



أهداف التنمية  
المستدامة البحرين  
BAHRAIN SDGs



UNITED NATIONS  
BAHRAIN

# Kingdom of Bahrain

## Voluntary National Review Report on the SDGs

### Key messages and statistical booklet







**HE Mr. Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al Mutawa**  
**Minister of Cabinet Affairs**  
**Chairman of the National Information Committee**

I am pleased to be here today at the High-Level Political Forum, to present the Kingdom of Bahrain's first Voluntary National Review on the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs). I am grateful for the opportunity to briefly review the comprehensive development process sponsored by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain; and recognize the efforts of the government under the leadership of the Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, with the support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, The Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister.

Bahrain's achievements and the progress made in our development efforts over the last few decades, has been the result of ongoing efforts led by the Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa. This drive and determination towards fulfilling our vision for a sustainable future has been advanced through programs and initiatives, which have helped push forward the Kingdom of Bahrain's development agenda, in order to support and sustain its growth, in our pursuit of progress and advancement.

Bahrain has willingly accepted its responsibility to integrate sustainable development into our government plans which provide the Kingdom with prospects and a pathway for the future.

With this in mind, I would like to emphasize that the Kingdom of Bahrain was able to register numerous accomplishments in the field of sustainable development, the principles of which are already deeply rooted in our history and consciousness, and in meeting the targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

Bahrain has been host to ancient civilizations and was the historical centre of ancient trade routes and the port of the ancient world. It has been blessed with an open, social and welcoming people. Today, Bahrain stands as a modern Kingdom, reflecting the will of its people offering opportunities and support without discrimination, continuing to develop and build a sustainable

future which supports and delivers on the hopes and aspirations of its people, by pursuing stability, well-being and prosperity for all.

## **Commitment and institutional arrangements**

The Kingdom of Bahrain commitment to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is manifested in its participation in the negotiations to formulate the SDGs at a regional, national, and international levels. It hosted the second session of the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development in May 2015, which adopted the Bahrain Document, and which included 19 recommendations on the key issues related to sustainable development in Arab States. We also hosted the sixth meeting of the Group of Experts on the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, in which the Kingdom of Bahrain also represented the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, preceeded the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by establishing the necessary institutional arrangements, the National Information Committee. The National Information Committee established by a decree of H.R.H. the Prime Minister, and chaired by the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, and is composed of all relevant departments involved in the delivery of the SDGs, with multi-sectoral task forces linked to it, to undertake the process of localizing, implementing and realizing the SDGs, through the Government Action Plan.

By identifying correlations between each global goal, we were able to commence the collection and classification of information around each indicator. This helped in the preparation of sustainability reports, which were provided to the National Statistical Office, establishing a monitoring and reporting system for indicators, and providing a reliable platform to share development information between different government agencies and partners. The establishment of an electronic system allowing for regular follow-up on the progress of the Government Plan of Action has increased the efficiency of accurate data collection, with statistics and indicators within government departments supporting the submission of periodic reports to the Council of Ministers.

The SDGs are implemented through the Government Plan of Action, in partnership with the private sector, civil society and academia. The current program of the Government includes six strategic axes that intersect with the main areas of sustainable development goals. The comparison demonstrates that 78% of the objectives of the SDGs are included in the current program.

## Report Preparation Mechanism and the role of partners

In the preparatory process for this the report, we coordinated with the Office of the Resident Coordinator for the United Nations in Bahrain, and collaborated with all UN agencies and programs operating in the Kingdom. We were keen to ensure broad participation, and ensured that no one was excluded from the process. Through workshops, civil society organizations, the private sector, academics, research centres, educational and media institutions, women youth, and people with disabilities, all participated in identifying priorities around sustainable development issues. The consultative process also helped raise awareness about the goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda and provided the Voluntary National Review with qualitative data.

### Achievements

Over the past few decades, the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain has reinforced its commitment to further improve living standards for the Bahraini people, through sustainable development. This process started long ago. In 1919, free formal education was guaranteed to all citizens, as well as ensuring the provision of free healthcare. We further secured social stability for Bahraini families by providing housing, in addition to building a strong economy, and by generating thousands of jobs annually to support social mobility. As a result, and according to the international indicators, the Kingdom of Bahrain has a very high level of human development.

- Bahrain is therefore advancing rapidly in its economic and social development. We have succeeded in achieving the first Sustainable Development Goal in terms of the eradication of poverty in all its forms, through economic growth, which has raised the average income of families by 47% over the last 10 years; and through social protection networks covering 8% families. We have also met the second goal, in that no one in our country suffers the hardships of hunger or malnutrition.
- With regards to Goal 3, all citizens have access to good quality healthcare, access to treatment and free medical prescriptions. Every child receives immunizations and vaccinations, which has led to lower maternal mortality and child mortality rates, which are both below the global averages. There are lower levels of infections and communicable diseases and of premature deaths, which has resulted in an increase in life expectancy at birth to about 77 years. This has all helped to improved quality of life across Bahraini society.

