	71.96	72.77	0.98

Source: The Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, Annual Statistical Abstract, education chapter, population chapter

As seen in the previous table, Gross Enrollment Ratios in kindergartens grew by more than 150% in the period between (2000/2001) and (2011/2012), and surged from 27.3% to 72.77% due to the Supreme Education Council's adoption of a policy to increase the number of kindergartens, with the goal of absorbing the enrollment of children in early childhood education, in line with education policies, legislations, and frameworks on which the National Education Plan and the Education and Training Sector Strategy (2011-2016), were based.

The importance of this cycle of education to the State of Qatar appears clearly in the policies of the Supreme Education Council. The Strategic Plan for Early Education included building kindergartens annexed to independent primary schools, equipped according to the latest international specifications in terms of a learning stimulating environment, and clear standards for safety and security in private and public kindergartens.

20- The development of basic education

Primary education is the basis of education and lasts for 6 years. Its pivotal task lies in assisting children to grow, preparing them to live in society, and allowing them to continue their studies in the next cycle of education. The fundamental goals of primary education could be formulated as follows:

1. Raising children in the noble values of Islam.
2. Making children feel proud of their country, values and heritage.
3. Achieving physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social development of children.
4. Encouraging children to possess and practice the basic knowledge skills, such as: reading, writing, expression and numeracy.
5. Developing children's imagination and satisfying their curiosity.
6. Teaching children respect of discipline and cooperation with others.
7. Helping children correctly understand their local environment, recognize its source of wealth, and respect public property.
8. Directing children's tendencies and developing their artistic creativity.

It should be noted that independent schools have the ultimate freedom to choose teaching methods, design the school's system (such as school days, and the number of classes assigned to each subject) and provide supportive educational resources. In order to achieve this goal, the education institute of the Supreme Education Council provides support and guidance through school consultants.

As such, model lesson plans were provided to help teachers and experts in school curricula to ensure curricula's reflection of Qatari values and civilization, and at the same time, meet students' needs.

Quantitative achievements in basic education reflect the state's tremendous efforts in the service of this sector by providing free Education for All, as well as the state's efforts to serve the private sector by providing technical expertise as well as human and financial potential.

Enrollment rates in primary education in the State of Qatar grew remarkably in the past few years. The Supreme Education Council exerted inordinate efforts since it committed to implement the Education for All goals. This appears clearly in the progress achieved regarding the Net Enrollment Rates, registering 84.6% in (2000-2001) and 94% in (2011-2012), signaling growth in offered educational services, as well as building new schools to absorb the growth of students' numbers, in line with the demographic growth in the state.

Table 35: Net and Gross Enrollment Ratios in primary education in 2000/2001–2011/2012

School Year	Net Enrollment Rate			Gross Enrollment Ratio		
	NER			GER		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2000/2001	76.8	94.5	84.6	99.0	107.8	103.0
2010/2011	90.3	9.6	90.5	106.0	104.5	105.3
2011/2012	93.6	94.0	93.8	103.5	104.9	104.2

Source: Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics – The State of Qatar

21- The development of secondary education

Secondary education is comprised of elementary and secondary cycles. The goals of elementary cycle could be summarized as follows:

1. Attaining the highest levels of emotional, spiritual, social, physical and mental maturity.
2. Consolidating students' national and Arab affiliation.
3. Providing the bare minimum of required education for youth, such as religious education, and various basic human and scientific knowledge.

4. Introducing students to their local and Arab environment, and developing their creative tendencies.
5. Preparing students to live in an Islamic society, open to the world.
6. Preparing students to practical life through the procurement of practical skills, the respect of manual labor, collective work and productivity.

The contemplated goals of secondary cycle could be formulated as follows:

1. Helping students forge a rational philosophy of their lives based on the noble Islamic and Arab values.
2. Identifying students' orientations and guiding them to the best kind of secondary education that could offer them the required knowledge and attitude to be qualified to play certain social and vocational roles.
3. Enabling students to obtain research skills and critical thinking, offering the tools to solve their problems and make the right choices.
4. Guiding students to different paths of higher education and vocational fields, in line with their capabilities, preparations, and tendencies.
5. Providing students in all specializations with general culture, and guiding them through practice to the source of this knowledge.
6. Equipping students with concepts of democracy in theory and practice, through daily school activities.

The state of Qatar provides relatively limited opportunities for Qatari youth, especially females who seek nonacademic alternative at the end of the compulsory stage, since only 3 public schools offer technical and vocational education in secondary education, providing suitable qualifications for the labor market. However, through the follow-up of secondary education in the previous period, it appears that interest in technical and vocational education, as well as its development, grew sharply, to meet the economic, industrial and urban changes in the State as well as the need for qualified labor force. Several agreements were signed to operate technical schools, to forge additional partnerships with relevant State parties and associations. The Supreme Education Council ratified the employment agreement with Qatar Petroleum, to operate the Qatar Independent Technical School for boys in 2012. A similar agreement was ratified between the Supreme Education Council and Qatar Central Bank, to operate the Independent Senior Commerce School for boys in 2011, and the religious institute for boys, developed to keep pace with the modernization of independent school, in term of curricula, educational programs, as well as the training of teachers and school faculty.

Box 13: Technical education in the State of Qatar

The State of Qatar offers relatively limited opportunities for Qatari youth, especially girls who seek nonacademic alternative, at the end of the compulsory cycle. Only 3 public schools offer vocational and technical education in secondary education, providing suitable qualifications for the labor market. These schools are: Qatar Independent Technical School, Qatar Independent Senior Commerce School for boys, and the religious institute. Despite the fact that enrolled students in these schools grew from 472 to 739 students between 2006/2007 and 2009/2010, their total is still precarious. Future plans exist to provide vocational and technical education for girls.

Among the most distinguished schools in this area are the following:

Qatar Independent Technical School, founded in 2004, is the only technical high school in the State of Qatar. It offers boys, between the ages of 15 to 17 years old, a 3 years program, at the end of which they receive a degree. In 2001, this school hosted 245 students. The school follows the "Australian vocational education and training" qualifications framework. Qatar Petroleum operates the school on the basis of the operation agreement ratified with the Supreme Education Council. Approximately 30% of study time is dedicated to training activities in workshops and laboratories. Students obtain additional training and industrial jobs in the summer. Since 2009, Independent Technical School students have become highly qualified to obtain public scholarships. Graduates could land jobs in Qatar Petroleum if they wish to; excellent students could enroll in certain majors in Qatar University.

In 2010/2011, the Supreme Education Council, in partnership with Qatar Central Bank, started operating Qatar Independent Senior Commerce School, offering banking and business management courses. This school would provide training in business and finance as part of an education syllabus, preparing graduates to play effective and meaningful roles in the country's financial sector. Qatar Central Bank would supervise the training of students, coordinating with several Qatari banks. The Central Bank would also coordinate directly with English and computer institutes, so students would be well versed in these two areas.

The Secondary Religious institute in the State of Qatar was established in 1913 and became an independent technical school in 2010/2011. Since the very beginning, the institute sought to remain a scientific and religious center, specialized in Sharia Sciences and Arabic, in addition to providing high quality education in English and other experimental sciences. Every year, between 200 and 300 students enroll in the Institute; Qatari students represent a modest 10% of the overall number.

DeBakey High School for Health Professions is considered among the most renowned new international private schools in the State of Qatar. It is a vocational and technical school for elementary and secondary students, wishing to enroll in health professions. DeBakey High School provided education in 2011 to approximately 150 students.

Table 36: Total Enrollment, Gross and Net Enrollment Ratios in technical and vocational education, in (2000/2001 – 2012/2013)

Year	Gender	Total Enrollment	Gross Enrollment Ratio GER	Net Enrollment Ratio NER
2000/2001	Males	697	5.6	3.9
2005/2006	Males	584	3.9	3.4
2012/2013	Males	570	2.7	2.1

Source: Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics – The State of Qatar

In the previous table, it is clear that the numbers of males enrolled in technical and vocational education decreased in 2013, in comparison with the base year 2001, inducing the fall of Gross and Net Enrollment Ratios. This is due to the following:

- The majority of enrolled students are inclined to secondary academic education, and few of them enroll in technical and vocational education.
- There are no technical or vocational schools for girls in the State of Qatar.

22- Teachers provision and training

In the context of education reform in 2002, the required qualifications of Qatari teachers working in independent schools were determined as follows:

- Kindergarten and primary education teachers: Bachelor's degree in Education (a 4 year program), or a bachelor's degree (other than education), in addition to two years' experience as kindergarten or primary school teacher.
- Elementary and Secondary education teachers: a Bachelor's degree in Education with specialization in math, science, English, Arabic, or a bachelor's degree (other than education) in science, math, Arabic, or English, in addition to 3 years of experience as school teacher, or an education degree or bachelor's degree in elementary or secondary education.

All teachers should have the capacity to plan their lessons to enhance students' learning through:

- Determining clearly defined goals and contents of learning, suitable for the subject matter and students, as well as shaping the teaching and assessment of the subject matter.
- Determining tasks of the whole chapters, individually or collectively, including homework, and guaranteeing high levels of students' interest.
- Identifying clear goals for students' learning, on the basis of previous achieve-

ments, and guaranteeing that students are fully aware of the content and goal of the required tasks.

- Identifying students with special needs, such as learning difficulties, difficulties in English and offering help for positive, meaningful and supportive guidance.
- Offering a clear structure of lessons on the short, medium and long term, to preserve the same pace of stimulation and challenges for students.
- Benefiting from information on students' learning, to achieve progress in teaching and planning, as well as future lessons sequencing.
- Using teaching technics that preserve participation momentum of students by inciting intellectual curiosity and enthusiasm for the subject matter.

In the context of education reform, the education institute of the Supreme Education Council offers a diversified array of training programs for teachers, to support independent schools teachers in their professional development.

These programs conferred the “best practices” to teach the new curricula, prepare students for the annual examination, and take new teachers' special requirements into account.

The committee issued new regulations and policies regarding Qatari employees in independent schools. These regulations determined wages, training, and indemnities that school operators should provide to Qatari employees, as well as issues of performance assessment, secondment of personnel, annual leaves, and end of service benefits. These policies are based on the following goals and principles:

1. Providing well paid job opportunities for Qatari teachers.
2. Establishing a system to reward high performance employees.
3. Establishing the bare minimum of employees' rights, and the means for school operators to attract and train Qatari employees.
4. Linking employees' professional development to wages and promotion policy.
5. Guaranteeing a comprehensive system for the evaluation and development of employees' performance.

Since the initiative for developing education in the State of Qatar (Education for a new Era) was launched, interest in forming and training teachers and school faculty grew. The Professional Development Office of the Supreme Education Council was established to elaborate policies and strategies regarding professional development of the teaching and administrative committees' members in independent schools. It provides a plethora of services, such as:

1. Providing training and formation for would-be teachers.
2. Professional development of teachers in teaching strategies and subject matters.
3. Providing assistance and support to new teachers.
4. Offering leadership development programs to school principals and independent schools faculties.

The Professional Development Office conducts continuous assessments of school needs to provide training programs that meet the needs of every school and the requirements of school faculties. Every independent school prepares a program to develop its faculty's pedagogical qualifications and the use of modern technics, after the Professional Development Office approval of these plans. The basic training programs is comprised of emerging-level standards programs, competent level, ambitious leaders program, Emerging Leaders Program, the adopted Educational Leadership Program, leadership diploma, school self-review, the National Professional Standards for Teachers and school faculties, as well as the Program of Learning Resource Center Coordinators.

Table 37: No. and percentage of teachers, based on educational qualifications and gender for 2012/2013

School Year	Gender	Post-Secondary		Tertiary		Higher Education		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Kindergartens	Male	-	-	15	52	14	48	29
	Female	544	25.26	1360	63.16	220	10.21	2124
Primary Education	Male	88	6.5	870	63.5	410	30	1368
	Female	733	8	7464	80.2	1103	11.8	9300
Elementary Education	Male	59	3	1474	77	381	20	1914
	Female	159	7	1746	78	338	15	2243
Secondary Education	Male	87	4.7	1406	77	335	18.3	1828
	Female	217	10	1637	76	293	14	2147

Source: The Supreme Education Council – State of Qatar

The previous table shows the following:

- Women constitute the greatest majority of school faculties in kindergartens and primary education. They represent respectively 99% and 87%, given children's age and the fact that women are psychologically closer to children.
- The percentage of teachers with post-secondary degree does not exceed 10% in all levels, with the exception of kindergartens, where it reaches 26%.

5. Adult Education Programs

The State of Qatar always gave great importance to literacy programs and adult education right from the start. The goals of eradicating illiteracy appear clearly in the Education for All National Plan, as follows:

1. Constantly raising the awareness of all concerned about the importance of adult education.
2. Developing adult education schools throughout the country's regions.
3. Offering financial and other incentives to enroll in literacy centers.
4. Using technological means and methods in spreading literacy and adult education programs.
5. Expanding the training of teachers and modern administrative cadres.
6. Developing curricula and adult education methods.
7. Enhancing the evaluation system in literacy and adult education centers.

This type of education is devised into:

- Evening Courses (literacy and adult education): this type of education offers education services to illiterate adults, who do not master reading, writing, and numeracy skills, as well as adults of both genders who were not able to complete their education but wish to learn and study in the evening.
- Home Schooling: This type of education is for students who were not able to enroll in the general morning education system or night education, due to reasons accepted and adopted by the council. Studying begins in grade 1 until grade 12, in line with the morning education ladder.

The education system in the State of Qatar offers opportunities for the willing of both genders to pursue their academic journey; those who were not able to continue the private or public morning education, as well as those willing to obtain literacy skills regardless of their age or nationality.

Table 38: Educational ladder of equivalent education

Education cycles	Levels	Evening class	Home Schooling
Primary cycle	1	First cycle	1
	2		2
	3	Second cycle	3
	4		4
	5	5	5
	6	6	6
Elementary Cycle	7	7	7
	8	8	8
	9	9	9
Secondary Cycle	10	10	10
	11	11	11
	12	12	12

Equivalent education includes evening classes and homeschooling. Evening classes include primary education, comprised of the first cycle (first and second level), second cycle (third and fourth levels), grades 5 and 6, as well as elementary and secondary education. Homeschooling includes K12 classes, in line with national curricula norms; equivalent education matches the educational ladder of morning education.

