

Content

Page  
No.

1

2

First

Women and Poverty

Women and Health

13

Women and the Economy

22

Women in Power and Decision-Making

27

Institutional Mechanisms for Improving the Status of Women

29

Seventh:

Human Rights

Eighth:

Women and the

Ninth:

Wo

the Environment

Status

Tenth: Role and Mechanisms of the

Reforming



### Intellectual Principles for Development of Bahrain's Women:

The issue of social development is considered to be one of the key priorities for the State of Bahrain. Women's issues are prominent among the overall development priorities. The country's Constitution recognises the principle that all citizens are equal without any discrimination and provides for the principle of equality and equal opportunities as one of the principal bases of the society. Article 18 of the Constitution provides that all people are equal in enjoying human integrity. All citizens are equal before the law in terms of public rights and duties, with no discrimination between them because of race, ethnic origin, language, religion or creed.

The family is considered as the nucleus of the society and its basic pillar. Hence the State seeks to develop it and to preserve its entity. The Constitution explicitly provides in Article 5 that the family constitutes the basic

foundation of the society through a belief in loyalty to the homeland. The law prescribes and strengthens its bonds and values through the protection of childhood. Within this framework, children enjoy care and protection, safeguarded against exploitation. They are protected from moral, spiritual and physical negligence and abuse.

With the above in mind, the State has sought to implement basic principles and laws, especially in the educational, training and health spheres, with a view to ensuring equal opportunities between both sexes and ensuring continuous development.

Comprehensive efforts made by Bahrain in housing development efforts, the country has occupied a prominent position in the Human Development Reports for 1996, 1997, and 1998 Bahrain in the field of human development. During the years 1996, 1997 and 1998 Bahrain has afforded all Arab countries in the field of human development. The State's concern with development in various spheres.

The Bahrain Government has adopted an open-door policy while seeking to preserve the society's cultural and moral values. Focus on women's statements and speeches, which reiterated the need that women must acquire an active role in the national life in view of their position. Plans for municipal elections are currently under review allowing women equal rights to voting and nomination in such elections. It is also expected that a Government plan will be approved shortly concerning the involvement of women in the island's Consultative Council.

Progress Achieved in the Crucial Areas Outlined by the Beijing Action

Programme:

First: Women and Poverty

... oil producing country with a per capita income of ...  
and sewerage ... electricity, drink ...  
out Bahrain. Thus, poverty conditions are ... schemes are available ...  
be compared to such conditions in other ... relative in Bahrain and ...  
social cohesion and belief in the Islamic ... developing countries ...  
... have played a role in strengthening ...  
poverty does not exist in the light of ...  
should better be described as low-income ...

The Government policy is based upon ...  
families. Around ten million dollars have ...  
state budget for payment to about 10,000 ...  
68% of the cases are supported by women ...  
divorced women ...

... seeking ...  
such families to get jobs by enter ...  
training. Women enrolled ...  
Social Affairs Ministry's ...  
1999 totaled 9,248 ...

Decree was issued whereby the Ministry of ...  
of the electricity consumption charges to the ...  
the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs ...  
Earlier this year ...  
Electricity granted a ...  
needy families regist ...



The Ministry has sought through the High Council for Vocational Training to deduct a proportion of the private sector companies' contributions to training

to be allocated for providing education for low-income level families especially students attending colleges and higher institutes. A total of 2, students reaped the benefits of this scheme during the period from 199 to 1999. Females account for around 49% of this figure reflecting the government's concern with training on the one hand, and seeking to ensure that discrimination is shown in giving opportunities for both sexes on the other hand.

### Obstacles:

The following are the obstacles faced in our efforts to eradicate poverty:

1. There is a lack of a definition of the poverty line in view of the situation in Bahrain.
2. Local citizens have been accustomed to receive public services free of charge and this practice prevails amongst many people in spite of the fall in oil income in recent years. Hence it is necessary for local people to have better awareness and to change their social attitudes.
3. Lack of a database ensuring co-ordination between charitable organizations and the Government in giving charitable assistance to avoid duplication and waste of funds.

### Future Plans:

The Bahrain Government is seeking to attract the citizens to contribute to the

2. Enabling the citizens, especially low-income bracket individuals, to obtain soft-term loans.
3. Developing the Productive Families Project to broaden the base of beneficiaries from this scheme.
4. Finding job opportunities for young members of families that receive financial assistance to enable such families to depend on themselves.