- With regards to Goal 4, basic education in Bahrain is free and compulsory. The net enrollment ratio for primary and secondary levels is 100% and 86.4%, respectively, consequently eliminating illiteracy, while enrollment in kindergartens is 82%.
- With regards to providing adequate housing, the Constitution states that “the State shall provide housing for low-income citizens.” Accordingly, 65% of citizens have been able to acquire their homes through public housing programs and services, some through strategic partnerships with the private sector over the last four decades. In order to ensure the sustainability of these housing complexes they are provided with modern infrastructure and facilities, to meet the needs of the population, and to be able to raise living standards in accordance with international standards, and consistent with the concept of sustainable development.
- With regards to Goal 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women, the Kingdom of Bahrain has substantial experience in this area, which began almost 100 years ago with the political participation of women in the establishment of the first municipal council, in the early 1920s. Our commitment on gender equality has been strengthened by the Constitution. The Supreme Council for Women was established under the chairmanship of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, the wife of His Majesty the King, to ensure equality, establish justice and promote equal opportunities. We have launched several initiatives which have led to increased participation of women across different sectors. We now have 55% of Bahraini women in supervisory positions, with 53% participation in the public sector and 33% in the private sector. Bahraini women also hold numerous high-level positions in a varied range of fields.
- We have promoted the creation of decent work. Bahrain has adopted an active policy to increase qualitative and decent employment opportunities with high wages, regulated the labor market for optimal employment of expatriate workers, and guaranteed the rights of migrant and expat workers. In this regard, we have applied a flexible work permit system, which has meant the freeing of expat workers from the one sponsor system. These initiatives have contributed to a decline in unemployment rates to below 4% in the last 10 years.
- The Kingdom of Bahrain attracts workers from all over the world, thanks to its attractive work environment. Expatriates represent 76% of the total workforce. Bahrain, despite its small size, provides more than 600,000 permanent jobs for expatriates. They are able to transfer money without

deductions, with a total remittance of \$2.5 billion in 2017; contributing to the development of their native economies and supporting their families.

- With regards to economic growth, Bahrain's real GDP grew by 3.9% in 2017 compared to 3.2% in 2016. The Government Action Plan (2015-2018) focuses on the diversification of the economy, supports the growth of non-oil sectors, opening up to foreign investments, and strengthening public-private partnerships, which has raised the contribution of non-oil sectors in 2017 to more than 80% of activities in the Bahraini economy.
- With regards to Goal 16, Bahrain seeks to foster a culture of dialogue, promote the rule of law and continue to strengthen constitutional institutions (namely the Shura and the Council of Representative) through elections; as well as committing to fighting corruption and preserving public funds, through the Office of Financial and Administrative Control.
- The Kingdom seeks to promote and protect human rights through political and legislative measures, including insuring that every citizen has a legal identity, and that all births are recorded in a central register immediately after birth in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Bahrain joined in 1989.
- The Bahraini judicial system enjoys independence, in compliance with the Constitution, which grants a separation of powers. The judicial process includes a series of legal procedures to ensure fair trials, including the right to a defense, due process and judicial assistance. The Kingdom guarantees rights and freedoms to its citizens, including personal and religious freedoms, and guarantees access to institutions and mechanisms which protect these rights such as the judicial system. The Kingdom also offers accountable democratic practices through the legislative authority, freedom of opinion and expression, and supports other freedoms and institutions such as non-governmental organizations and the media.

### **Challenges:**

Despite the progress achieved in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals across a number of sectors, the Kingdom of Bahrain, as a Small Island Developing State, faces the following challenges:

- Achieving a high economic growth rate while maintaining the stability of prices; full investment in production in light of limited natural resources; containing the potential adverse effects of growth on the environment; taking measures to reduce the budget deficit and addressing public

debt by promoting joint government investment with the private sector in development projects; and increasing the efficiency and productivity of Bahrainis.

- Climate change and its adverse effects on water and agricultural resources, biodiversity, coastal installations, infrastructure and health, requires urgent action such as the transfer of appropriate green technologies; we must also provide necessary funding, build national capacity and raise community awareness regarding sustainable production and consumption patterns.
- Security and development are fundamental requirements that are not mutually exclusive, as one cannot be achieved without the other; we must therefore promote regional and international security and peace. Despite the increase in external interference from countries in the region, in the affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain, according to irrefutable evidence and documents, the Kingdom will continue on its path towards sustainable development, securing stability, by maintaining the balance between security and development. Bahrain is committed to fighting terrorism within the framework of the law and safeguarding human rights and is working with the Gulf Cooperation Council to prevent the aggravation of regional crises to prevent further impact on a national level.

Bahrain appreciates that the sustainability of its development process and the well-being of its citizens and residents requires the expansion of global partnerships, especially with regards to funding development. But Bahrain is fully committed to achieving its sustainable development targets, despite the many challenges it faces.

I am pleased to reaffirm Bahrain's commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global goals with a focus on raising living standards of its citizens and protecting its (natural) resources for future generations. We look forward to continued cooperation with the international community and United Nations agencies to meet these challenges, and to achieve the ambitious, but vital goals and objectives of sustainable development.

Thank you.

**HE Mr. Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al Mutawa**  
**Minister of Cabinet Affairs**



## Key messages

Bahrain's decades-long development trajectory accelerated with the comprehensive development plan of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and the launch of "Economic Vision 2030" - underpinned by the principles of sustainability, competitiveness and fairness - which aims to double the income Bahraini households - in real terms - by 2030.