Adult illiteracy rates dropped in the State of Qatar, as shown in the following table.

Table 39: Adult literacy rates above the age of 15 in (2001- 2005- 2013)

Year/Category	Male rates	Female rates	Total Rates	Gender Equity Index GEI
2001	89.6	86.5	88.7	0.96
2005	93.6	87.5	90.6	0.95
2012	96.9	95.8	96.7	0.99
2013	97.9	97.1	98.5	0.99

Source: The Supreme Education Council – State of Qatar

The previous table shows that male and female literacy rates increase each year and border 98%. The table sheds light on some type of equality between male and female students regarding literacy rates. Hence, the results show an improvement and a clear surge in literacy rates of both genders, with no clear discrepancies, reflecting Qatar's interest in adult education of both genders, without discrimination.

6. Programs supporting quality education

The first National Development Strategy in the State of Qatar was prepared in 2011-2016, based on the 3 fundamental guiding principles: quality, which requires international competition, achieving good learning outcomes by focusing on excellence in all educational inputs and outcomes, including school's infrastructure, teachers, education leaderships as well as school curricula. This strategy was translated into a set of action plans and executive programs targeting education quality and enhancing education outcomes.

Interest in education quality emerges in many aspects, and most importantly through:

1. Developing curricula and textbooks, in line with national and international criteria.
2. Taking interest in professional development and growth of all school workers, teachers and administration employees alike.
3. Enhancing school environment, developing school buildings equipped according to safety and security conditions, as well as facilities such as laboratories, gyms, courts, health facilities and others.
4. Enhancing and supervising school performance through a periodic assessment system of independent schools and school accreditation of private schools.
5. Participating in international tests such as PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS, to compare the performance of Qatari students with their counterparts in other countries, and to recognize the performance level of Qatari students in math, science and reading.
6. Comparing students' performance in all subject matters for classes (4-12) through national examinations.
7. Integrating technology in education through E-learning and electronic briefcase.
8. Stimulating students through awards and competitions, especially the Education Excellence Day award, under the high patronage of His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar.
9. Attracting a vast array of distinguished schools from different countries, such as DeBaKey and London schools, among others.

Box 14: Independent schools in the State of Qatar

At the dawn of the 21st century, the pace of education revival surged especially following the establishment of the Supreme Education Council, by virtue of Emiri decree (37) in 2002, as the highest authority in charge of drawing the state's education policies, developing education strategies and supervising their implementation.

In 2004, the government of the State of Qatar, in light of the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, launched the initiative for the development of general education in the State of Qatar, under the slogan "Education for a new Era", in line with the requirements of the sustainable and comprehensive development journey.

The initiative aims at promoting Qatar's principles, values and national priorities, making classrooms attractive for teaching, encouraging students to employ their utmost potential and talents, involving parents in the educational process and meeting their needs, as well as producing a youth generation qualified for university and the local and international job markets.

The "Education for a new Era" initiative aims at encouraging innovation, enhancing students' performance through schools' independence. Hence, the initiative offers State funded independent schools the freedom to choose their pedagogical philosophy and teaching methods, as long as they adhere by the policies and regulations of the council.

The initiative "Education for a new Era" is based on four key pillars:

Independence: encouraging innovation and enhancing students' performance through schools' independence. State funded independent schools have the liberty to choose their pedagogical philosophy and teaching methods.

Accountability: putting schools in charge, measuring and assessing students' learning and development, as well as the progress of school's performance.

Diversity: Providing different pedagogical alternatives, while preserving fixed standards for performance level.

Choice: Giving parents the right to choose and participate, in line with their desires, potential, and capabilities. Independent schools are funded by the state and have the freedom to implement their own vision, mission and goals, while abiding by stipulated in the ratified contract with the Supreme Education Council.

The philosophy of independent schools, regarded as a model for schools in the State of Qatar, is based on the principle that schools run themselves independently. Schools select teachers, teaching methods, evaluation technics, school programs and activities, define school system, and provide supportive education sources. Independent schools allow parents to play a key role in administration, through boards of trustees and parents associations. The organizational chart of the school includes: the board of trustees, school principal, deputies/agents and parents associations.

The board of trustees is one of the required legal organizational elements of every independent school, offering guidance, representing parents and the community, and helping the school in quality control.

The State of Qatar is working towards establishing a comprehensive system for student assessment in all schools, and conduct periodic general examinations based on the best international standards in order to measure the extent to which the educational standards and competencies were met, complete the assessment cycle through school examinations and the comprehensive education assessment system, and determine the status of education and student performance at the global scale, while pinpointing strengths and weaknesses in student performance.

In the spring of 2004, (80000) Qatari students participated in the first comprehensive education assessment in 4 subjects: Arabic, English, Mathematics, and Sciences. The point was not to measure success or graduation; the assessment provides teachers and parents with a clear picture of the educational process.

The comprehensive education assessment is a series of standardized examinations which go in line with curriculum standards. It is applied to students in grades 4 through 11. It started with 4 subjects; Arabic, English, Mathematics and Sciences. In 2010-2011, it also included Social Sciences and Islamic Education.

These examinations are aimed at providing an idea about school, teacher and student performance according to national curriculum standards. They also provide information regarding the strengths, and weaknesses which need improvement in student performance. The results provide information about students' educational achievement at the national, school, term and subject levels, and at the student level through detailed analytical reports.

These examinations measure the mastery of the required skills through a series of objective and essay questions that can be either short or long, depending on the subject's nature. They include students in independent schools, and private schools applying Qatari national curriculum standards.

With a view to compare Qatari students' performance to that of their counterparts around the world, the State of Qatar participated in three international examinations:

- The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which combines three defined fields: reading, mathematics, and sciences, in addition to the skill of problem-solving in these fields, without focusing on curriculum content, but rather on knowledge and basic skills that the students need in their lives. The program focuses on concept assimilation, and the ability to work in any field, in order to measure the success rate of students aged 15, and who are about to complete basic education. The State of Qatar made remarkable progress between the first and third cycle in the field of reading; progress points in the aforementioned period reached (76). In Mathematics, progress points between the two cycles reached (58), and (35) in Sciences.

- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), an international study aimed at focusing on educational policies and systems, and studying the efficacy of applied curricula, their teaching methods their practical implementation, and education achievement assessment, in order to provide information which would help improve the teaching and learning of Mathematics and Sciences. This study is applied to students in 4th and 8th grades, in the subjects of Mathematics and Sciences. The State

of Qatar participated in the 2007 and 2011 cycles, during which it made great progress and improvement in the results of both subjects and both grades. The highest improvement was registered in the 8th grade with (103) progress points. Progress points in Sciences were equal in both the 4th and 8th grades. These progress points achieved by the State of Qatar are the highest among States whose performance improved between the aforementioned cycles.

- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). This study is aimed at assessing 4th grade students in the skill of reading in their mother tongue. The State of Qatar participated in the 2006 and 2011 cycles, collecting up to (72) progress points between both cycles.

This is attributed to increased awareness regarding the importance of international examinations, and training students to similar models, while training teachers to elaborate questions similar to those in the examinations and use them in classrooms, which promotes positive student participation through national competitions at the school level.

Section two:
success stories in education
development



success stories in education development

This section reviews the most notable success stories in education development in member States at the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS). It is aimed at highlighting accomplishments made in these States' education systems, in order to learn the necessary lessons and facilitate relevant information exchange. Through the classification of projects and joint or individual programs, the States share their learned lessons. This promotes the culture of information and expertise exchange.

The search for realizable policies and innovative solutions developed in member States promotes the development of local capacities which can strengthen the weaknesses in their education systems. Thus, the aim of this report is to promote national analysis capacities in order to guarantee sustainable development in national education policies. The review is not limited to the overview of achievements, rather to classify them according to different fields and objectives. This encourages Ministries of Education to look into the reasons of their success, and their evolution towards a sustainable culture. It also encourages them to review achieved progress periodically, and thus contribute to the institutionalization of the culture of learning through previous experiences, along with using these experiences in the services of development in the future.

The review covers two types of classification and analysis. After the enumeration and classification of all projects and programs gathered through the adopted source, the first chapter of the analysis presents the major projects and programs of common interest among member States, so that they are classified and their objectives are presented. The second chapter cites the most significant successful experiences in every country separately, by describing their content, goals, outcomes, supporting factors, and learned lessons.

1- Education development projects

1.1. Programs classification and overview

Three main sources were chosen to draw education development programs and projects in member States, with regard to the following:

- Programs and projects mentioned in the GCC States' Educational Renaissance special report.
- Projects and experiences presented in consultative meetings held among Ministers of Education, namely the fourth and fifth meetings.
- Results of surveys for Ministries of Education in member States regarding successful experiences.

This is in addition to EFA reports as well as the websites of Ministries of Education and UNESCO International Bureau of Education.

This research led to the overview of no less than 117 projects, knowing that with regard to the report on GCC Educational Renaissance, only projects with clear goals and

components were adopted, after being specified as program or project. Additionally, all projects submitted in the framework of consultative meetings were counted, and all received successful experience forms were adopted. These projects are distributed by source and country as follows:

Table 40: Distribution of projects by source and country

Country	Source			
	Report	Fourth and Fifth Consultative Meetings	Form Research	Total
- UAE	6	3	4	13
- Bahrain	8	5	12	25
- Kuwait	5	3	1	9
- KSA	10	4	9	23
- Oman	7	4	8	19
- Qatar	7	3	12	22
- Yemen	-	3	3	6
Total	43	25	49	117

1.2. Classification of education development programs and projects

- The nature of projects presented by member States in the framework of the joint education development plan gave precedence to the improvement of the education system's components and the development of school and teacher performance. Thus, the fields defined in the framework of the GCC Education Development special report focused mainly on improving education quality, through the development of curricula and education systems, and the use of technology in education and learning, without the other dimensions based on which policies and strategies are adopted to develop education.
- Subsequently, in order to analyze the programs and projects' components by country in all of their dimensions, it was necessary to adopt a larger matrix encompassing the three axes which constitute the cornerstone of the educational systems analysis on an international scale: enrollment, education quality, and good governance.

Table 41: Program and project classification

Axis	Fields defined in the report	Components
Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generalization of basic education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding education supply • Encouraging demand • Limiting disparities • Guaranteeing equal gender opportunities • Organizing education for disabled persons
Education Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricula • Educational systems • Performance of educational institutions • Education and technology • Education apprenticeship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricula and education and learning methods • Examinations and attainment assessment • Assessing institutions' educational performance • Improving the education and learning environment • Adopting education and training institutions • Promoting the capacities of education and framing bodies • School and vocational guidance • Internal and external profitability • The use of technology in education
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institutional and organizational dimension • Planning, programming, and the school map • Administrative, material, and financial planning • Coordination, follow-up, and institutional assessment • Decentralization and deconcentration • Information systems for statistics and provisioning. • Companies and regulating foreign interventions • Funding education • Communication and networking

23- Joint education development programs and projects

- The idea of developing education in the framework of joint action was derived from the Supreme Council's resolution in its 23rd session (Doha, Qatar, December 2002) regarding the consensus document presented by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud to the Council in its fourth consultative meeting (Jeddah, May 2002).

- The education development project took shape by virtue of the Supreme Council's resolution in its 24th session, which tasked the Ministers of Education (the ABEGS General Conference) with establishing a unified plan encompassing all programs and projects. Indeed, many States started preparing and implementing a series of programs and projects aimed at developing education in the region.
- The various domains of the programs and projects focus on general education, benefiting from the outcomes of the curriculum development joint plan, and from the member States' visualizations, priorities and aspirations. The programs of the Educational Renaissance's joint project focused on general education curricula, system development, vocational development, and the scope of community-based partnerships. The types of joint programs and projects which reached (13) programs and (26) joint projects, are distributed by fields.

2.1 Overview and classification of joint programs and projects mentioned in the report

- The report prepared by the ABEGS addressed Educational Renaissance in GCC States. This report is considered as a main reference for the joint Educational Renaissance plan, since it would be dated – after recalling the premises of care for education – for the medium term plans which led to this Renaissance, through enumerating and analyzing achievements, foreseeing the future, and establishing the major signs of this Renaissance in GCC States.
- The report mentioned the programs and projects which were the cornerstone of this Educational Renaissance in every GCC State, amounting to (39) projects and programs. It also defined its domains and classified and grouped them according to their nature, into (5) types of programs and (11) types of projects considered as joint projects among GCC States, while defining the goals of every type. Below is an overview of these projects and their goals, as mentioned in the report.

Table 42: Overview and classification of joint education development programs and projects

Axis	Domain	Programs		Projects	
		No.	Title	No.	Title
Curricula General Education 7 The Subject Complementarity Program 2 The Islamic Education Curriculum Development Program 4 The Arabic Language Program 4 The Mathematics and Sciences Curriculum Development Program 2 The Attainment Examinations Program The Learning Difficulties Program			The Citizenship Education Program	3	- The Culture of Dialogue Project - The Citizenship and Self-Concept Project - The Life Skills Project
			- The Learners' Educational Competencies Project - The Concept Atlas Project		
			- The Developed Document Building Project - The Educational Software for Islamic Education Subjects Project - The Vocational Development for Islamic Education Teachers and Supervisors Project - The Islamic Education Teaching Strategies Project		
			- The Arabic Language Educational Center Project - The Arabic Language Curriculum Document Building and Teaching Strategies Project - The Arabic Language Teacher Training and Skill Development Project - The Arabic Language Development and Learning Project		
			- The Mathematics Curriculum Development Project - The Sciences Curriculum Development Project		

Education Quality	Education Apprenticeship	2	Vocational Development Program	1	- The Teacher Training Project
			Educational Leadership Training Program	1	- The Educational Leaders' Leadership Skills Development Project
	Education Systems	1	System Development Program	2	- Education Improvement Project - School Accreditation Project
	Education and Technology	1	School Electronic Network Program	3	- Educational Software for Mathematics and Sciences Project - Teacher's E-House Project - E-learning Portal Project
Governance	Community-based partnership	1	Education Investment Program	3	- The Gulf Foundation for Education Investment Project - The National Education Support Fund Project - The Education Economies Project
		1	Guidance and Counseling Program	1	The Education Outcomes and Job Market Integration Program

2.2 Joint development programs and projects goals

- The general education curriculum field constitutes more than half of the joint programs and projects, encompassing (7) programs and (15) projects, as well as two programs and three projects in the education systems and community-based partnership fields. The education apprenticeship field includes two programs and two projects, while the learning and technology field includes one program and three projects.