**Second: Education and Training of Women:**

The educational policy and philosophy in the State of Bahrain are guided by

high provides, in Article 7 that the State supports science and the arts and encourages scientific research. It also supports education and cultural services for the citizens. Also provided is free and compulsory education in the early stages determined by the law and in the manner stipulated therein. The law draws up the necessary plan for eradication of illiteracy. Several laws related to education were promulgated, the last of which was the Private Education Law that was enacted in the year 1998. A draft law on compulsory education is under review.

Although compulsory education is not enforced by law, the vast majority of age children go to school, especially in the first three (primary, intermediate and secondary). Free education and availability of educational services throughout Bahrain, as well as the emphasis on quality education, have played a vital role in the development of both rural and urban areas to the benefit of the citizenry.

The Ministry of Education has taken special measures to provide schools as a result of poverty by ensuring that all students are provided with the necessary stationery and uniforms.

curbing the drop-out rate in schools, especially at low-income students are provided with morning meals and uniforms.

The Ministry of Education is making continuous efforts to develop the learning process for students of both sexes, considering the importance of the basic human rights for all. The Ministry adopts the following measures:

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education has taken the following measures to ensure that education is available to all:

1. Reducing the illiteracy of uneducated citizens in the 10 - 40 year age group in the next few years. Strategies in this direction include taking steps to cut the drop-out rate in the primary and intermediate school levels, reducing the number of illiterates through the establishment of Anti-Illiteracy and Adult Education Centres in all areas, and the eradication of illiteracy with the help of the various media especially television.



Underlining the value of technical education through expanding the available technical schools.

Achieving the integration of regular and irregular education by enabling students of Anti-illiteracy and Adult Education Centres in the 10-22 year age group to join Government schools and to continue their regular education.

Improving teachers' performance through continuing to train school teachers in the modern skills required for the latest trends in teaching

al programmes  
girls' schools.

5. Enhancing the quality of education by introducing and IT programmes in all educational levels in b

Anti-illiteracy:

indicate that there is a drop in the illiteracy rate among the  
6.4% for males and 9.18% for females during the  
ar. The Ministry of Education is currently reviewing plans  
eracy that stood at a rate of 5.25% during the school year  
be achievable through transmission of educational  
V to enable the eradication of illiteracy, especially for

Available s  
10-44 year  
1996/97 s  
for elimina  
1998/99.  
programm  
Housewive

Formal Ec

in the basic school levels to the  
Admission rules are equal for  
completion of the secondary stage. Upon reviewing the education  
statistics, the following is noted:

The number of students attending government-run schools in the year  
totalled 114,669 students of whom  
166 females or 50.7%

1999/2000 in all school  
56,503 are males or 49.3%

school boys in the intermediate and  
totaling 13,622 school boys compared

School girls are more  
secondary levels with the



The infant has numerous private schools, specialised institutes, handicapped institutes and day care centres in this connection, we

submit herewith the following details of the progress of the subject for the year 1999/2000.

**Numbers of Schools and Students According to Gender in Government - run Education from 1995/96 to 1999/2000**

Particulars	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00
<b>Number of Schools</b>					
Males					
Females					
<b>Number of Students</b>					
Males	54004	54624	55104	5576	5576
Females	55089	55527	56339	57270	58153
<b>Percentage of Females</b>	99.6	98.4	98.8	97.3	97.3
<b>Percentage of Females in Primary Education</b>	96	96	98		
<b>Percentage of Females in Intermediate Education</b>	90	98	98		100
<b>Percentage of Females in Secondary Education</b>	29	29	30		94
<b>Classroom density for Males</b>	30	31	30		30
<b>Classroom density for Females</b>					

Training:

The Government of the State of Bahrain shows special interest in the development of human resources, which are considered the true wealth of the country. Against this background, training has a top priority in the

Government is making intensive efforts to... country's plans and strategies. The...  
...turn Bahrain into a region...  
...rain Training Institute to play a significant...  
...role in training young Bahrainis of both sexes and providing them with the...  
...The Ministry of Labour...  
...account for 27% of the total number of trainees in 1995. This

|||||

Female trainees in 1995 accounted for 39% of the total trainees. This has risen currently to 41%.

and training challenges are significant and for this reason...

Education is making every possible effort to draw up policies and plans for implementing them in the near future. These are made up of the following:

1. Reducing the sources of illiteracy by reducing or even eliminating the illiteracy rates in various basic educational levels.