The Government, under the leadership of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister, and with the support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander, First Deputy Prime Minister, are focused on achieving economic diversification and sustainable and comprehensive development. This led to the successful delivery of the Millennium Development Goals, and setting the foundation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### Progress

- Percentage of the population living in extreme poverty is zero.
- Average economic growth in the past decade stands at 37.4% and average GDP per capita is USD 22,000.
- Public expenditure on health, education, and social protection exceeds 35% of the budget.
- Basic education is free and compulsory. Net enrollment ratio for primary and secondary levels is 100% and 86.4% respectively, thus eliminating illiteracy. While KG2 enrollments is 82%.
- Healthcare is free and universal. Maternal mortality and that of children under five dropped to 28.6 deaths per 100,000 live births and 9 deaths per 1,000 live births respectively, compared with 226 deaths per 100,000 live births and 44 deaths per 1,000 live births worldwide.
- The Constitution guarantees gender equality. There are two committees instituted by the Supreme Council for Women to ensure equal opportunities and gender-responsive budgeting. Women hold 55% of

the supervisory positions, with 53% and 33% participation in the public and private sector respectively.

- The private sector is a key development partner. It provides equal high paying employment opportunities contributing to lowering total unemployment to 4%.
- 65% of the population benefited from public housing services with five new sustainable cities being developed.
- The coverage of safe water, sanitation and clean energy networks reached 100%.
- The Labor Fund (Tamkeen) provides vast support to Enterprises s. More than 45,000 Enterprises and 125,000 individuals including women, youth, and persons with disabilities benefited from its financial and training support.

## **No One Left Behind**

The Constitution of Bahrain and public policies guarantee universal access to basic services. Public and civil society-led programs provide support to abused women, persons with disabilities, and those in need. Such programs also extend to migrant workers to safeguard their rights, provide health insurance and shelter, protect against arbitrary dismissal, and combat human trafficking. The new flexible work program eliminates the sponsorship scheme to allows workers to work freely.

## **Regional Integration and International Contributions**

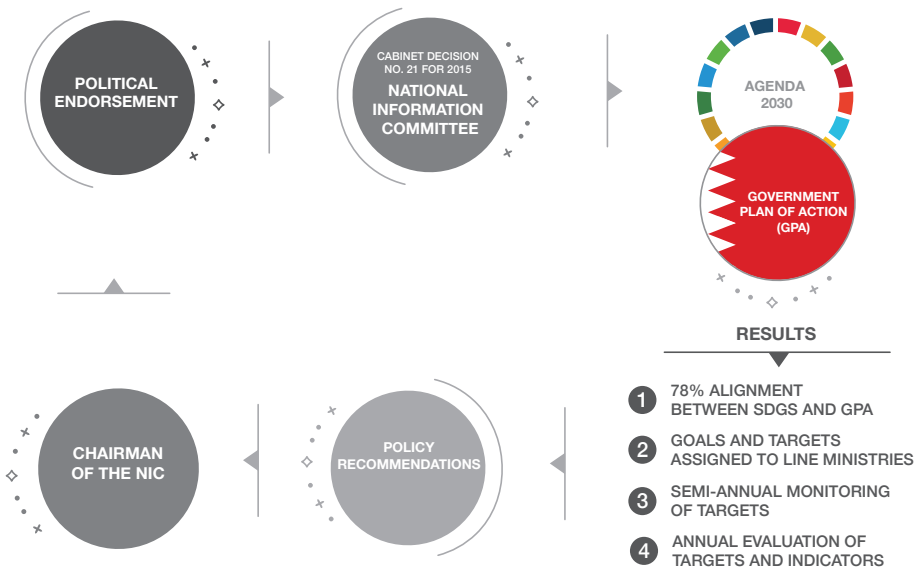
Bahrain is a GCC member state. Its regional integration is vital for its security and stability.

Bahrain provides humanitarian assistance to mitigate the impact of disasters, and more than 600,000 permanent jobs for expatriates. Their remittances amounted to BD 927 million (US \$ 2.5 billion) in 2017 and contribute to the development of their countries and reducing poverty.

## SDGs Implementation

The SDGs are implemented through the Government Plan of Action (GPA) and in collaboration with the private sector and civil society. The current GPA's six strategic pillars are aligned with the SDGs, with 78% of the SDG objectives included in the current program. This alignment will continue in future plans.

### HARMONIZING THE GOVERNMENT PLAN OF ACTION WITH THE SDGS



## VNR Preparation

The National Information Committee (NIC), chaired by HE the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, monitors and aligns SDG objectives and indicators with GPA, and evaluates corresponding programs and policies. The NIC's technical team, and in coordination with the Executive Committee, is preparing the VNR by collecting information and analyzing sectoral and national data. The outputs of the VNR consultations were also considered in the report.