2.2.1 The general education curriculum field

- **The Citizenship Education Program:** This project is aimed at developing ethical values and community culture, and encompasses the following projects:

- **The Culture of Dialogue Project:** Aimed at spreading and developing the culture of dialogue among concerned parties within the educational institution
- **The Citizenship and Self-Concept Project:** Aimed at developing citizenship behavior in kids enrolled in kindergarten and primary education.
- **The Life Skills Project:** Aimed at providing the student with a range of basic life skills.

- **The Subject Complementarity Program:** Responds to the necessity of achieving complementarity, interdependence, and compatibility between subjects. It includes the two following projects:

- **The Learners' Educational Competencies Project:** Aimed at preparing a guide with the level of educational competencies that are expected to be mastered by the students in all subjects by the end of secondary education (10-12).
- **The Concept Atlas Project (Concept Maps):** Aimed at helping authors of the curricula to build curricula around the subject matter's basic scientific concepts.

- **The Islamic Education Curriculum Development Program:** It comes as a confirmation to the importance of Islamic Education curricula in instilling noble Islamic values in students, in light of social, cultural, and technological variables. It includes:

- **The Developed Document Building for Islamic Education Curricula Project:** Aimed at defining general goals for Islamic Education curricula in member States.
- **The Educational Software for Islamic Education Subjects Project:** Aimed at promoting the teaching and learning of Islamic Education subjects.
- **The Vocational Development for Islamic Education Teachers and Supervisors Project:** Aimed at developing vocational competencies for the teachers and supervisors of Islamic Education.
- **The Islamic Education Teaching Strategies Project:** Aimed at developing subject teaching strategies.

- **The Arabic Language Program:** This program comes in response to the need for a comprehensive project which addresses weaknesses in the Arabic Language curricula and its teaching methods, in order to improve relevant student levels. It is constituted of:

- **The Arabic Language Educational Center Project,** aimed at improving the methods of planning and designing Arabic Language curricula.
- **The Arabic Language Curriculum Document Building and Teaching Strategies Project,** aimed at improving methods of planning and designing Arabic Language curriculum elements.
- **The Arabic Language Teacher Training and Skill Development Project,** aimed at improving the methods of choosing, training, and developing the competencies of Arabic Language teachers.
- **The Arabic Language Development and Learning Project,** aimed at developing students' trend toward free reading, and developing the level of authorship and creativity in child literature.
- **The Mathematics and Sciences Curriculum Development Program:** This program comes in response to the need for developing Mathematics and Sciences curricula, in order to keep up with the latest developments in modern science.
- **The Educational Attainment Examinations Program:** Aimed at measuring the quality of education and its outcomes, its efficiency and that of the curriculum's elements, in order to improve educational and pedagogical work.

- **The Learning Difficulties Program:** This program is aimed at identifying students having learning difficulties, through the development of standardized detection tools, and the establishment of scientific mechanisms and methods in order to identify them and treat the difficulties they are facing in the educational process.

2.2.2 The education apprenticeship field

- **The Vocational Development Program:** This program takes into the account the fact that teaching is one of the essential professions in the field of education and human development, and that the teacher is the essence of the educational and pedagogical process. The program is aimed at deepening the concept of professionalism in teacher performance in member States, and developing the qualifications and standards of teacher training and development in member States, while providing the educational environment in GCC States with an integrated system for the teachers' vocational training system, which goes in line with the current educational systems.
- **The Educational Leadership Training Program:** This program focuses on educational leaders, as an essential element in the work's success or failure, based on the conviction that taking interest in developing leadership skills in educational leaders means developing education.

2.2.3 The Educational Systems Field

- **System Development Program:** Aimed at developing, updating and assessing current educational systems, while measuring their capacity to interact with surrounding changes and developments. This program includes two projects:
- **Education Improvement Project:** Aimed at improving the learning process in the classroom (school environment) through the development of assessment methods of classroom and school performance, in addition to improving the educational relationship between the school and the surrounding environment, while providing the educational and pedagogical environment with the assessment standards and tools which contribute to performance improvement.
- **The School Accreditation Project:** Aimed at enriching the educational field with school accreditation literature in the educational institution, as well as improving and facilitating the assessment measures of educational and pedagogical performance in educational institutions.

2.2.4 The Education and Technology Field

- **School Electronic Network Program:** Aimed at promoting design, dissemination and modeling, in order to mainstream technology in education. The program's first phase includes three projects:
- **Educational Software for Mathematics and Sciences Project:** Aimed at promoting the teaching and learning of Sciences and Mathematics in the elementary and secondary cycles.

- **Teacher’s E-House Project:** Aimed at improving the methods and tools of teachers’ vocational and technical performance improvement with the use of E-learning techniques, and by spreading the culture of self-development through the use of this technology.
- **E-learning Portal Project:** Aimed at enriching the learning and teaching processes in general education schools, by providing e-learning material through the Internet for all cycles in all disciplines. It is also aimed at spreading the culture of self-development through the use of technology.

2.2.5 The community partnership field

- **Education investment program:** This program is mainly aimed at sensitizing education workers about the various fields, opportunities, and economic methods in education, and at finding a developmental investment institution in the field of general education. This program includes three projects:
- **The Gulf Foundation for Education Investment Project:** Aimed at promoting the role of the private sector in member States for investment in education, and activating a true partnership between the private and public sectors.
- **The National Education Support Fund Project:** Aimed at finding participatory community-based models between the private sector and the public sector in funding education through the usual sources.
- **The education economies project:** Aimed at contributing to building standards and mechanisms which aid the optimal use of education resources, while reducing financial and human wastage in educational projects.
- **Guidance and counseling program:** This program complements the previously achieved school guidance program. It is mainly aimed at promoting integration between education outcomes and the job market, by raising awareness within the target population (students) about the available work domains.

24- Education development programs and projects in Member States

- Below are the programs and projects for each State, after being enumerated and classified according to the sources from which they were drawn. Additionally, their goals, outcomes and learned lessons are briefly presented, knowing that relevant details can be found by referring to the program or project’s card. The presentation of projects is mainly based on successful projects and programs gathered through the survey, in view of the information they provide, and knowing that they are relatively new in terms of preparation and completion. If the survey was not received from the State, the projects of the fourth or fifth consultative meeting will be presented if sufficient information is available to do so. Needless to say, the presentation avoids presenting programs or projects with similar goals and outcomes, within the same State.

3.1 The United Arab Emirates

3.1.1 Project overview

- (12) projects were accounted for and registered from the three adopted sources, between the educational systems field which included (9) projects, and the education and technology field which includes two, in addition to one project aimed at developing kindergarten. The achievements are centered on developing the educational institution, teachers' qualifications, the use of technology, and giving special attention to people with special needs.
- Similar to the joint projects mentioned in the report on Education Renaissance, it becomes evident that by looking at the tri-dimensional classification (enrollment/quality/governance) that all projects belong to the second field concerning the improvement of education. The table also shows that the project related to people with special needs was repeated at two sources.

Table 43: Project distribution by source in the UAE

Source	Axis/Field	Project Title
Joint report on Education Renaissance in GCC States	Education quality / education systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing the structure of education - Developing the teacher's system - Taking care of people with special needs - Model schools - Schools of tomorrow - Assessment counselor
Experiences presented in fourth and fifth consultative meetings by Ministers of Education	Education quality / education systems	- Schools of tomorrow
	Education quality / education and technology	- E-Learning
Form search on successful experiences	Education quality / education systems / education quality and enrollment / education systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School accreditation for public and private schools - Integrating students with special needs and learning difficulties in general education schools - The kindergarten development initiative
	Education quality / education and technology	- The Mohammed bin Rashid Smart Learning Program

3.1.2 Success stories

The UAE submitted four surveys for success stories in the field of education, centered on education systems, and enrollment equality through giving particular attention to those with special needs, as well as kindergarten.

3.1.2.1 The school accreditation for public and private schools initiative project

The project is aimed at guaranteeing educational performance quality in public and private schools through:

- School internal and external assessment.
- Professional development of education workers to play the role of school assessors.
- Coordinating with different departments within the Ministry of Education, and with school districts.

The implementation of the project hinges on using the school assessment guide comprising six focus areas, and three assessment provisions, in order to judge school performance in every area (very efficient, efficient, and inefficient).

The school accreditation program goes through six phases, starting with school selection, training on the self-assessment program, then visits, culminating in the final report which would be published on the Ministry's website.

Main project outcomes: (417) public schools have been assessed from 2009-2013. (136) public schools were graded "very efficient", with (252) schools as "efficient", and (29) schools as "inefficient". Then, (35) private schools were assessed, with the training of (124) directors and counselors in order to play the role of school assessors, and the training of (1022) directors and assistant directors in school self-assessment.

The project benefited from several supporting factors guaranteeing its success, such as the availability of an assessment guide of international standards, and the co-operation between international assessors, local assessors, and analysts who undertook the assessment process, as well as the circulation of school reports mentioning strengths and weaknesses, which supports schools in the elaboration of future development plans. This was also reinforced by the presence of a data system for all schools, and the complementarity of roles between the school accreditation administration and other administrations. This was illustrated in the organization of the school accreditation conference, and the positive effect of local assessors on school directors, as well as spreading the culture of school assessments in all schools.

3.1.2.2 The Project of integrating students with special needs and learning difficulties in general education schools

The project is aimed at providing equal and equitable educational services for all, by providing an opportunity to disabled students for education in equal measures to their peers in society, so that they can lead an ordinary life, and interact with others. It also provides an opportunity for ordinary school students to get acquainted with disabled students, appreciate their problems, and help them face the requirements of life. It is also aimed at reducing the financial cost of establishing special education institutions, and accommodation and interior care centers.

The project was launched in 2008/2009, since that time, integration was achieved in (10) schools in all school districts. The number of beneficiaries from special education programs reached (6496) students. In 2013/2014, the number reached (348) out of (422) schools (83% of schools), and the number of beneficiaries was (15547) students. Almost (50%) of school faculty and administrative body members received training, in addition to (80%) of the kindergarten faculty and technical body members.

The project is supported by the 2006 Federal Law No. (29) related to the rights of disabled persons, and was amended with the 2009 Federal Law No. (14), and the UAE 2020 Vision, axis IV (the education system provides equal opportunities to all students which leads to balanced results, and integrates those with special needs in the educational system while providing the adequate support programs and facilities). The project also benefited from financial and moral support by the Ministry of Education which allocated a special budget for that purpose, in addition to the establishment of the general rules guide for special education programs, the promotion of cooperation, the conclusion of partnership deals regarding the education of students with mental disabilities, then providing vocational rehabilitation for them, as well as establishing a higher committee for disabled persons, and preparing models for the individual education plan (the special curriculum for disabled students within the ordinary curriculum for all students in public schools).

This project highlights the need to gradually implement the integration initiative, since it started with ten schools in 2009, and is expected to include all schools by 2015. The shortage of specialists in special education programs led to the elaboration of a training package which benefited (50%) of school teachers and directors, and (80%) of kindergarten workers. Parent support is the cornerstone of the integration initiative's success. The training of teachers of all disciplines on special education programs with the participation of parents also played a major role in the initiative's success.

3.1.2.3 The Mohammed bin Rashid Smart Learning Project

The project is mainly aimed at spreading the culture of smart learning, and effectively integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the teaching and learning process. The project has the following goals:

- Supporting education technology, improving the teaching and learning processes in schools, developing the decision-making process, and providing a broad range of high-quality educational opportunities.
- Promoting the skills of school teachers and directors so that they perform efficiently, and effectively integrating parents in their children's learning process.

The project had major outcomes. After His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum launched the Mohammed bin Rashid Smart Learning Project in 2012 which targets all schools, it was implemented until the present period in (123) public schools, while (440) smart classrooms were equipped (interactive whiteboard, linking to the adequate online material, computers for every teacher and director, tablet device for every student...). Additionally, (1357) teachers and (72) school leaders received the appropriate training, in addition to honoring the outstanding efforts deployed in this regard.

The project benefited from the support of UAE leadership for being a part of the UAE (2020) Vision. It also supports the national education development agenda, and is reinforced by the presence of a project budget which supports fixed implementation plans, especially that its strategy is based on several pillars such as practical studies, similar field experiences, and drawn lessons locally and internationally. Other support factors include communication and team spirit in cooperation with parties and partners to achieve the program's vision and goals.

The project allowed for learning many lessons, including the necessity to establish a program and plans to manage change in a studied and elemental manner, in order to successfully transition to smart and modern practices in education. It is also worth mentioning that guaranteeing a seamless and sustainable transition to modern educational practices requires a continuous professional development program for school teachers and leaders.

3.1.2.4 The kindergarten development initiative project

The project's main aim is to establish a specialized and distinguished scientific educational system which includes all kindergarten education and training services, through continuous development and expansion of the training program. This is possible by modernizing educational work methods, developing the tools and methods used in kindergarten so they keep up with the times and the tremendous changes in knowledge and technology, developing the educational environment in kindergarten which helps achieve set goals, and reach positive and cost-effective results, in addition to promoting the level of kindergarten, which allows the child to adapt to ulterior cycles.

Kindergarten development has acquired a holistic and gradual nature due to several factors: Establishing kindergarten development centers, preparing the developed curriculum according to the self-learning principle, developing performance assessment methods and enriching the developed curriculum with the linguistic development program and the English language program. It has also sought to provide training on the developed curriculum for the faculty, administrative, and technical staff, reorganizing the internal and external environment, developing the organizational structure of developed kindergarten, and changing the daily program.