2. Focusing on the quality of programmes delivered to the students of Anti-Illiteracy and Adult Education centres to ensure that illiteracy is totally eradicated.

3. Ensuring that adult students do not drop out of school.

4. Improving the quality of education in government schools.

5. Introducing modern technology in the primary schools.

6. Altering the school curricula so that the content reflects the positive development of women.

7. Continuing to bridge the gap between the educational output and needs of the labour market.

### Third: Women and Health:

Human development is the objective sought by all communities with a view to improving the quality of life and seeking to attract every individual to make a vital contribution for improving standards of living and social conditions in general.

Health is one of the basic human rights without discrimination due to

of this right, the Bahrain Constitution provides for residents in the State of Bahrain. The State of Bahrain provides free healthcare at all levels to local citizens and expatriates. In addition to the development of preventive and medical services, the State of Bahrain has ratified Resolution 1944 of the World Health Organisation, and the UN General Assembly Resolution 43, for providing health for all by the year 2000.

religion, sex, economic status, etc. Recognising the importance of offering healthcare to all, Bahrain provides free healthcare to all its residents. Support is provided for medical services throughout the country. WHO 34-36, issued by the General Assembly Resolution

goals for healthcare.

Bahrain has made vast strides towards realising the goal of health for all by the year 2000 according to the indicators laid down by the World Health Organisation. Indeed, the country was able to realise most of the goals of the

To continue to maintain the health gain and improve health standards, the Ministry of Health drew up a strategic plan for the period from 1994 to 2000 and the following years. This plan aimed to enhance and improve the population's health conditions. Ten key major programmes were incorporated in the plan:

1. Combating hereditary diseases.

2. Maternal and child health promotion and surveillance.

- 3) Combating cancer.
- 4) Combating vascular system and cardiac diseases.
- 5) Combating physical disability diseases.
- 6) Combating respiratory system diseases.
- 7) Protection against accidents and injuries.
- 8) Mental and psychiatric health.
- 9) Combating dental diseases and maintaining oral health.
- 10) Other national health programmes designed to achieve the "All Strategy".

It should be noted that there is a lack of health information on behavioural patterns and ways of life affecting the population conditions, such as dietary behaviour etc.

One of the major challenges facing the health services is the healthcare. The problem lies in the need to re-allocate the earmarked for health services so that the primary healthcare of the population, which is the main focus of this strategy. Another challenge is the need to maintain health gains and improve health conditions in view of the

prevailing economic conditions.

The following Table shows the development in the area of women's health and the achievements within the framework of women's development:

**HEALTH INDICATORS**

Average life expectancy upon birth - males and females..	72.9	1998	Health Statistics 1998
*Males	71.1		
*Females	75.3		
Mothers' mortality rate per 1000 live births	0.1	1998	Health Statistics
Infants' mortality rate per 1000 live births of both sexes	1.5	1998	
Rate of children under 5 years below per each 1000 live births	11.1	1998	
Percentage of women using contraceptives in the 15-49 year age group	62%	1995	Family Health Study
Percentage of pregnant women of the 15-49 years age group and suffer from anaemia..			
Percentage of pregnant women vaccinated	54%	1995	
Percentage of pregnant women who receive prenatal care			
Percentage of medically supervised child births			
Percentage of fully vaccinated children			
1995	Family Health Study		
1995	Family Health Study		
1998	Health Statistics		



The average life expectancy for both men and women has risen significantly

due to the development of many services and improved sanitation standards.

Family planning awareness has also improved due to the focused awareness

campaigns in this field as well as the rise in the standards of education. As a

result, the fertility rate has declined from 4.01 in



study also showed that 49% used the pill, 30% depended on the use of condoms, 8% used the loop and sterilisation of women accounted for 6%. Separation of women from their husbands represented 51%.

It is noted that awareness of family planning methods among women is very high, with 99% of married women being fully aware or at least of methods.

The pill, women's sterilisation and loop are the most common methods the ones of which married women are familiar (93%, 96%, 92%) followed by the use of condoms and men's sterilisation. Traditional methods such as methods are widely known to n

planning methods is considered high that interest in preventive services desired. The study has shown that there is a modest level of women and this is one of the challenges facing officials

Although knowledge and use of post-nat in charge of

shown that 40% of pregnant women who frequent health centres suff

Some studi centres suff

**ent Status in the Health Sector**

**Women's E**

g an increasingly effective role in the health sector's process on the local, regional and international levels

Women a decision m compared v

unt for a large proportion of the health workers in the healthcare system, (77%) women have been actively

Since wom Governmen involved in

of leading positions in the health sector up to the level of

Director

Bahraini women working in the health sector have been given the opportunity to develop their management and professional skills in the health services field on an equal footing with men through enjoying equal training opportunities and participating in decision making.