### CONSULTATION PROCESS



#### NIC-ORGANIZED CONSULTATION SESSIONS AND WORKSHOPS



106 NGOS  
220 PARTICIPANTS



88 PRIVATE FIRMS  
100 PARTICIPANTS



32 ACADEMIC, PARLIAMENTARY  
& OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES  
90 PARTICIPANTS



# KEY NATIONAL PRIORITIES MAPPING AGAINST THE GLOBAL GOALS 2030



## PEOPLE

(1) EMPOWERING BAHRAINIIS TO CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT, ENHANCING THE STANDARDS OF LIVING ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED; (2) REDUCING INEQUALITY IN ALL ITS FORMS, AND ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY; (3) SPREADING HEALTHY EATING AND LIFESTYLE PATTERNS; PROVIDING ADEQUATE AND DECENT HOUSING; (4) ENSURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES AT AN AFFORDABLE COST; (5) PROMOTING EDUCATION, RESEARCH, INNOVATION, VALUES OF CITIZENSHIP & PRODUCTIVE WORK.

✓ SOCIAL INEQUALITY & POVERTY	1 NO POVERTY	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
✓ GENDER EQUALITY	5 GENDER EQUALITY	
✓ HOUSING & SERVICES	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
✓ HEALTH & NUTRITION	2 ZERO HUNGER	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
✓ KNOWLEDGE & CULTURE	4 QUALITY EDUCATION	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



## PLANET

(1) IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES BY PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS; (2) DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC & URBAN POLICIES; (3) CONTRIBUTING TO TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS EFFECTS ON BAHRAIN; (4) TAKING MEASURES TO CONSERVE WATER AND ENERGY.

✓ MAIN SERVICES	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
✓ SUSTAINABLE CITIES	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	
✓ ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES	14 LIFE BELOW WATER	15 LIFE ON LAND
✓ SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	13 CLIMATE ACTION



## PROSPERITY

(1) ESTABLISHING A STRONG AND DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY, A STABLE FINANCIAL AND MONETARY SYSTEM, AND SECURING A SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; (2) ADOPTING SUSTAINABLE POLICIES THAT ACHIEVE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS; (3) PROMOTING ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND SUPPORTING HIGH POTENTIAL SMES THAT GENERATE DECENT EMPLOYMENT FOR BAHRAINIIS; (4) ADOPTING POLICIES THAT SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS & PROVIDING A LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK THAT GUARANTEES PROTECTION AND RIGHTS FOR ALL.

✓ INCLUSIVE ECONOMY	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
✓ EMPLOYMENT & DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	
✓ GROWTH SUSTAINABILITY	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
✓ EXTERNAL DIMENSION	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	



## PEACE & JUSTICE

(1) ENHANCING SECURITY AND STABILITY BY ADHERING TO THE RULE OF LAW  
 (2) ENHANCING THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.  
 (3) IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

✓ EXTERNAL & REGIONAL STABILITY	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
✓ INTERNAL SECURITY	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
✓ INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS, PARTICIPATION & JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

## Development Challenges

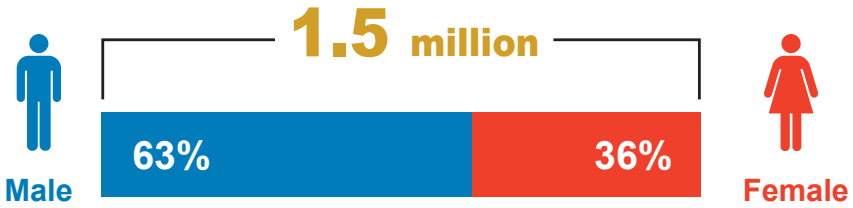
As a small island developing state, Bahrain faces these challenges:

- Mitigating climate change impact on water, agricultural, biodiversity, and coastal resources, and health. Requires a transfer and adaptation of appropriate green technologies, funding, national capacity-building and raising community awareness.
- Sustaining a prosperous economy attractive to businesses and investment that provides rewarding jobs for citizens.
- Strengthening the role of evidence-based statistics and policy making to increase transparency and improve the public service and SDG delivery.
- Addressing extremism, terrorism, and conflicts to maintain unity and preserve national gains.

Bahrain reaffirms its commitment to SDGs to ensure the well-being of its citizens and the sustainability of resources for future generations.



## TOTAL POPULATION



Bahraini **45%**



Non Bahraini **55%**

Area **779 km<sup>2</sup>** Capital City **Manama**

Language **Arabic**

Flag



CURRENCY  
**BHD**

Equivalent to  
2.66 USD



GDP per capita  
**22,000 USD**

**Goal 12 is not included due to lack of data.**

**More information on the Kingdom of Bahrain's SDG indicators are available at [www.data.gov.bh](http://www.data.gov.bh)**