The program also benefited from the ongoing government support to kindergarten, to the kindergarten development project, the organization of an international conference on childhood, and undertaking visits as well as participating in conferences and seminars in order to keep up to date with other States' experiences and initiatives. Ongoing training of faculty, administrative and technical staff in government kindergartens – along with parent and society participation – has played a key role in the success of this project.

The completion of the project led to a series of drawn lessons, namely: sensitizing parents about the importance of their participation in the process through which their children acquire communication skills through increasingly participating in their children's learning. Another lesson is showing the role of parents, society, and nursery, in the optimal construction of pre-kindergarten, and in developing and promoting the child's mental growth while establishing basic skills and knowledge. Additionally, the fact that more parents are enrolling their children in government kindergartens, and transferring their children from private to government kindergartens, has shown private kindergartens' desire to implement the self-learning curriculum which is applied in government kindergartens.

3.2 Kingdom of Bahrain

3.2.1 Project overview

The number of projects included in the three main sources reached no less than (18) projects, distributed by source and field, as follows:

- (8) projects mentioned by the report on Education Renaissance in GCC States, all of which address education systems.
- (5) projects presented in the framework of the fourth and fifth consultative meetings of Ministers of Education. These projects address the fields of technical and education systems, and education and social partnership.
- (5) projects derived from surveys on successful projects and experiences directed at Gulf States by the Arab Bureau of Education. They are divided into two fields related to education systems and community-based partnership.

Table 44: Project distribution by source and intervention field in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Source	Axis/Field	Project Title
Joint report on Education Renaissance in GCC States	Education quality / education systems	- HH King Hamad Schools of the Future Project - Unifying Academic Paths in Secondary Education - Developing Primary Education - Developing Elementary Education - Developing Technical and Vocational Education - Apprenticeship - Fostering Gifted Students
	Education quality / general education curricula	- Teaching English in First Grade in Primary Education
Experiences presented in the fourth and fifth consultative meetings of Ministers of Education	Community-based partnership	- Experience in the Field of Society Service
	Education quality / education and technology	ICT Regional Center
	Education quality / education systems	- HH King Hamad Schools of the Future Project (Repeated) - Apprenticeship (Repeated) - Disabled Students Program
Surveys on successful experiences	Education quality / education systems / enrollment opportunities	- Improving School Performance - Training Vocational Education School Students - Integrating Autistic Students in Public schools
	Community-based partnership	- Skills Competition - Helping and Training to Establish Small Enterprises and the Local Economy

Additionally, there are (6) unlisted local experiences at the school level, in the framework of the HH King Hamad Schools of the Future Project.

3.2.2 Presenting successful experiences

3.2.2.1 The school performance improvement project

The project is generally aimed at improving teacher and student performance in order to help students acquire the needed life skills, and thus achieve goals related to developing curricula, the school environment and the teacher, while promoting the teacher's mission, and the role of school administration and leadership. The project depends on self-assessment by all components of the educational institution based on the main performance indicators, in addition to school review visits and performance dialogues.

The project outcomes are illustrated in the rise of number of schools with positive reports, and the drop in schools with unsatisfactory results according to the quality assurance body report. The project also led to the transformation of schools to active institutions working with team spirit, and participating to the establishment of a vision based on the spirit of responsibility.

The supporting factors of the project's success are illustrated in the presence of strategic plan by the Ministry which guarantees continuity and support in order to improve school performance, as well as the reports of the training and teaching quality assurance body.

The lessons drawn from the project are related to improving school time, promoting personal and academic student performance, and teachers' professional development.

3.2.2.2 Integrating autistic students in public schools project

The project is mainly aimed at providing the best educational and pedagogical services to autistic students in public schools, by providing them with educational competencies and life skills, engaging them in certain educational activities and events with ordinary students in schools, and preparing them for craft concepts that are adequate for qualification and training, in order to join the job market.

The project outcomes are centered on building partnerships with civil society institutions specialized in autism, in addition to opening classes in (8) schools, attracting (40) students.

The project's supporting factors include the conviction in the importance of this project with regard to the Ministry, the institution and parents, as well as providing the project's human, financial and institutional requirements.

This project has highlighted the necessity of achieving education for all through the inclusion of this category within other disability categories within the school. It has also helped alleviate the financial burden on families by providing free education for this category, and thus was able to meet parents' aspirations of preparing their children for integration in society.

3.2.2.3 The Project for helping establish small enterprises

The project's main aim is to prepare a generation that is capable of contributing to the support of the national economy plans, by adopting small and micro-enterprises as a practical way of life. It is aimed at honing students' skills and talents in order for them to be able to start their own enterprises, while raising awareness about the importance of starting small enterprises for society and local economy. It is also aimed at helping students develop their business ideas and establish and develop their own enterprises, and raising awareness about sources that back small enterprises and the services they offer, in addition to providing students with the opportunity to see actual experiences of previously achieved pioneer enterprises.

The project led to the graduation of students in technical and vocational education, who are able to establish their own enterprises and actively contribute to the development of the local economy.

Moreover, the project benefited from many supporting factors, such as the appointment of teachers to monitor and supervise children in work sites, providing all trainees with transportation to and from training sites, in addition to providing student trainees with financial allocations. The project was also supported by the preparation of a competition for enterprises, with the selection of the twenty best enterprises, and honoring the students who started these enterprises by the Bahrain Development Bank, in addition to fostering a series of enterprises, and offering facilities to turn them into reality.

There are many lessons drawn from this project: Spreading the culture of free work among students before graduating from secondary education, developing creative thinking skills, supply and marketing methods, techniques for the preparation of project plans, supporting communication and teamwork skills, and promoting positive attitudes towards others.

3.2.2.4 Technical and vocational school student training program

The project's main aim is to promote the skills of Bahrainis through the development of education and training, in order for their skills to meet the requirements of an ever-changing job market. Its specific goals are to develop the partnership with industrial and service companies and institutions, provide students with the necessary work skills, experiences and ethics in the professional life, and introducing them to the various work fields that they might join in the future. The specific goals also include linking scientific subject matter to the profession through practical field training, while preparing students to join the job market, and find future job opportunities.

The project led to the participation of (610) institutions from both the private and public sectors in 2013/2014, and (4446) students in the industrial and business paths which implemented the project.

The project was linked to a number of supporting factors, namely feedback from beneficiaries (questionnaires and reports), appointing teachers to monitor and supervise students during training, providing transportation and insurance coverage against accidents, and offering financial allocations to students.

The project helped students get to know work techniques and the reinforcement of professional belonging. It also led to close cooperation and true partnership between schools, job market institutions and the local society. It also raised awareness regarding equality in rights, duties and accountability. The project helped reinforce positive attitudes and respect towards others, and contributed to the receipt institution feedback at the technical and vocational education student level, while educating and engaging parents in the educational process.

3.2.2.5 Skills competition

The general goal of this project is to provide a program that works side by side with job market institutions, in order to graduate qualified national cadres able to compete on the local, regional and international levels, by achieving the specific goals aimed at encouraging the youth to enroll in TVET, and take up technical and vocational jobs, in addition to promoting communication between the job and education sectors. The specific goals also include, developing TVET programs, and promoting its departments with the provision of modern equipment and devices, highlighting those with skills and the status of TVET in regional and international forums, as well as acquiring experience through contact with people with experience and specialists.

The outcomes of this project include a series of mechanisms which allowed the executive committee to choose the skills and participants from the participating party according to the standards set by the executive committee, in addition to an experts' mechanism. The project also led to the development of young cadres that are qualified to professionally join the job market.

The project main supporting factors are related to funding fields, since the project depends on the private sector and the Labor Fund (empowerment) as well as human resources, by providing a number of experts and arbitrators, in addition to the technical aspect, where educational institutions played a major role in the equipment of students' training sites.

The lessons drawn from and help offered by the project show the increasing interest in TVET, and integration in technical and vocational jobs. They also show the reduced dependency on foreign labor, while revitalizing the spirit of competition among States and individuals, in order to reach high skill levels, and promote the participation of civil society institutions and public and private companies, while exchanging experiences and knowledge.

3.3 The Republic of Yemen

3.3.1 Project overview

There were six successful projects and experiments included within the three basic adopted sources, divided by source and field:

- Three projects that were presented in meetings four and five for discussion among Ministers of Education.
- Three projects that were part of a research by means of a form studying successful experiences.

We need to point out at this stage that the report concerning the revival of education in GCC countries was not part of the projects of the Republic of Yemen.

Table 45: Distribution of projects by source in Yemen

Source	Axis/Field	Project Title
The joint report on the revival of education in GCC countries		
Experiments presented during the fourth and fifth consultative meetings of ministers of education	Education quality/technique and education	Using ICT in education "Intaliq Project"
	Social partnership	The Conditional Cash Transfer Program
	Education quality/Education systems	School development
Research through forms about successful experiences	Education quality/Education systems	Girls' education
	Education quality/Education systems	School-based development
	Governance Social partnership	Establishment of parent associations

1.1.2 Success stories

3.3.1.1 The school-based development project

This project aims at preparing material and human resources based on the needs of each school, allowing them to improve their performance and education outcome and raise the level of their education services in accordance with quality and school accreditation standards. This requires achieving special goals, which can be summarized by providing an attractive, safe, and healthy school and education environment that promotes learning and positive competition among students. This can be reached by improving learning and teaching practices, by raising the level of both teaching and learning to meet the quality and school accreditation standards, while taking into consideration and promoting equal opportunities, fostering religious, moral, national, and educational values in students. It also requires an efficient use of teaching and learning

sources and techniques to improve educational and administrative practices, along with the development of human resources, so that these establishments may perform their education mission efficiently and competently. There is also a need for activating and expanding the participation of parents and local community, and their support for schools constant development, capacity building for managing and developing schools financial resources, improving capabilities of both schools and local communities in terms of carrying out, following up on, and evaluating school development plans, while encouraging them to manage and develop their financial resources, and agree to evaluate their performances, order, and classification by quality and school accreditation standards.

Among the positive project outcomes, establishing an administrative, financial and planning system, a follow-up and evaluation school-based system, along with the improvement of joint cooperation between local communities and schools in terms of practical management of education and improvement of its inputs. This resulted in the expansion of the participation of the school community in school administration by tackling school issues, facilitating its work, and offering financial support at times. It also meant the development of school administration abilities to solve its own problems, set detailed annual plans for extracurricular activities within a specific timeframe, set the financial cost for relevant actors, improvement of task and activity distribution among school staff members, particularly those related to quality. Additionally, it led to the adoption of annual operational budgets for schools to be able to set and manage a transparent financial system that respects good governance systems in deposits and withdrawals, as well as to building school capacities in terms of planning, execution, follow-up and assessment, and to the improvement of the school environment; simple maintenance, class preparation and painting, maintenance of school furniture and equipment, supplying educational means to carry out class activities, assisting in the implementation of extracurricular activities that go along with education curricula, and supplying indoors and outdoors school equipment.

Success factors of the projects were centered on the existence of political will that supported and backed the development process, and growing official and popular awareness of educational problems and challenges that schools face when trying to respond to the needs of individuals and society. They were also based on the trend towards meeting the challenges and problems the educational systems suffered from, and a serious move towards raising the level of cooperation, coordination, and harmonization between development partners in planning, implementing, and funding school development programs, investing and efficiently using possible and available resources and sources, benefiting from national, regional, and international educational experiments, and learning how to bolster developmental positive points and solve shortcomings.

One of the greatest lessons learned here is embodied by the previously mentioned importance of decentralized planning, particularly at the school level, which represents the front line of implementing national and local strategic plans. It is also linked to the importance of building school capacities in order to diagnose their situations and environments, and finding solutions that respond to the needs of local communities, which might differ from one another, or need different approaches, while keeping in mind a sense of ownership. It requires the participation of local communities, which play a pivotal role in strengthening the roles of monitoring and accountability through those who benefit most from schools –students, parent associations, and local communities.

3.3.1.2 The parent association establishment project

This project aims at strengthening the role of local communities in the expansion and quality betterment of the education process. Its more specific goals are linked to fostering and encouraging community participation, promoting a decentralized education system, and reinforcing communication between local communities and schools to solve the issues related to educational affairs.

The greatest opportunities to support and back this project are tied to the existence of a political will that is willing to do so in order to improve girls' education, especially in rural areas, and support granted by the Ministry of Education to parent associations by way of a community participation system adopted by the basic and secondary education development strategy. Determining the scope of these associations' work, and adopting parent and social specialist association training guides by the Ministry of Education requires the development of planning and administrative skills for staff members of both the girls' education and the community participation administrations, on all levels.

The greatest lessons learned are reflected by the importance of the role played by local communities in terms of assistance and stimulation of achieving educational goals, including parent associations, and the roles they play in fostering a sense of school ownership and preservation, and improving its educational mission.

3.3.1.3 Girls' education project in the Republic of Yemen

The aim of this project is equal opportunities, and justice in educational services between males and females, through specific goals that include raising the level of girls' enrolment in basic education, raising the level of school retention and basic education completion for girls, and raising community awareness about the importance of education, especially for girls, in rural areas.

The results and outputs of the project are clearly reflected in the raising of the net enrolment rate for females from 52.4% out of the total female population in the 6-14 age group in 2001-2002, to 75.3% in 2012-2013. Additionally, the gender gap shrank from 0.72 in 2001-2002 to 0.82 in 2012-2013. Furthermore, school dropout rates dropped, and school retention rate increased without significant reduction, despite a state of instability that reigned over most areas of the Republic of Yemen. There was also an increase of the rate of female teachers in basic education out of the total number of teachers, from 20.8% in 2001-2002, to 30.4% in 2012-2013; there was also a decrease in teachers' absences, and a fostering of the role of women, especially in rural areas.

Factors supporting the success of the project revolved around an official adoption of girls' education, donor parties turning towards supporting girls' education, and a trend towards anchoring local authorities and improving the relations between schools and local communities.