### Programmes Targeting Women

When the Ministry of Health adopted the "Health for All Strategy" by the year 2000, mother and child welfare services witnessed a significant expansion. The Ministry paid special attention to preventive services aimed at women, such as the annual regular check-up that includes mammograms, tests for early breast cancer diagnosis, uterus cancer and the pre-marriage check-up scheme. The latter scheme is designed to reduce the rate of hereditary diseases.

The Government provides health services for all through a comprehensive healthcare programme offered at health centres. In addition, the scheme offers pre-natal and post-natal care for women. Primary and secondary healthcare are being transferred to the hospitals.

Through the Maternal-Friendly Hospital Scheme, launched by the Ministry since September 1992, women are being encouraged to breast feed their children without any discrimination. A teenage health programme, for both sexes, was launched in 1993.

In addition, several new educational and awareness programmes on nutrition were recently introduced, with a view to furthering women's awareness in this vital area related to her health, since a great number of Bahraini women suffer from anaemia resulting from iron deficiency.

### Family Planning on the Local Level

Family planning and reproductive health issues are an integral part of the especially these concerns priorities of the Bahrain Family Planning Society plays an effective role with women and youngsters. Therefore awareness enhancement workshops for its members of both sexes. Special emphasis is being laid on women's rights and reproductive health rights and expert advice is being given in this field.

These programmes involve the use of various methods and facilities such as holding personal meetings with senior officials at the concerned ministries or holding educational and cultural courses for local leaders and media personnel. Moreover, awareness sessions are organised at the anti-illiteracy centres and community centres. The Education Ministry's social workers usually participate in such events. Given the decision-making role of males in reproductive health, the Society is keen on training its male members to educate and inform other men at the anti-illiteracy centres, youth clubs and mosques. There is also a special focus on young men in terms of population and family education, as they play a key role in spreading family planning concepts and ideas to their future parents. In addition, the Society is also carrying out activities targeting youth awareness. As part of the service provided by the Society, publications and leaflets dealing with family planning issues are distributed to various groups in the community.

One of the major projects started by the Society in July 1998 was the launch of a family planning and reproductive counselling centre. Qualified staff who ensure total confidentiality offer advice to visitors of the centre to enable them to take appropriate decisions without any outside pressures. This centre supports and complements the services provided by the Government.

This new centre is based on the Society's premises and has been launched.

The objectives of the centre, extensive training, self-education, and its staff are as follows:

1. Providing advice and education to people seeking advice on family planning, reproduction and sexual health.

2. Providing advice to married couples on reproductive health and family relations.

3. Providing advice to childless couples, assisting and advising them on how to get their treatment.

4. Providing advice to family planning service seekers and helping them to make appropriate decision concerning the suitable method for them.

5. Providing information on the use and availability of family planning methods in the country.

The main challenges facing those concerned with developing women's status and participation in social and economic development include the following:

1. The low status of women in the health field and their contribution to the wider community's health.

2. The lack of psychiatric healthcare and other services for women and non-official levels as an adjunct to healthcare within the community level.

3. The need to focus on women's health especially as regards post-natal and family planning services through the following strategies:

1. Continuing to provide health education to women on the importance of regular check-ups and self-care.

2. Using the media for health education to target women.

4. Supporting strategies for the development of women's leading role

through the following:

- \* Giving women equal opportunities;
- \* Training women in management and leadership;
- \* Providing services supporting working women such as day care centres etc;
- \* Providing material and other support for women.

5. Continuing to forge closer links between Government and women's organisations in order to develop women's health and enhancing the role played by women.

**Fourth: Women and the Economy:**

Bahraini women play an effective role in economic development through contributing to all public and private economic sectors. Bahraini women have been contributing since ancient times to the community's economic growth. In the past, such contribution took the form of undertaking minor handicrafts that was reserved only for women. Now women work in key positions in the public and private sectors.