**Queries can be addressed to: [SDGs@gov.bh](mailto:SDGs@gov.bh)**

**All information in this booklet refers to recent available data.**





# NO POVERTY



1



**0%.** No one lives under the international poverty line (\$1.25 per day)

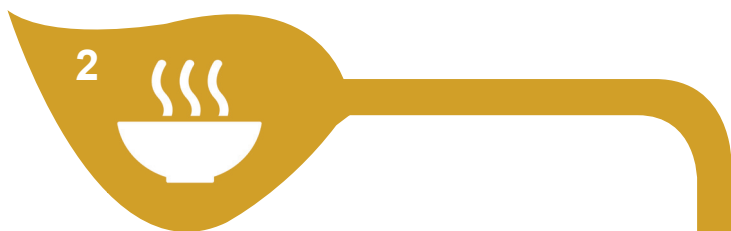


**8%** of households are covered by social protection systems



The average household income increased by **47%** over the last decade

## ZERO HUNGER



**1.9%** prevalence of stunted growth in children under the age of five



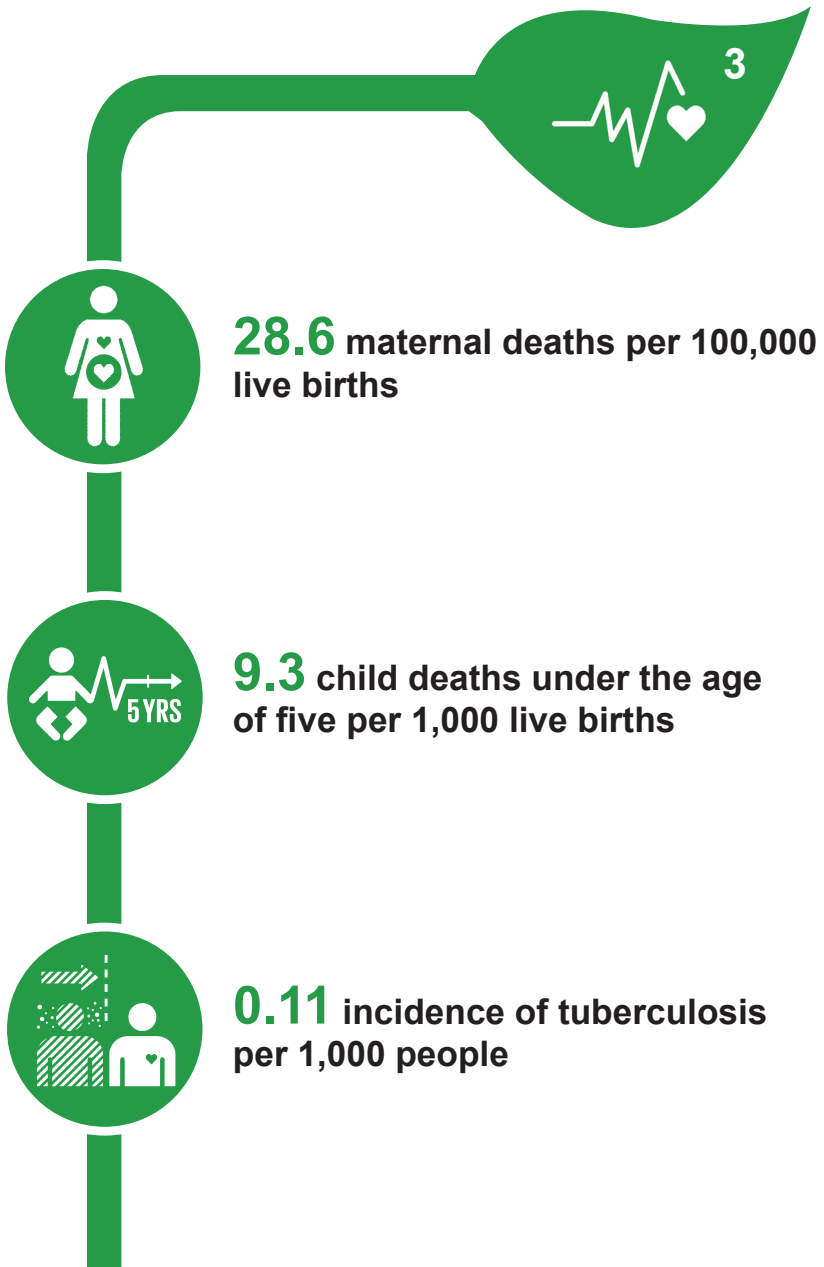
**1.8%** prevalence of wasting in children under the age of five



✓ **Monitoring tools created to measure inventory / consumption of top food items**



## GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



# GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



**1.7** deaths by suicide per 100,000 population



**8.3** deaths by road traffic injuries per 100,000 people



**14.5** adolescent births per 1,000 women, ages 15-19



## QUALITY EDUCATION



4



**82%** net enrollment rate in pre-primary education

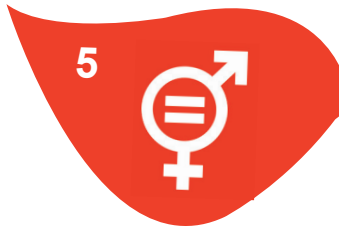


**100%** net enrollment rate in primary education



**86.4%** net enrollment rate in secondary education

## GENDER EQUALITY



**0.34%** of women aged 20 to 24 years were married before age 15



**15%** of seats held by women in national parliament and local governments



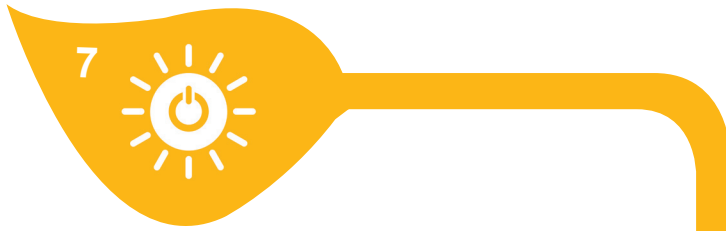
**53%** of Bahraini women in public sector



## CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



## AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



**100%** of the population has access to electricity



**100%** of the population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technologies

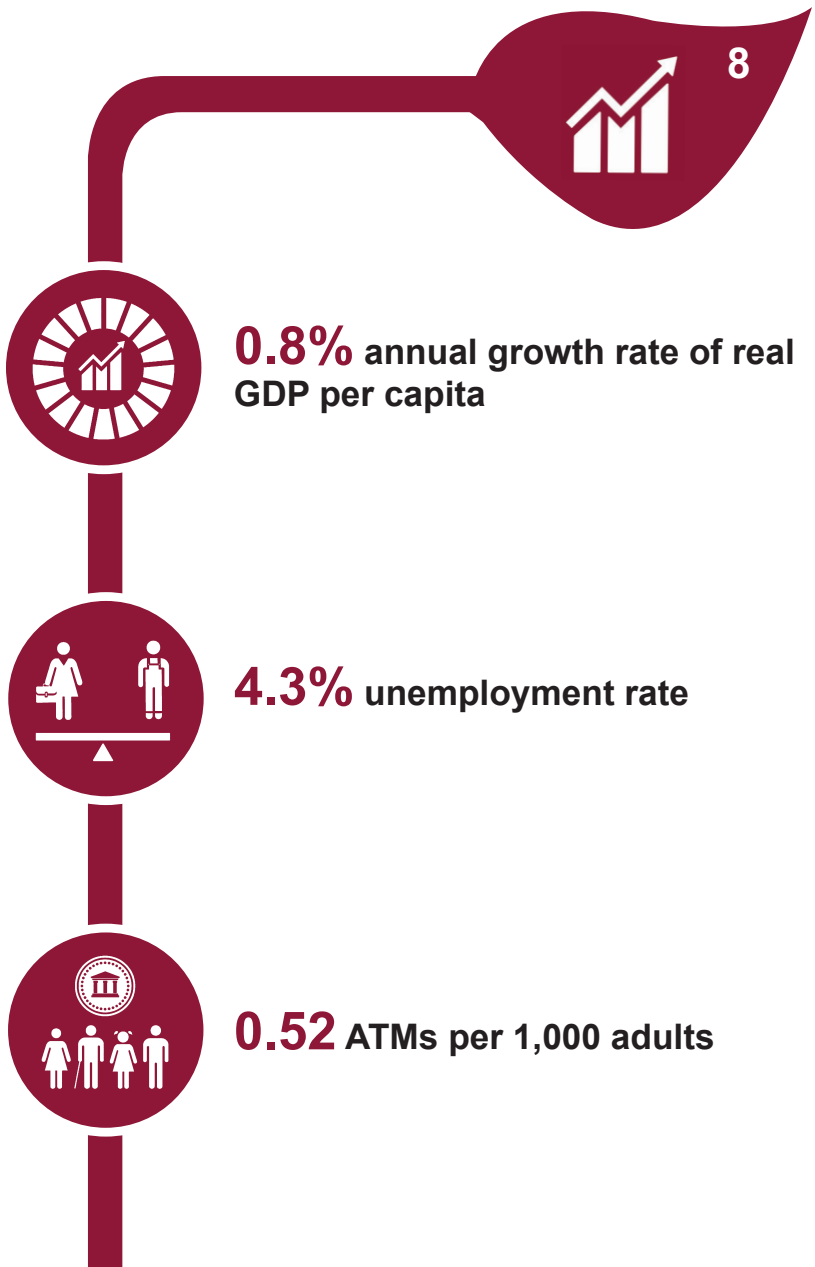


Bahrain will cover **5%** of its electricity demand with renewable energy, and improve energy efficiency by **6%** by 2025