3.4 The State of Kuwait

3.4.1 Project Overview

There were 9 projects undertaken in the state of Kuwait over three fields, distributed by source as follows:

- 5 projects mentioned in the report about the revival of education in GCC countries.
- 3 projects falling within the experiments presented at the consultative meeting.
- One project as research topic by means of a form.

Table 46: Distribution of projects by source within Yemen

Source	Axis/Field	Project Title
The joint report on the revival of education in GCC countries	Education quality/technique and education/enrollment and quality/education systems	Computerizing education in kindergartens and in primary education Achievement files Support classes Integration and education of children with Down syndrome Care for special categories
Experiments presented during the fourth and fifth consultative meetings of ministers of education	Education systems	Entrepreneurship education
	Technique and education	E-learning
	General education curricula	Consolidation of educational values
Research through forms about successful experiences	Quality/general education curricula	Human rights education

3.4.2 Success stories

3.4.2.1 Project of computerization of education in kindergartens and primary education

The computerization project was integrated with the experience of kindergarten education curriculum; it included some basic skills necessary for children to be able to use computers. The project objectives included:

- Children reaching a minimum level of computer culture so that they can consciously deal with computer data and requirements.
- Offering developed computer software that use various media for children's interaction at a kindergarten level.
- Enriching the kindergarten class environment with more educational activities that are both intellectually and mentally enjoyable for learners.

The computerization project in primary education aims at teaching a simplified subject matter to inculcate basic computer knowledge, skills, and use in primary education students, as well as the use of a computer for other teaching fields (complementarily so), in order to use positively use the computer as a tool.

The project aims to:

1. Grant learners basic computer skills and knowledge through setting computer courses taught at all primary levels.
2. Use computers to teach in various education fields.
3. Enrich different education environments with educational computer programs that serve each one.
4. Develop computer skills and knowledge in primary education teachers, promote the use of computers, and employ it to carry out various aspects of their work tasks.

3.4.2.2 The achievement file project

The achievement file project falls within the framework of the comprehensive development strategy adopted by the Ministry in various dimensions of the education process. It includes amending assessment systems and methods, and developing its concepts and objectives to ensure the quality of the education process. These amendments and improvements were necessary and compulsive in order to activate the implementation of the continuous formative assessment, and to meet the performance and result improvement aspirations of students. Achieving this requires the use of many means, including the achievement file, which contains all that a student does during an academic year, recorded on a computer, used by course teachers, accessible to parents, and serving as reference to know the student's level.

The aim of this achievement file is students' participation in their assessment, support to all forms of the education process, and encourage and develop successful performances. It also aims to support and document cooperative ideas and projects through developing students' work and encouraging them to work as a cooperating team, documenting their progress, in addition to involving parents and teachers in students' personal and professional follow-up process. The achievement file is divided into two types:

- Working portfolio: this type of file includes all the work undertaken by a student during an academic term or year, in a specific course or subject matter.
- Presentation portfolio: this type is dedicated to presenting a student's most important and best work during the learning period, or at its end. It is used as a tool for the final assessment.

3.4.2.3 Support classes project

It aims at remedying and enriching skills taught in Arabic, English, mathematics, and sciences through support and specialized classes throughout the week. They rep-

resent a method of dealing with weak, average, and brilliant students separately. They adopt a cooperative method that raises the level of weak students, propels the average students forward, and fans the flames of achievement in brilliant students. This was included in the plan adopted by the State of Kuwait, aiming at developing primary education to pay attention to brilliant students, and remedy the educational shortcomings in others.

3.4.2.4 The integration and education of children with Down syndrome in primary education project

In the spirit of curricula for persons with special needs, the education program for children with Down syndrome includes sensory skills, social behavior skills, and language, motor, and cognitive skills. It also includes self-care skills in public schools. Additionally, Arab private schools implement the Ministry of Education's curricula, and foreign schools modify their curricula to fit the various degrees and types of disabilities. The project aims at ensuring the highest level of educational, psychological, and social care for children with Down syndrome within their peers' natural environment in primary education. It also aims at them acquiring the proper skills to help them rely on themselves, and strive at making children a productive force for the future, within the limits their capabilities and capacities.

3.4.2.5 The care for special categories project

The Ministry of Education is aware that caring for brilliant students should not be left to individual efforts or circumstances, and that it is important to exert intensive and systematic efforts to reach the best possible care for them. For that very reason, the Higher Council for Gifted Students was founded, presided by the Minister of Education. The goals of the project were listed as follows:

1. Invest in the capacities of the intellectually brilliant to the maximum.
2. Prepare future leadership in various fields of scientific, artistic, and literary specializations.
3. Develop creative thinking capacities in sciences, languages, and art.
4. Help brilliant students understand social accountability, learn their duties to their state, and their success in their field of specialization.
5. Develop characters and facilitate their psychological adjustment.

The Ministry has developed morning classes for the Enrichment Center secondary education students in two schools, one for boys and one for girls. This aims at alleviating administrative burdens shouldered by enrichment class teachers. Selecting those who will teach brilliant students' special classes is based on specific standards; the teachers must undertake and pass training sessions that aim at preparing brilliant class teachers and identify their characteristics and teaching methods.

3.4.2.6 The entrepreneurship education project

This program was launched at the call of the executive offices of Ministries of Labor and Ministries of Social Affairs in the GCC, issued in its 26th session in Muscat, in November 2010. It called “member states to strive to integrate the Know About Business (KAB) program in education and training curricula, in cooperation with Ministries of Education and competent training parties, while stressing the importance of necessary financial support and advertising campaigns”.

The program aims at:

1. Raising awareness in secondary education students and trainees in technical and vocational education and training about enterprises and working for the private sector as a viable employment option.
2. Developing positive positions about enterprises and working for the private sector.
3. Offering knowledge and experience in the required competences, and challenges that may arise when founding a successful enterprise, especially small enterprises.
4. Preparing young men and women to work productively and more comprehensively in SMEs, and prepare them for an environment in which the regular full-time use of paid employees is rare or nonexistent.

3.4.2.7 Ambitious insertion of technology in education projects

The education and teaching scene is the set of a contemporary revival that takes in the latest development of modern science and technology to benefit and improve the education process. In this context, the Ministry has adopted a number of projects aiming at meeting schools' material needs, necessary for them to improve their performances and insert technology in education, thus bettering its inputs and outputs. These projects are numerous and include a number of practical educational aspects.

In cooperation with the regional center for software development, the Ministry of Education undertook a number of projects, including:

1. The e-book project: this project is based on the idea of offering an electronic version of school books, along with the possibility of accessing and reading them. This project included all of general, religious, and adult education. Flash memory drives were supplied to each student or learner, and 911 books were digitalized –or 150,000 pages.
2. The kindergarten software project: this project aims at encouraging and motivating level 1 and 2 kindergarten children by way of self-education and by raising their excitement through software. The first development was made in 2002, in cooperation with the UNDP and under the supervision of education experts, to benefit all kindergarten children. More than 55 thousand children benefit from this program annually.
3. The primary education software development project: it is carried out through the design and production of educational software for primary education stu-

dents, in the subject matters of the Holy Quran and Islamic education for classes 1 through 5, Arabic for classes 1 through 4, English for classes 1 through 5, social studies for classes 3 through 5, civics for classes 1 through 5, and life skills for classes 1 through 5.

4. The educational software preparation for elementary education in sciences and mathematics project: in the context of expanding the insertion of technology in education, the Ministry of Education, in agreement with the regional center for software development, and with the support of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, kicked off a project to develop educational software for elementary level sciences and mathematics. The Ministry determines the scientific content, and the regional center turns it into software technology. Work on this began in the 2011-2012 academic year.
5. The item pool development project in all teaching fields, for both elementary and secondary education, aims at helping improve teachers' learning and performance. Around 200,000 questions were verified by knowledgeable reference subject matter teachers within the Ministry of Education. The program was posted on the Ministry website in 2004 and is available to all.
6. The education portal project: this project aims at contributing to the development of the education process by finding a comprehensive multi-service technical system that helps build teachers' capacities and skills. Precise interactive data and statistics are made available daily, and include participants of the education operation chain (teachers, learners, parents, administrators, researchers...).

3.4.2.8 The education value consolidation project

The aim of this project is for students to have a set of educational values, knowledge, and skills. In that spirit, developed courses and curricula were set to go along with the growth in education philosophy. Among its goals are:

1. Life skills, human rights and the constitutions, freedom of choice.
2. The development of standards and education subject matters for academic curricula according to curriculum setting quality standards.
3. Consolidating Islamic doctrine through education goals in all education curricula, and affirm them in educational content and activities.
4. Preserving the Kuwaiti cultural identity and basic rights.
5. Confirm values education through focusing on the values of dialogue, human rights, respect of other people's opinions, democracy, the respect of freedoms, the rule of law, and communication with others in all education curricula, and implementing them in educational activities.
6. Promote a spirit of citizenship and national unity, linked to the balance between rights and duties, while retaining intellectual balance and staying far from extremism and violence; adopt moderation as a civilized approach in all education curricula, especially social studies, civics, and life skills.

7. Pay attention to students' comprehensive and complementary development through taking the balance of knowledge, psychological, motor, and existential aspects into consideration when setting curriculum education goals.
8. Inculcate students with self-education skills, and foster a love and thirst for knowledge in an era of knowledge boom.
9. Center education practices around the individuality of education positions.
10. Increase the degree of freedom given to students within learning positions, and multiply the choices and alternatives available to them.
11. Positively deal with the technological challenge by confirming that curricula will be using various learning sources, and modernize e-curricula to encourage self-education in teachers and students.
12. Implement new education concepts such as individual learning, learning assisted by a computer, multimedia technology, learning source centers, and e-libraries.
13. Interactively link scientific matters with technological advancement from the first primary grade to the end of general education.
14. Diversify and modernize education strategies and pertaining activities.
15. Modernize assessment methods and diversify student assessment tools to measure academic achievements.
16. Rely on international expertise to develop academic curricula, and print and supply education subject matters.

3.4.2.9 **The human rights education project**

The general goal of this project is integrating the concepts of democracy, constitution, and human rights within the curriculum. Its more detailed objectives lie in raising teachers' awareness about the importance of democracy and human rights, and supplying them with the necessary information and knowledge about the constitution and human rights. They also include preparing them for everyday exercise, aiming at promoting the human values related to democracy, the constitution, and human rights, forming positive trends towards democracy, the constitution, and human rights, and fostering within students a sense of loyalty and belonging to their country and effective thinking skills.

Among the brightest outputs of this project is dedicating a 12th grade course to democracy, the constitution, and human rights, and supporting the LAS's education plan on human rights by printing the plan guidebook. It also helped publish a booklet on the State of Kuwait's experience in education on individual rights, and integrating the concepts of human rights in all religion curricula.

The project benefited from several supporting factors, such as political support and will to reach the project goals, and the government's education and development plan.

The project highlighted how important it is for education curricula to keep up with the times, and underlined the importance of teamwork, and the coordination with all competent sectors, researchers, and teachers, as well as benefiting from the LAS's and the Arab Bureau of Gulf States' recommendations.

3.5 The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

3.5.1 Project Overview

There were 23 projects undertaken in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, distributed by source as follows:

- 10 projects mentioned in the report about the revival of education in GCC countries.
- 4 projects falling within the experiments presented at the consultative meeting.
- 9 projects as research topic by means of a form.

Table 47: Distribution of projects by --- source within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Source	Axis/Field	Project Title
The joint report on the revival of education in GCC countries	Education quality/education systems	1. The King Abdullah project for the development of education
	Education quality/education curricula	2. The comprehensive project for curricula development
	Education quality/general education curricula	3. Teaching English at the primary level
	Education quality/education apprenticeship	4. Selections of educators' professional standards
	Education quality/general education curricula	5. The experience of flexible secondary education
	Education quality/technique and education	6. Computerized laboratories
	Education quality/general education curricula	7. The development of mathematics and natural sciences curricula
	Education quality/education systems	8. Care for talent and creativity
	Education quality/education apprenticeship	9. Training teachers during their service
	Education quality/education systems	10. Care for persons with special needs
Experiments presented during the fourth and fifth consultative meetings of ministers of education	Education quality/ education curricula	11. Secondary education - course system
	Education quality/technique and education	12. Electronic education system
	Education quality/general education curricula	13. Developing general education: curricula as examples 14. Developing general education: achievements and aspirations

Research through forms about successful experiences	Education quality/technique and education	15. Networking and communication project 16. Service guide and operation design project for the national center at the Ministry of Education 17. Computer laboratory and learning resource laboratory supplying and installing.
	Governance/technique and education	18. The INJAZ project 19. The financial and administrative resource management project (FARES) 20. The NOOR project (for education management)
	Education quality/general education curricula	21. The project of elaborating and building an application program and information technology administration development methodology 22. National 2013 AD Olympics for scientific creativity project 23. The active learning project

3.5.2 Success stories

3.5.2.1 The networking and communication project

This project's main goal is expanding society's participation in education. Its more particular goals pertain to linking ministry websites, public administrations, and education administrations in a wide virtual network, and improving the use of internet in ministry offices and schools. It also seeks to link, via satellite, remote universities that have no internet access, and develop current school networking means with the best available techniques and speeds.

The outputs and achievements of this project shine clearly through the building, activation, and management of a virtual network, gradually linking all ministry websites, step-by-step. They are also concretized by allowing ministry offices and schools safe and direct internet access through said network, as well as allowing the ministry to competently and properly activate its strategic systems, improve expected interest rates, and prepare the proper technical infrastructure to develop an education environment corresponding to ministry guidelines.

Additionally, its greatest outputs were also linking 714 websites, covering more than 10 websites on service education administrations, providing more than 2,800 remote schools with internet via satellite, more than 937 schools with direct internet access, and 20 in-service education and learning administrations, with high capacities.

3.5.2.2 Service guide and operation design project for the national center at the Ministry of Education

This project strives towards a general goal in the development plan, which is to set

the basis of technical information governance, and a detailed guide of technical services and operation at the national center for education information at the national Ministry of Education. This project aims at designing and carrying out an entire set of work mechanism for the national center for education information, based on the best world practices, through designing, publishing, and training on the operations and service guidebook of the national center for education information.