The significant role played by women, and their ability to fill such high positions, would not have been possible without the strong backing of the

country's laws do not discriminate against women in working with men. Women enjoy the same wages as men, even though in respects by getting maternity leave and babies.

and cultural awareness levels enjoyed by women have helped women reach the highest in the various areas of employment and of Bahraini women having, as a minimum, According to the 1991 census, the working secondary education certificate totalled 5,361 the total Bahraini working women. The r degrees totalled 5,979 women, which Bahraini working women. Having high women have been able to efficiently fill key

country's leadership. The and treat them on an employment benefits and women are more privileged time off to breast feed their

Indeed, the high educational members' of the Bahraini educational levels and for production. We see large the secondary school certificate Bahraini women having the women. This represents number of women holding account for 45% of the educational standards. Ba

While the total number of Bahraini women in the public and private sectors totalled 12,176 according to the 1981 census, this figure rose to 17,544 women according to the 1991 census. Now the total number of Bahraini women is 21,846 women according to the most recent estimates of the Central Statistics Organisation.

### Bahraini Women's Involvement in the Public Sector

Bahrain women's participation in the public sector represents 37% of the total number of Bahraini workers in this sector (according to the information of the Civil Service Bureau). Female employees work equally side by side with men in all Government ministries, departments and in different occupations. They spare the same duties and responsibilities.

Most women working in the public sector are employed at the Ministry of Health where women account for 51% of the total number of employees in the Government sector. The Ministry of Health employs the largest total number of women working in the public sector. At the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs women represent a 60% majority of the total number of employees at this Ministry. There, the female employees

The majority of female employees in the Ministry of Health are mostly university graduates and

### Private Sector

As a result of reaching the saturation point in the Government sector, which is no longer able to offer sufficient jobs for job seekers, the Government promotes the policy of encouraging the private sector through setting up incentives for private sector companies that

### Bahraini Women's Participation in the Private Sector

women are now seeking jobs in the private sector. In addition, the Government is increasing the employment of Bahrainis in the private sector, Bahrainisation levels and giving incentives to encourage companies to employ Bahraini citizens.

In spite of the continuous increase in the number of working women, their participation in the employment market represents only 19% of the total number of employees in the labour market according to the 1999 figures of the Central Statistics Organisation.



Organisation. This may be due to the nature of the labour market that always looks for trained and qualified workforce in addition to the concentrated demand for manpower in industries that require physical efforts and finally

the competition posed by the expatriate workforce.

to women with an increase in the number of work suited to women. Making intensive efforts to reduce

annual report published by the General Organisation for Social Security indicates that the percentage of Bahraini women to the total workforce employed by firms registered with GOSI (firms that employ

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE BAHRAINI PRIVATE SECTOR WORKERS FROM 1995 TO 1999

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
------	------	------	------	------	------

It is noted that the number of self-employed women is steadily growing. 25%

of the commercial registrations of businesses are owned by women according

to 1998 figures (Statistics of the Ministry of Commerce).

The Bahraini Labour Law, which was recently revised,

allows women to own businesses in various economic sectors.

Some self-employed women, especially uneducated women or housewives develop an interest in doing some simple handicrafts at home. Such women are not subject to the legal requirements of having commercial registrations nor do they have to join the GOS insurance scheme. In addition, the fruits of their work are not included in the Gross National Product. This situation is not peculiar to Bahrain as it takes place in all countries of the world.

Meanwhile, the Government is making continuous efforts to find jobs for youth of both sexes. In 1996 it set up an Employment Services Bureau at the

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for finding job opportunities for youth

in Bahrainia. The ESB 1999 Annual Report said that a total of 3,913 jobs were

filled for Bahraini job seekers represent 3,173 job seekers or 81% while

740 females or 19% only.

The above statistics reflect what we have a

modest participation in the workforce. There

is a need to boost women's

educational and training

efficiency through introducing the appropr

Moreover, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has prepared a five-year plan (1996-2000) for accelerating the process of maximising the employment of Bahrainis. Aspects of this are the replacement of expatriate workers by

the move focuses on Bahrain job seekers and providing financial support for recruitment and training and qualification of Bahraini manpower. Raising the fees is used to finance the training of Bahraini job seekers. In pursuance of the five-year plan, Ministerial Decree No. (7) of the Year 1996 was issued for raising the percentage of Bahraini in the workforce in the private sector companies and firms.

benefited from this. There is no doubt that increasing number of women have benefited from it. An evaluation should be conducted of its influence on creating jobs for women. Now, four years after its implementation, how far women have benefited from it.

priority for women to The challenges currently being faced and employment may be summed up in the following

targeting women so that increasing the focus on training programs

concentrating on enabling women to gain the skills required in the

**Fifth: Women in Power and Decision-Making:**

primary education to women in 1972. Ten years after the beginning of formal education for boys in 1919. Since this date the scope for women's education expanded which was gradually reflected in their participation in productive activities and entry to the job market. Initially women's participation was limited to clerical jobs and subsequently to administrative jobs. However, due to prevailing conditions, women were unable to hold key positions in teaching, health and other sectors.