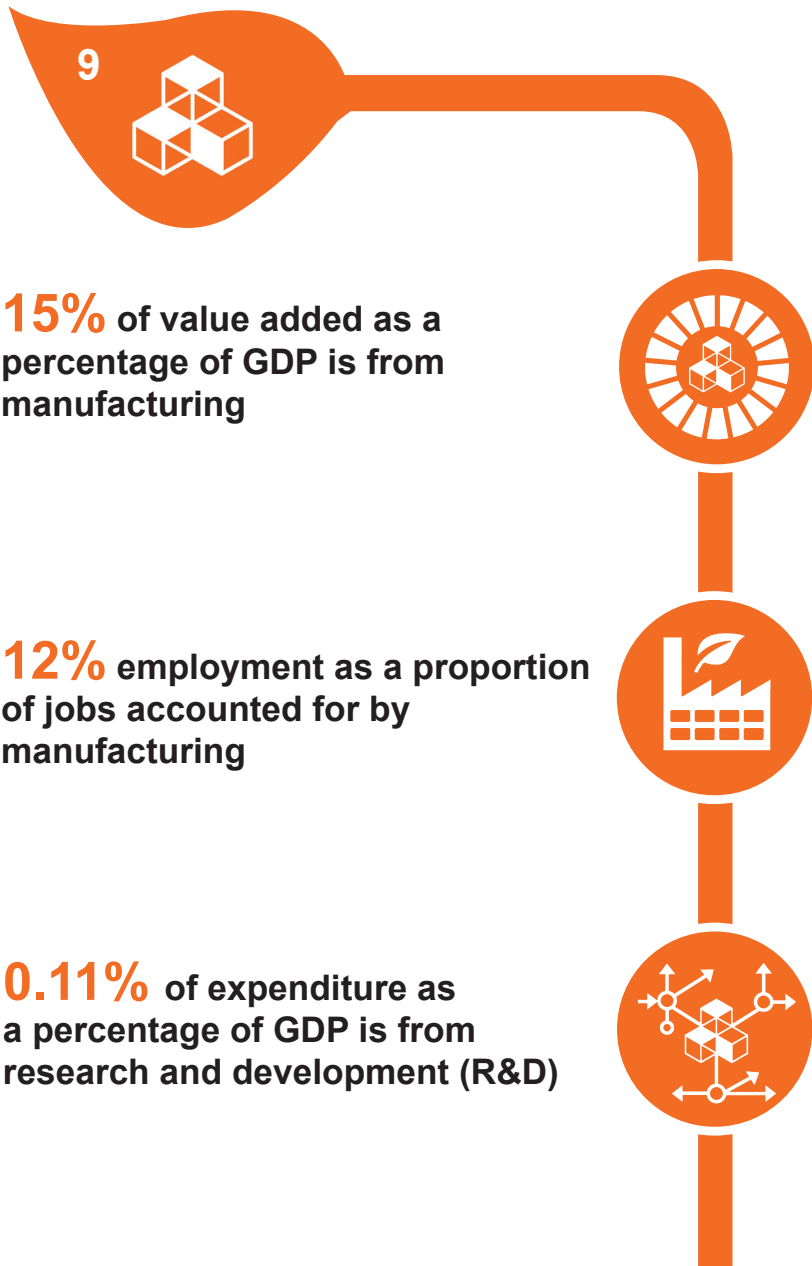




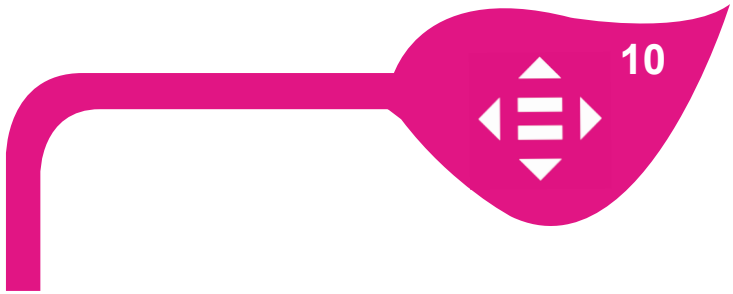
## DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



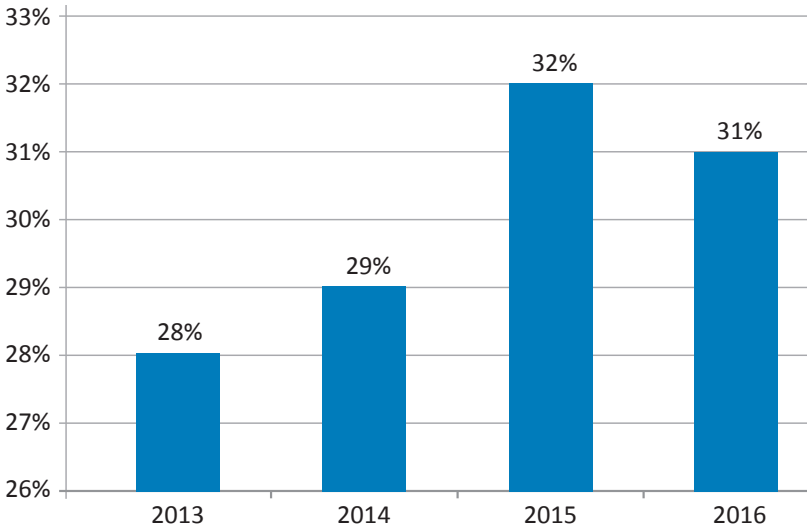
# INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