The outputs and achievements of this project appear in the design and execution of the entire set of work mechanism for the national center, and the development of a comprehensive guide for the operations and services of the national center.

3.5.2.3 Computer laboratory and learning resource laboratory supplying and installing.

The aim of this project falls under the development plan, and pertains to developing the education environment in order to meeting the quantitative and qualitative needs of the next stage. The project aims at allowing schools to use computers and informatics in order to promote the education process, through practical applications of computer sciences, and those related to computer curricula in both elementary and secondary education. It also aims at education using computers, by using the latter as an interactive and personal learning tool. It strives to allow access to information from different sources by using a computer, and offers technical support and maintenance for all laboratories supplied in these projects, teacher and supervisor training in field information technologies on the latest versions of programs adopted in these computer curricula, and software and hardware maintenance.

This project had many outputs and achievements that are embodied by computer laboratories equipped with a technical network and hardware, and technical furnishings (in 2013: 6,763 laboratories, 102,077 e-readiness, 6,763 servers), and teachers trained on programs supplied in the computer laboratories (benefiters in 2013: 45 administrations, 6,763 schools, 6,763 teachers, 135 laboratory supervisors), as well as technical support for computer labs.

3.5.2.4 The INJAZ project

The goals of this project show through the comprehensive automation of official documents, the management of these documents' movements between agencies and administrations, and the establishment of an integrated and safe environment to preserve and archive ministry documents. It is also tied to the establishment of system to preserve and easily retrieve circulars. Additionally, the project aims at facilitating the search for documents according to prerogatives and adopted governance, at an integrated preservation of documents with strategic project solutions within the ministry (such as the FARES and NOOR systems), and competence improvement by reducing the time necessary to transaction movement, improving the tracking of official documents, completing tasks and transactions anytime, anywhere, through tablets and smart phones, and manage the affairs and decisions of committees and follow up on their tasks.

Among the outputs and achievements of the project, we find the automation of office tasks at the general administration, the follow-up of incoming and outgoing transactions and correspondence, the control over transaction flow, the unification of the e-content technique used by the ministry and education administrations. This was carried out to find a more efficient information environment, and it related to the management of document and e-content archiving for all ministry departments, to the establishment of a records administration that follows the highest standards, to the management of meeting and committee affairs and decisions and the follow up and preservation of their tasks, and the management of appointments and contact lists.

3.5.2.5 The financial and administrative resource management program (FARES)

This project aims at developing an education environment that meets the quantitative and qualitative needs of the upcoming stage, and using the latest technological advances to provide a comprehensive and integral solution for the management of the resources of the Ministry of Education, to raise the ministry's financial and administrative competence and efficiency in education administrations, improve the precision, quality, and security of data pertaining to financial and human resources, and guarantee this data is safe and private. The objectives of this project also aim at supporting the decision-making process within the Ministry of Education, through finding a unified information environment that is integrated, safe, and available, which supports taking the proper decision, and through competence improvement by mechanizing tasks related to resource planning and operations management within the ministry, along with precise information supplied by employees; this information allows the measurement and the follow-up of employees' best performances, and leads to integrated multiple databases of all region within one central database that offers round the clock electronic services, from any location, to all teachers and employees. It provides information and makes it available to individuals and administrations for optimization, helps preserve confidentiality and privacy, and allows comprehensive administrative quality for ministry instruments and education administrations, and improves the level of work measure efficiency and competence.

The project's outputs and achievements lie in the supply, installation, and activation of all necessary equipment for the infrastructures of all systems applied in the main website, along with the preparation of a system for data recovery in a backup website in case of problems. They also include the supply, installation, and activation of all necessary project permits, the use, preparation, and execution of all comprehensive solutions and an integrated media environment that can link the presented solution to any future systems, and can undertake all the necessary work to execute, apply, and activate the systems.

3.5.2.6 The NOOR education management system project

Through the NOOR project for education management system, the Ministry of Education aims at increasing education efficiency for all general education schools and kindergartens, by efficiently using public education resources, offering precise informa-

tion, getting rid of data repetition, offering round-the-clock electronic services to users, and ensuring feedback for data related to students, at the opportune moment and as needed. It also aims at ensuring a trustworthy data flow between the ministry and education administration, which reduces the need of data insertion at the ministry level, at improving the ministry's capacities to design, plan, form, and implement proper administrative and education policies, and at supporting the decision-making mechanism, thus allowing stakeholder users remote access to administrative education information.

The most important services offered by this project concerns all components of the educational and formative system (courses, elementary and secondary examination systems, student acceptance and mobility, student and teacher absences, education supervision, student guidance, kindergartens, adult education, school and building planning...).

The achievements of this project during execution may be summarized as follows: first stage (main structure), 100%; second stage (examination and acceptance), 100%; third stage (dissemination), 99%; fourth stage (procedural systems), 90%; fifth stage, 73%; sixth stage, 48%.

3.5.2.7 The preparation and building an application program and information technology administration development approach project

This project aims at setting a unified approach in terms of regulating software life cycles for all applications at the level of the Ministry of Education, and activating and motivating information technology administration to benefit from the skills and experience acquired by participation in the life cycle of software setup.

The importance of this project lies in the fact that it sets a standard approach to the life cycle of software development based on international standards, and that it works on accelerating work, saves efforts, time, and costs, and building high-quality software.

This project's outputs and achievements in cognitive functions are concretized by building an approach of software preparation and development built on realistic applied bases, an automated approach system (applications/areas), along with the development of running, applying, and executing a gradual program developing methodology, communication management (internal communication, communication for the national center, communication with areas), the measurement and verification of results (review/verification/measurement of results), and the launch of preparation and planning activities with a 3% achievement rate; this value corresponds to the beginning of the project.

3.5.2.8 The 2013 national Olympics for scientific creativity project

This project aims at providing a competitive environment, and discovering and developing students' scientific talents.

This project's outputs and achievements included presentations of scientific research and innovation projects, benefiting 70,000 students.

3.5.2.9 The active learning project

The general goal here is to develop teaching practices to go in hand with the implementation of active learning, through field teaching applications in accordance with the requirements of active learning, and setting and publishing prototype and applied guidebooks, thus building and publishing a training portfolio, applications, and strategies for active learning in civics.

Project outputs are clear through the participation in developing active learning strategies, focus on developing student skills, and improving supervision practices for field supervision, in hand with active learning strategies.

Its execution for this year is tied to the preparation of active learning training portfolios, and the implementation of some active learning strategies in classrooms, with the participation of general supervisors, field supervisors, and teachers.

3.6 The Sultanate of Oman

3.6.1 Programs overview

The 19 projects are divided by source as follows:

- 7 selected from the report about the revival of education.
- 4 projects as presentations.
- 8 projects derived from research topic by means of a form, about the successful projects and experiments, addressed to the Gulf countries by the Arab bureau of education.

Table 48: Distribution of projects by source within the Sultanate of Oman

Source	Axis/Field	Project Title
The joint report on the revival of education in GCC countries	Education systems	- Development of school performance
		- Activity bank project
	Technique and education	- Teaching scientific subject matter with electronic models
	Social partnership	- The national center for career guidance
	General education curricula	- The integral curriculum project
	Technique and education	- The education portal project
Experiments presented during the fourth and fifth consultative meetings of ministers of education	Education systems	- Filming/Recording school performances
	Technique and education	- Electronic systems and applications that serve the education system
	General education curricula	- Cognitive development systems for students in sciences, mathematics, and the concepts of environment geography
	Technique and education	- Electronic correction of the general education diploma examinations
Research through forms about successful experiences	Education apprenticeship	- The experienced teacher academic project in cooperation with the Sultan Qaboos University
	General education curricula	- Cognitive development project for students in sciences, mathematics, and the concepts of environment geography
	Social partnership	- The ROI (Return On Investment) project
	Education apprenticeship	- The teacher knowledge examination program project
	Social partnership	- The communication program between schools, families, and local communities project
	General education curricula	- The "teaching young learners" project
	Technique and education	- The use of online blogs to teach sciences project
	Education systems	- The safety and security team project

3.6.2 Success stories

3.6.2.1 The experienced teacher academic project in cooperation with the Sultan Qaboos University

This project's main objective is the motivation and development of teachers for the better, and improving their performance within the education process. This goal is reached through concretizing detailed goals, by developing these experienced teachers' academic side, supplying them with information, recent developments, and methods pertaining to the education process, as well as developing specialized teacher skills in education field, and arming them with the necessary skills for technical and practical applications.

The project covered the academic needs of teachers participating in the program, hailing from different specializations and regions. In 2012, it targeted 200 teachers over four specializations, and in early 2013, 600 teachers participated in the project. January 2014 saw the participation of 1,040 teachers over 18 specializations, and 530 participants over 16 education specializations were recorded in June 2014.

Factors that supported the success of this project included the involvement of most education specializations and practical applications, scientific visits coupled with a corresponding university investment by involving the assistant figures accompanying the program, and efforts to diversify training methods by direct contact with academic professors, by inserting teachers in university environments.

What we learned: the specialized scientific subject matter was enriched by the exchange of experiences between experienced teachers. This helped teachers acquire the necessary skills in technical and practical applications, and promoted the role of universities in enriching various specializations.

3.6.2.2 The cognitive development project for students in sciences, mathematics, and the concepts of environment geography

The general goal of this project is to develop the teaching and learning of the subject matters of sciences and mathematics, and the concepts of environment geography. One can summarize its more detailed objectives as motivating and encouraging students to study sciences, mathematics, and environment geography, raise their level of achievement in these subject matters, encouraging them to research, eliminate, and adopt systematically scientific thinking, develop their innovation talents, activate the applied practical aspect of studying sciences, mathematics, and environment geography concepts, and apply the cognitive skills learned in their lives. It also aims at discovering brilliant and talented students, encourage them and develop their skills in preparation for their participation in regional and international contests and studies in sciences and mathematics. It also aims at directing teachers to develop their performance, in order to renew and develop their teaching methods to go in hand with the various levels contained in one class. It strives to motivate them to follow the latest developments and inventions in the fields of sciences, mathematics, and environment geography, and encourages teachers and education supervisors to undertake diverse central and decentralized training programs, especially when it comes to higher cognitive capac-

ity question preparation skills, and education output realization standards with modern education means, all while taking the motivational aspect into consideration, and fostering a spirit of clean competitiveness.

The outputs of this project revolve around building enriching remedial activities, caring equally for excelling and weaker students in terms of achievements, and participating in international efforts with outstanding and projects and innovations.

Factors that allowed success here were based on the higher administration's support in overcoming difficulties, to implement the program tools and promote financial and moral support in students, teachers, schools, and education districts.

One of the greatest lessons learned was how teachers acquired higher cognitive question forming skills, by benefiting from the program's written examinations and oral tests, which made them conscious of the importance of scientific innovations, through the clear development in scientific innovations shared at the student project exhibition.

3.6.2.3 The ROI (Return On Investment) project

The main goal of this project is to know the impact of training programs on the improvement of performance and education process quality improvement, through carrying out its own specific goals aiming at knowing the impact of training programs on improving the performance of employees and the quality of work at the ministry, how this reflects on student achievement levels, and the extent to which trainees benefited from these programs, showing the amounts spent on them.

The project outputs were concentrated around ensuring evaluative studies for some training programs.

Additionally, the training programs carried out by the Ministry of Education have many positive consequences that weren't known until the completion of the ROI approach.

3.6.2.4 The teacher knowledge examination program project

The general goal of this project pertains to improving teacher competences and developing their knowledge. Its detailed objectives revolve around the development of main knowledge that teachers must have in order to teach English, and receiving an internationally recognized teaching certificate from Cambridge University. This leads to raising teacher competences, granting them self-confidence, bridges the wide gap between professional knowledge levels among teachers, and provides them with continuous opportunities for professional growth. This is due to the educational cooperation between the British culture council, and the Ministry of Education in the field of educational development.

The teachers received an internationally accredited teaching certificate from Cambridge University (teaching qualification degree), their competences were improved, and their professional knowledge developed.

The project is supported by the interaction among participants, motivated to learn and benefit from the program, as well as by the constant support of participants by the English training team at the main training center, and program supervisors in educational districts.

Lessons learned from this project include the acquiring of different teaching methods and approaches, new linguistic skills, the use of teaching resources, subject matters, and main elements to plan lessons, and new means of managing a class to meet its varied needs.

3.6.2.5 The communication program between schools, families, and local communities project

Meant to build an efficient partnership between families and local communities, this project's detailed goals pertain to the dissemination of communication culture between schools and local communities, and the ways of benefiting from available (human and material) capacities in both the private and the public sector. This falls in the service of the education process, in order to improve student achievement levels, through coordination between schools, families, and communities. It also equips school directors with some skills and competences that help them achieve the goals and mechanisms of efficient communication.

This project trained 1,001 school principals on program skills in educational districts, carried out several infrastructure construction projects in some of the schools that undertook the program, and disseminated the culture of the positive communication program abroad. This was achieved through the visit of a UAE delegation to get familiar with and benefit from the Sultanate of Oman's experience in school communication, along with mitigating parent reluctance to visit schools in order to follow up on their children's achievement level, remedying to some negative aspects of student life, such as tardiness, unjustified absences, vandalism and assault, and holding several education forums and seminars specific to the educational communication with parents and local civil society institutions in some educational districts.

Many factors were at play in the success of this project; most important were the strong motivation and administration by schools in the direction of creativity and mastery of schoolwork, a proper educational environment to carry out the program, and a focus on efficient administrative supervision follow-up by members of the schoolwork development team in educational districts, without forgetting the factor of moral and material motivation and promotion of exceptional administrators by some general directors in educational districts.

The project helped school directors acquire creative communication skills. That, in turn, allowed the efficient activation of the parents associations' role, and the appearance of various events at schools that undertook the program; they showed the importance and value of this program in a school environment. Additionally, some brilliant school directors communicated with educational institutions outside the Sultanate of Oman in the context of this program.

3.6.2.6 “Teaching young learners” project

This project aims at supporting and promoting current methods of teaching English to young learners, and overcoming reading difficulties in that subject matter. On a more detailed scale, the project aims at training 440 female English teachers by allowing them to acquire efficient methods of preparing and telling stories to young learners, polishing their English teaching skills through the use of stories in an exciting manner, and improving linguistic achievements for your learners by adopting contexts and methods to do so. It also strives to exploit local work environments for the improvement of both listening and reading skills, diagnose and treat those learners’ development issues, and continue to sustainably develop female teachers in first cycle schools in terms of teaching English, especially when it comes to teaching reading and writing through stories. The project will make teachers active participants in the preparation of stories, teaching methods, and accompanying activities. Furthermore, stories produced in the first production stage of the English language forum will be uploaded to the education portal so that all female English teachers in first school cycle may benefit from them.

The project resulted in the creation of 24 stories inspired by Omani folklore, accompanied by activities and lesson plans, 3 stories with activities and lesson plans, and a CD for storytelling.

The project benefited from several factors that played a role in its success, such as granting female teachers and supervisors a pivotal role in coming up with the stories, the activities, and the lesson plans, the experience and competence of experts who oversaw this project, the inspiration and linkage of short stories from the cultural and cognitive reality; Omani traditions, habits, local environment and heritage, along with Islam –the true religion of the targeted categories – and factors inspired by the main topics of current English and Arabic curricula were also important to the project’s success. They helped motivate male and female teachers equally.

Much was learned from this project, mainly about the use of short stories as a tool to enhance reading and writing skills in first cycle students, through accompanying activities and games, and to anchor values, self-confidence, and self-respect in those targeting by the development of educational subject matter, with a focus on methods of discovery and motivation of young learners’ imagination through those short stories.

3.6.2.7 The use of online blogs to teach sciences project

The aim of this project is to reach a certain speed in delivering documents and developments to teachers, through speedy receipt of documents and forms related to bilingual science subject matters, the speed at which teachers know of latest science developments, and by making sure teachers receive the latest editions of scientific documents with ease of communication with all science supervisors.

The greatest outputs of this project were the speed reached in receiving bilingual science documents and forms, teachers’ knowledge of recent science developments, with speedy delivery of the most recent editions of science documents, and ease of communication with all science supervisors.

Among the biggest factors that supported the success of this program were internet access in schools and at the ministry, and the organization of work between supervisors that run the blog.

The project allowed the alleviation of the burden of delivering the documents to teachers, and allowed for the speedy sending of official developments to teachers. This encouraged those working in other subject matters to start and use their own blogs.

3.6.2.8 The safety and security team project

The general aim of this project is to anchor the principles of safety and security by all means and methods, through school environment activities. In a more detailed manner, its goals are linked to the dissemination of the culture of safety and security in schools and society, building and promoting young people's safe intellectual, social, and behavioral capacities, develop the capacities of the safety and security team members and bus drivers pertaining to safe driving. They are also linked to the affirmation of carrying out safety and security measures and systems in school buildings and buses, and encouraging innovation in students through activities and competitions that promote the concept of safety and security.

There were many outcomes to this project, such as the training of 60 team members and bus drivers on safe driving, along with safety and security supervisors in private schools. It participated in the 2012 and 2014 Muscat (education village), and assessment tools were created for school buildings and buses. Private schools participated in the dissemination of the principles of safety and security in school and society, and a partnership was erected between the team and public and private social institutions that support these concepts. Furthermore, social media pages were set up for the team (on Facebook and Twitter), as well as a training program on safety in private schools in collaboration with the Civil Defense.

Among the factors that helped the success of the project are teamwork and unity between team members to reach the desired goal. Media coverage of the team's activities and events in visual, print, and social media helped introduce the program to the public, and encouraged it, along with individual initiatives, and the diversity of undertaken events and activities.

Many lessons were learned from the project, specifically in determining security and safety problems in schools, the introduction of safety and security systems implemented in buses and some public and private institutions within the state or outside it, as well as safety and security conditions in school buildings and buses, and first aid and firefighting training.

3.7 State of Qatar

3.7.1 Projects overview

There are 22 surveyed projects distributed as follows:

- 7 projects chosen from the report about the advancement of education.
- 3 projects that were part of presentations.
- 12 projects stemming from a questionnaire-based research by the Arab Bureau for Education on successful projects and experiences, which targeted the Gulf countries.

Table 49: Projects and programs distribution by source in Qatar

Source	Axis/Field	Project title
Joint report on the advancement of education in the GCC countries	Education quality/Education system	- Program to enhance skills in designing exam questions according to the national curricula standards
	Education quality / Techniques and Education	- Improving accountability in schools
	Education quality/Enrolment/Curricula	Raising awareness on education diversity
	Education quality/Education system	Follow-up on performance
	Education quality/Enrolment /Education system	pilot program for learners with personal needs
	Education quality /Professionalism in education	Training of Trainers
	Education quality /Techniques and education	- Promoting education through e-learning
Experiences presented in the 4th and 5th consultative meetings of the Ministers of Education	Education quality/Education system	Experience in the field of assessment and monitoring and performance assessment in the educational system
	Education quality/Techniques and education	E-learning
	Education quality/Professionalism in education	National standards for teachers and school principals

Source	Axis/Field	Project title
Results of the questionnaire-based research regarding successful experiences	Education quality/Public education curricula	Setting up learning sources based on the national curricula standards for subject areas
	Education quality/Education system	Project of exceptional and periodic assessment of independent schools in Qatar
	Education quality/Education system	Qatar National Schools Accreditation
	Education quality/Public education curricula	Project of international examinations - TIMSS&PIRLS 2011
	Education quality/Education system	Project of implementing the Learning Management System in all independent schools
	Education quality/Techniques and education	e-bag project (one laptop per student/teacher project)
	Education quality/Education system	National Education Data System Project
	Education quality/Techniques and education	e-library project
	Education quality/Techniques and education	Project of books/ digital interactive books library
	Education quality/Techniques and education	Project of Qatar National Network for Educational Information
	Education quality/Techniques and education	Project of implementing electronic registration for early admission of students in independent schools
	Education quality/Techniques and education	Project of the electronic assessment system

3.7.2 Success stories

3.7.2.1 Project to set up learning sources based on national curricula standards for subject areas

The overall objective of the project is for students in the State of Qatar to reach high academic achievement level, by identifying learning sources that teachers and students can rely on and that would be in line with global standards.

One of the major outputs of the project is to provide high-quality learning sources for all subject areas, based on set curricula standards. These would enable students of the three education cycles in independent schools to gain the most satisfying levels of knowledge and skills from learning the curriculum and strengthen their capacity to implement such knowledge and skills competently.

Success factors rely on cooperating with international companies in setting up stan-

standardized educational sources based on the curricula standards of the State of Qatar and involving numerous community institutions in setting up and examining learning sources of independent schools, linking training and professional development programs to these sources, examining the way they interact and how to address them through the e-bag project (one laptop per student) in some schools, as a supporting factor of interactive elements.

The project revealed a need for standardized and accredited educational sources in the State of Qatar through which modules are distributed sequentially in accordance with curricula requirements.

3.7.2.2 Project of exceptional and periodic assessment of independent schools in Qatar

The overall objective of the project is to promote quality education and the performance of independent schools and kindergartens based on an assessment system that is equivalent to the best global performance and quality systems available, by achieving the project specific objectives, i.e. by determining the quality level of academic performance in schools, assessing student social development, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of schools and encouraging the follow-up of recommendations related to school assessment outcome to develop and promote performance quality.

One of the project major outputs is the assessment of around twenty to thirty five independent schools per year.

The project success factors are based on high-quality and clear standards and mechanisms; a specialized and qualified team; analyzing and learning from other countries experiences; constant reviewing and amendment of procedures in place in accordance with global standards; adopting transparent and clear procedures in schools; and introducing schools to assessment procedures and standards.

The periodical assessment of independent schools has had many positive effects, e.g. assessment of school performance and development level; informing school administrations of their strengths and weaknesses; new schools and schools scoring below the level were identified, so support could be provide accordingly; schools benefiting from assessment reports in drafting appropriate plans to improve their performance. Parents, local communities and stakeholders were informed of the performance level of private schools; school managements grasped accordingly the urgency of development, which paved the way for a better education.

3.7.2.3 Qatar National Schools Accreditation

The aim of the project is to raise quality performance of private schools and kindergartens to the international level, through systems and procedures characterized by independence, justice and transparency. It also aimed at consolidating school performance levels and administrative and educational processes through self-assessment

reports and school visits, which encouraged schools to focus on self-assessment; add to that future planning, consolidating the achievements of advanced school requirements and characteristics, ensuring a high level of academic achievement, and assessing the educational programs of schools applying for the assessment and accreditation program.

The objectives of the projects include providing students and parents with information that would clarify the assessment method of students' work; granting of degrees according to high-quality academic standards; raising awareness in local communities about school accountability; enhancing school performance and output as a result of the long-term school accreditation process; as well as identifying the strong points of schools and sectors requiring improvement, orienting schools towards developing and implementing a procedural plan to improve their performance.

The project output involved 79 schools and kindergartens that were applying for the national school accreditation, out of which 15 schools had obtained the national school accreditation by June 2014.

Success factors include providing appropriate support and developing the accreditation team; setting quality and clear accreditation standards and mechanisms; creating a specialized and qualified team; reviewing and learning from the experiences of other countries; having twinning programs with international accreditation organizations; constantly reviewing and amending procedures in a clear and transparent way; in addition to ensuring continuous communication with schools; holding individual and group meetings with schools; and introducing schools to accreditation standards and procedures.

The implementation of the school accreditation program generated numerous positive results, namely raising parents, local communities and stakeholders' awareness as to the performance level of private schools; school administrations grasping the need for development, which paved the way to a better education. Private schools also understood their major and significant role in leading modernization procedures and most school administrations amended and adapted their programs to meet the accreditation requirements.

3.7.2.4 International Examinations Project – TIMSS & PIRLS 2011

The project aims at promoting student learning outcome to be competitive at the global level, by building an educational system that follows global modern standards and mimic the best educational systems in the world. It also aims at measuring progress made in learning and teaching mathematics, science and reading compared with other countries during the same period; identifying strengths and weaknesses of student performance in an international framework while developing school plans and programs that would contribute to improving education and learning processes.

Significant progress was made in 2011 TIMSS and PIRLS, compared to 2007. This progress is illustrated in the increase by 72 points in reading skills for grade 4 students in PIRLS and 117 points 103 points for grade 4 and grade 8 respectively in mathematics

in TIMSS, and 100 points for grade 4 and 8 students in sciences in TIMSS.

Success factors require setting up a long-term strategic plan to provide sufficient support by staff members of the Department of International Studies under the Evaluation Institute. They also require elaborating clear action plans and mechanisms by a specialized and qualified team that would review and benefit from the experiences of other countries, and would continuously conduct reviews to amend procedures and standards in place and ensure a constant follow-up to implement plans in schools through ongoing school visits to the staff of the Department of International Studies.

Learnt lessons revolved around improving student capabilities to compete on the national and international level; providing the opportunity to identify talented students; measuring the performance level of schools in Qatar and identifying their level by comparing their results throughout the years; and at the same time, following up on the latest educational developments and methods for the best interest of teachers and students, and contributing to the development of scientific thinking skills. As such, reading skills were enhanced by relying on thinking, challenging and analyzing methods of teachers and students.

3.7.2.5 Project of implementing LMS (Learning Management System) in all independent schools

The project aims at providing access to information at any time and place and at empowering and enhancing teachers' competencies by ensuring an innovative learning environment with the participation of parents in the education community.

Some of the major outputs of the project include an increased communication between schools and parents, ease of communication among all parties involved in the educational process and lightened teachers' work schedule allowing for more time for other activities.

Among the major success factors of this project, we can note schools and teachers adoption of the LMS system; active participation of parents; students using the LMS outside the school premises; teachers' preparedness to accept change; raising awareness about the importance of digital culture and technology by disseminating special success stories and practices among schools, and finally paying tribute to distinguished schools and teachers and motivating schools and teachers to implement the LMS system.

As for lessons learned, they include enhancing teachers' competencies in using modern technologies, and adopting such an enhancement as a standard for future appointments; including teachers in the processes of change management in order to develop the system according to the needs of the education sector; add to that raising awareness about the importance of digital culture and technology; adopting the concept of excellence centers, i.e. to have the choice of a distinguished school in every geographic region that would act as a training center to transfer expertise to schools in the same geographic region.

3.7.2.6 The e-bag project (one laptop per student/teacher)

The project aims at providing continuous access to learning and communication tools and collaborative capabilities. Its targets revolve around lightening the weight of student school bags on a daily basis, due to all the heavy textbooks, and replacing these books with digital books and alternative educational systems of the Supreme Education Council (SEC), enabling students to learn anytime and anywhere; they are offered numerous self-learning opportunities; they are also prepared to take the examinations that will be electronic in the future as some of the practical steps towards e-school project; and finally, accelerate the frequency of communications between the schools, students and parents.

The project outputs can be summarized by providing tablets to students with technological educational tools; all textbooks will be digital which will allow students to use a list of secure websites on the Internet (“white list”) - these are educational websites approved by the SEC; also, the SEC application store will be made available: students can only download and install approved educational applications; they are also authorized to access the LMS system with more flexibility, with the possibility of applying the system in all courses, as more cloud storage capacity is available, which will allow students to save and backup all their contents.

To consolidate these achievements, learners can now have access to the classroom management program that allows the teacher to control and manage students’ laptops during the course; and participate in a special way in implementing the e-bag project.

The outcome would be creating a specific search engine for the “white list”; raising student awareness about the best use of the e-bag in the education process; the need to raise awareness of society about accepting change; improve teachers’ technological skills and harnessing such skills in the education process.