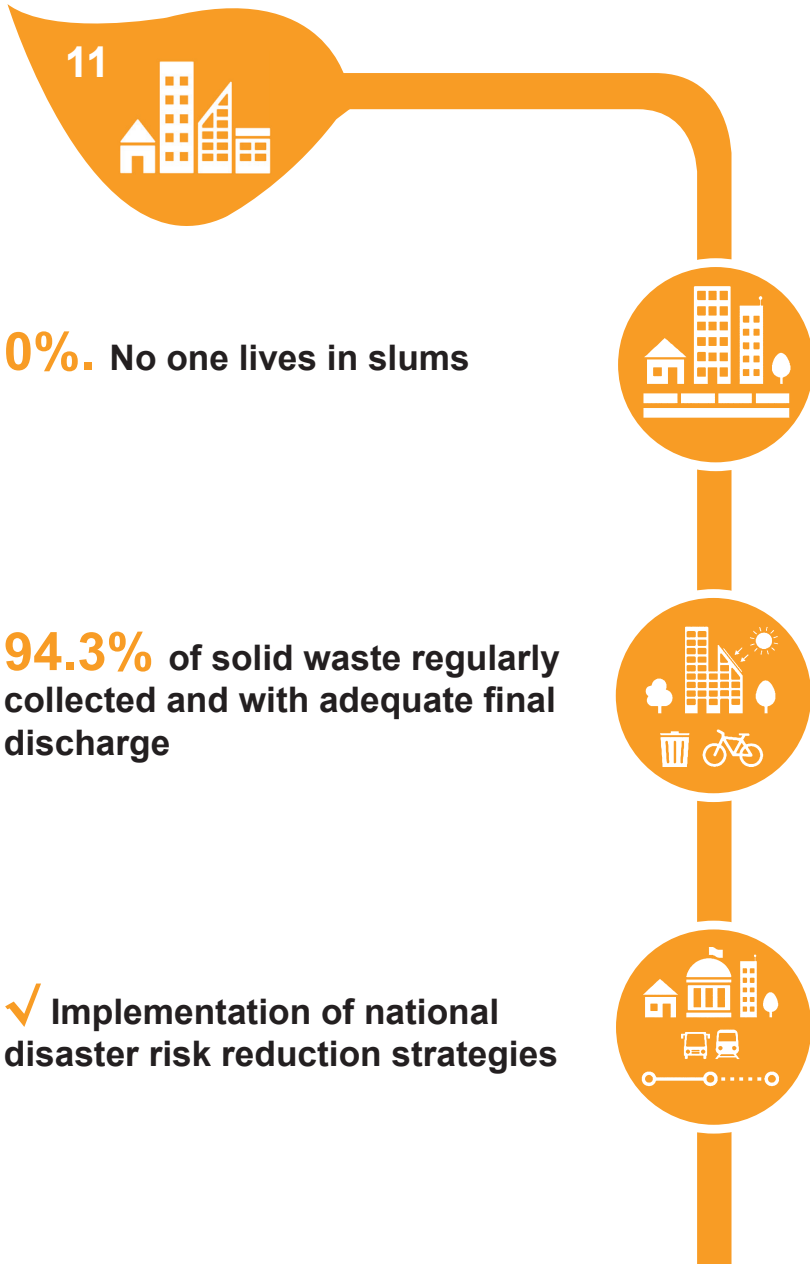
## REDUCED INEQUALITY



### Share of compensation of employees to GDP



# SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



# CLIMATE ACTION

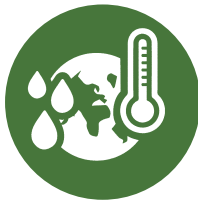
13



✓ **Ratification of the Paris Agreement in December 2016**

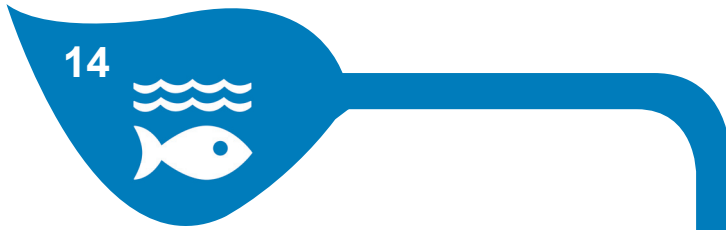


✓ **Climate change awareness in schools**

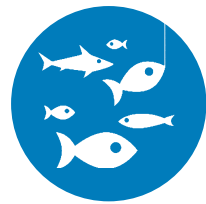


✓ **Integrated climate change concerns into national policies for all sectors, enabling them to raise their capacities to meet climate change adaptation and mitigation requirements**

# LIFE BELOW WATER



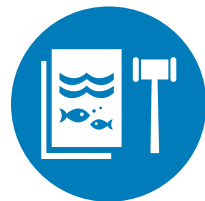
**10%** of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels



**21%** of the marine environment are protected areas



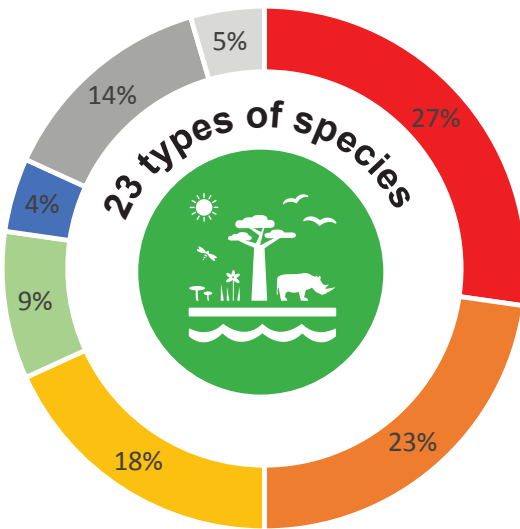
First in the region, to adopt the ecosystem-based approach in managing some of its coastal areas



# LIFE ON LAND



Red list Index



- Critically Endangered (CR)
- Endangered (EN)
- Vulnerable (VU)
- Near Threatened (NT)
- Least Concern (LC)
- Not Applicable (NA)
- Not Evaluated (NE)

# PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



**100%** of births of children under five years of age have been registered with a civil authority



✓ Independent National Human Rights Institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles



**0.44** homicide rate per 100,000 population





## PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



17



**7%** remittances as a percentage of GDP



**98%** of population using internet



✓ **Conduction of population and housing censuses on a regular basis**



INFORMATION &  
eGOVERNMENT AUTHORITY