3.7.2.7 National Education Data System Project

The project aims at linking information provided by different parties and using such information to improve the decision-making process in order to develop human resources in Qatar and guarantee a brighter future for the country. As for the targets, the project aims at setting up a central data warehouse and an entry point to data pertaining to schools, students and teachers; it will be used in all compulsory education schools, of all sizes and locations, with immediate access to all information about student promotion through the education levels, from kindergarten to the general secondary level. The project also seeks to provide comprehensive information that would allow drawing-up efficient and accurate reports for schools and different SEC departments, thanks to a better cooperation and exchange of information between relevant parties in the education system; this will enhance informed decision-making at all levels, and provide the SEC with an information gate that would enable it to integrate and interact with current and future applications and with the other e-government applications; in addition to providing immediate information to students and parents about the education system at

school; so that they would be more interactive with the educational system and ensure an integrated school management system that would contribute to transferring the SEC procedures and reach the best practices in the school community, which will have a positive impact on all levels.

The project outputs include the Supreme Education Council acquiring an administrative institutional information system, fully accessible on the Internet, which would ensure the participation of all teachers and administration staff in the school life as active and interactive users.

These achievements are consolidated by the smooth synergy with the new system, the rapid implementation of the data system once it is launched, with the participation of all school and SEC stakeholders in the project plan before its launching on the Internet, to ensure the smooth and flexible transfer from the old system and guarantee intensified assistance by the support center to users by phone or email.

These procedures help in the project planning process while accounting for the work cycle and timeline of the different operations of society; the implementation is done according to the requirements of the school year (400 schools, 200000 students, 25000 school employees), with the participation of all stakeholders, in order to obtain a clear list of requirements pertaining to procedural operations; the rules and regulations and the importance of users in schools, and give the priority to meeting the needs of administrators and teachers, and ensure the accurate and timely data flow to the Supreme Education Council.

3.7.2.8 The e-library project

The project aims at providing administrators of learning sources with an electronic system that would help them in managing the e-library, and providing borrowers (students, teachers, etc.) with an electronic website. As for the aims, they include the automation of the library system, ensuring digital access to the different media and enhancing the experience of media management and book borrowing, creating an on-line library system with a research option that mimics that of a physical library; indexing resources according to international tools and standards and enabling other users (teachers, school management) to use the e-library features and characteristics.

The outputs of the project ensure an e-management system for the school library, and provide an electronic website for borrowers enabling them to search for books and sources electronically whether from the project library or the SEC libraries, create an e-library system in 119 independent schools, and train 3 persons from each school: the librarian, technical support officer and coordinator of the e-learning project.

Among the major factors supporting the project success, the organization of training workshops periodically, training the technical support officer and e-learning project coordinator on how to use the system, in order to provide administrative and technical support to users at school, while designing the system and the website in a user-friendly and uncomplicated way that enables any user to implement the system without any difficulty; and encouraging the adoption of e-library system by schools, by librarians and

motivating them to use the system in their work, and by borrowers that can access the website with the same username of the e-learning system; ensuring quick and easy answer to inquiries arising from users, as the system was designed by the SEC; organizing field visits to all schools to provide the necessary support to librarians, and setting up a plan to transfer the expertise to teachers and students and train them on how to use the website.

Accordingly, librarians' technological skills will improve as will their involvement in the system development based on their own needs and requirements. Success stories and best practices will be disseminating among schools. The system users will be encouraged and honored, and training certificate will be granted to all who successfully pass the training program.

3.7.2.9 Project of digital interactive books library

The project aims at providing the library with digital school books by offering schools a full collection of credible digital sources that are easily accessible, providing SEC and schools with a series of services to provide and implement the electronic content in the LMS system, providing students with a series of tools to help them develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, empowering teachers to efficiently use the electronic content through learning and education processes for innovation in providing students with knowledge, facts and concepts, and implementing Qatar Strategy 2030 which relies on integrating technology in education.

The outputs of the project revolve around digital school books and regular school books with interactive elements, disseminating e-learning and empowering student to acquire the culture of e-learning.

Success factors of the project are limited to the e-bag laptop in schools, thus facilitating students' navigation of digital books and reading book on laptops. This enables students to change the font when writing, to control the luminosity level that suits them best, with the possibility of printing pages from books and finding the required information through the search tool.

Therefore, it is possible to improve teachers' technological skills and ensure the gradual transfer from paper to digital books, in addition to raising awareness of parents and society to accept change.

3.7.2.10 Project of the Qatar National Network for Educational Information

The aim of the project is to implement a consolidated and standardized infrastructure for educational data that contributes to the development of the educational process by controlling, monitoring and analyzing the academic performance of students, teachers and schools, in order to promote the educational process as a whole.

As for the goals of the project, they include setting up a consolidated and standardized centralized database, increasingly benefiting from current data, encouraging

communication and dialogue among educational service providers and stakeholders, unifying and improving the quality of educational data, while working on consolidating data warehouses and other business information surveying tools. The project also aims at promoting the value of available data to have a deeper understanding of educational information from various sources and connecting the different social media.

Among the output of the project, benchmarking school performance in the overall educational assessment, calculating the added value of a school, following up on the number of students, teachers and employees in schools, assessing the opinions of parents about the school in comparison with other schools and measuring their participation level, following up on school grants for graduates, projecting student results based on past years results, analyzing school curricula and their impact on student performance, data analysis and identifying the connection between data, in addition to tracking teacher, student and school performance, following up and monitoring early electronic registration of students in schools.

Success factors of the project consist of supporting the State to develop the educational process and all student, teacher and school related aspects, with the support of the SEC to provide all services electronically, and system support through all available media; providing a hotline to respond to the queries of users, due support to independent schools by all available means, and the necessary cooperation with independent schools via the system; and submitting proposals.

The advantages of these procedures lie in how to link educational data to different sources; how to improve them and coordinate them in an efficient and useful way for decision-makers; ensure constant contact with schools, identify school requirements, verifying school use for the national network and to what extent the project tools which enable users to predict future data are beneficial.

3.7.2.11 Project of electronic registration for early admission of students in independent schools

The aim of the project is to register students for the next academic year in independent schools. As for the goals, they are the provision of necessary support to help parents in registering students, providing more developed electronic services with the improvement of available alternatives within codified options related to geographic locations, to ensure educational opportunities for all students and assist parents. As such, the electronic registration mechanism provides independent schools with the freedom of selecting and admitting students, in accordance with the open admission policy of independent schools.

The output of the project consist of saving parents the time and effort in the process of registering their children from within the geographic location of their house, enabling the school to follow up and verify registration applications via the system, enabling the relevant parties to follow up on vacancies in independent schools, and extracting early registration statistics and reports by relying on the electronic system on the Internet.

The supportive factors of the project lie in the support of the State to the develop-

ment of the educational process and all aspects related to student and parent; supporting the SEC to provide all services electronically, in addition to supporting the system through the different media by all available means, providing a hotline to answer parents inquiries, offering welcoming services and support independent schools with all available means; cooperation among schools by using the system, presenting proposals and cooperating with parents through the system in registering their children.

That system is used for a constant communication with relevant external parties, such as the Qatar Electricity and Water Company which provides the system with electricity figures which are used to specify the geographic location; primary healthcare institutions which provides the system with information about the health status of children which is essential for students enrolment in school; and the Ministry of Interior through a constant communication as students are registered by their Qatari identification number; there is also an ongoing contact between the SEC and schools: a statistical study for early registration can be beneficial in different ways, such as knowing the intensity of registration among regions and schools, examining the underlying reasons, offering solutions and proposals related to the current situation and the years to come.

3.7.2.12 Project of electronic assessment system

The project aims at finding an innovative and safe system to preserve the intellectual properties of the SEC, in relation with electronic questions and examinations, through special questions banks, organizing and managing the drafting of various questions and official examinations of the SEC, by achieving its goal of gradually moving from paper-based exams to electronic assessments; finding a flexible system to support any type of SEC exams, and the best and safe use of SEC intellectual assets, such as questions and tests, in addition to saving time and efforts concerning the administration, drafting and correction of various public exams and enabling decision makers and officials to follow up on the exams procedures, from the preparation phase to the dissemination of the different reports results.

The output of the project consist of creating a system to support the setting up and development of questions and electronic tests, the creation of a system to support public and private question banks to include any number of questions according to the SEC specifications, the creation of a flexible system to support the different settings and necessary prerogatives to draft questions and tests according to the nature of every test, support the creation of test tables, reports and analyses, and create a training site to train students on the nature of different national and international tests or exams.

The main supportive factors consists of designing and developing the system by the SEC internally, with some flexibility so as to be used for any of the SEC exams, from any place, and according to the schedule of each type of exam; the strict respect of safety policies and risk management procedures, in addition to the verification and follow-up processes which include detailing any procedure in the system.

The lessons learned provided by the project underscore the importance of trained and qualified personnel to design exams from an academic perspective and harness their efforts to add and edit questions in line with international quality standards.

Conclusion

The Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) experience in the Gulf countries is one of the important initiatives that would induce a pioneering education renaissance in the Gulf countries and the Arab region in general, an experience that would promote the dynamism of education development and create cooperation and exchange of expertise between countries.

In terms of aspects covered by the questionnaire forms collected from countries, the main focus was on education quality in curricula, education programs and the harnessing of modern technologies. Priority was given to establishment and student performance levels with the exception of one country, which in addition to the above-mentioned aspects, tackled the aspect of girls education opportunities.

The main pillars of the education experience from an education revival perspective can be summarized by the following three main issues:

- a) **Life-long education**; two main issues emanate from the concept of ongoing education:
- The link between formal and informal education in their different forms.
 - Training, renewed training and re-training to meet the changing needs of society and particularly the needs of the work place (economic and social).

As for training, renewed training, replaced training and completed training are possible, as long as knowledge and skills acquired by those enrolled in formal schools constitute a starting point for education and formation rather than the end. Formal education structure and curricula should change so that schools could focus on acquiring knowledge and basic skills, especially in the basic education cycle.

- b) **Self-learning**, which means:

- Learner-centered, and focused on his/her efficient role and direct participation in education, and changing his/her role from a passive listener to a participant, a critic and a main source of knowledge.
- Wide-spread use of modern education technologies in their varied and developed forms, which means that the student will teach him/herself especially by using a computer. Modern technologies facilitate learning and allow for overcoming obstacles of spreading education. They ignite within students a motivation and a desire to learn. However, these technologies should be understood and comprehended; they should be used – in their contents – with a selective awareness.

Self-learning capacity can reduce the burden of formal schools and render ongoing education and learning a possibility even after quitting school (before or after completing the education level).

- c) **Flexibility of the education system**, it is a prerequisite to face the enormous changes worldwide, particularly since learning is no longer limited to a specific number of years in the early phases of a child's life, nor confined to the school or university walls. It is no longer related to a quantity of information and skills acquired by individuals in codified education programs but used throughout a person's life.
- Flexibility concerns the whole structure of a curriculum: number of years of study, content, schools always open to the labor market and its needs, a diversified and multi-tracked education, ease of transfer between education levels and types, eradication of formal and informal education obstacles, and education and labor integration and alternation.
 - It is not an exaggeration to think that from the perspective of the future of development in the Gulf countries, there is a vision to develop the education system in order to ensure a gain – a gain of knowledge, capabilities and trends that meet the requirements of the 21st century. Thus, the ambition of an education renaissance by building a high quality human capital would become a reality, by achieving three goals:
 - 1- Full access to basic education and an extended compulsory education of 9 or 10 years at least and systematic expansion of the scope of post-basic education.
 - 2- Create an institutional - life-long, highly flexible and constantly developing - adult learning curriculum, in order to efficiently fight illiteracy – in all its aspects – on the one hand, and on the other hand, to follow the principle of life-long learning for graduates of the formal education system.
 - 3- Equip all education levels with means that would guarantee the promotion of education quality, thus a modernity, excellence and creativity track would come to life as an entry point to knowledge and modern technology.

Effective means of achieving universal basic education would guarantee a comprehensive and completely free basic education that would rise to the challenge of an upgraded quality and improved practices. It is not also an exaggeration to believe that, from the perspective of the future of development in the Gulf countries, there is no end that amends developing an education curriculum that would lead to a gain – a gain of knowledge, capabilities and trends that meets the requirements of the 21st century.

There is no doubt that the right policies would guarantee building high quality human capital. The will of the Gulf leadership is but a testimony to that. It could be said that the huge challenge that these countries will face in the future is creating innovative solutions that would develop an alternative education system that would produce a more efficient education, of a higher quality and at the right cost.

There is a dire need to elaborate a targeted action plan to develop education in the region. It will be based on country programs but also on an effective Gulf cooperation framework. Building high quality human capital is the main challenge of the future for all of these countries. Development - solely at the country level - is no longer sufficient. The country-level development achieved the possible wide expansion, quantitatively.

However, promoting quality is a bigger challenge than spreading education.

The advancement of education in the Gulf countries is a crucial, and constant, item on the agenda of summit meetings. There is still space for national, state and civil society establishments, and for supporting current education establishments. The aim of the regional program for education development is to narrow the knowledge, capability and trend gap between countries, to an extent that would allow for the active, wide-spread and financial follow-up processes to develop knowledge and technology in the region, and their efficient use.

Research and assessment should focus on studying the development of the education status, particularly, assessing the real education outcome in terms of trends, knowledge and capabilities acquired by graduates. Such an assessment should have high priority among common program activities. The outcome of such an assessment would give a boost to education development efforts in the Gulf countries in general. In addition, the research scope is expanded to cover the analysis of elements impacting the education outcome and to study education development attempts and successful experiences in this regard, to benefit from the lessons learned.

Obviously, ABEGS is prone to playing a pioneering role in the institutional structure of a joint program to develop education in the member states in general, though it is essential to mobilize the capacities of other relevant Arab institutions such as the Arab Fund for Development and other Arab funds, even if they need to build their own capacities in education. We hope that Arab funds will play an important role in financing some projects and programs.

Finally, in order to ensure a win-win situation and guarantee sustainability so that the project-based approach would be an essential and typical foundation, there is a need to:

- Create a project bank based on the current projects in place.
- Identify main headings according to the common prevalent axes (enrolment, quality and good governance) and establish a working group of country representatives to follow-up, assess and develop these projects.
- Organize training workshops for elaborating, following-up and assessing education projects.

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