During the early 1970s the Civil Service Regulations, Private Sector and Civil Service Regulations contributed to discriminatory practices between men and women in terms of the type and wage levels. Subsequently, women began to take up jobs. They played an effective role in key positions. The Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General Mr. W.J. Yardley, Fact-Finding Mission, to confirm Bahrain's Arab identity and independence was achieved by holding meetings with a number of women members as well as some specialists in the history of Bahrain.

During the period from the 1970s to the 1990s, women occupy positions in various public service sectors. In 1990, 45 Directors in the fields of Social Affairs, Health, Communication, Engineering and Human Resources. Women now occupy the positions of Assistant Undersecretaries (Civil Service and Social Affairs). Another woman was appointed as Ambassador to a leading European country. Also a number of female officers have been appointed in some of Bahrain's consulates and posts abroad.

In addition, women were appointed for the first time in Bahrain's history on boards of administration of local government when they were established in Bahrain three years ago. It is expected that women will

participate in Municipal elections by way of nomination and election upon the directives recently issued by the country's leadership. Rules and regulations ensuring women's active participation are now being reviewed. Given the Government's policy of opening up Bahraini women look forward to taking the Consultative Council as members on par with men.

Though there are a few women in key positions in the private sector, this has recently witnessed major advances in favour of women. A radical change was witnessed recently with the appointment of a woman as heads of branches of commercial banks, in addition to the post-

employed as Human Resource Development General Manager in a leading company in Bahrain. In addition, a woman was elected on the Board of a major company in Bahrain.

Many women are active members of the Boards or Executive Committees of various professional and academic societies such as the medical, bar, engineering, economists, chemists, and other societies. They are also members of many important committees such as the General Committee of Bahrain Workers, which is concerned with the protection of workers' rights, National Committee for Eradication of Illiteracy, Environment and Wildlife Protection Committee and National Council for

participants on the regional level in the membership of the International of Women's Activities in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula, Arab Women's Network and Arab

Organisations. Off the regional and international working in the World Health Organisation in the post Support Health Sciences Advisor at the WHO. A Bahraini woman is a senior nursing advisor Organisation's Geneva headquarters.

In addition the State of Bahrain has endorsed international conferences concerning also introduced the appropriate

measures and strategies adopted by such conferences.

Sixth: Institutional Mechanisms

In response to this need, the State of Bahrain has taken into account gender by drawing up strategies, policies and planning programmes that ensure improving women's conditions and the necessary introduction of the suitable mechanisms for implementing and monitoring such policies. The State of Bahrain has sought to enhance the role played by women. Ensuring women's contribution to public life has been translated through enacting laws and legislation that ensure the necessary and support for enhancing their role as follows:

In Bahrain, legislators have been keen to ensure that the Constitution stipulates in the Constitution that men and women have equal rights and duties without discrimination. The law provides protection for women in case of disability, social security guarantees for women in case of widowhood and widownhood. Social insurance services free of charge for women and employment have been secured by the State. The Labour Laws regulate the terms of her employment, maternity leave and the right to shorter working hours of two years.

... a woman was recently appointed as Assistant ...  
... This person had extensive experience in ...  
... as an active member of a well-known women's ...  
... the Children and Women Information Centre. The ...  
... ent lies in the Government's trend to pay an ...  
... to the social work sector, targeting women in ...

... respect to the co-ordination ...  
... ational level. The Social ...  
... erned, on the national level,

... ensure protection for ...  
... employment such as ...  
... hours to breast feed h

In confirmation of the ...  
Undersecretary for ...  
voluntary social activ ...  
society' and chairwor ...  
significance of this ...  
increasing level of a

Ministerial order No.10 of 1997 was is ...  
mechanism for women's affairs on ...  
Development Directorate is the autho



The State has allocated annual financial aid for national societies and non-governmental associations to help them implement programmes aimed at training their staff and personnel and setting up development and productive projects. This move will enable them to broaden their organisational structures and thus allow more people to benefit from their services.

According to the provisions of the Law on the Establishment of Foundations and Donations, such groups may approach private sector firms and individuals to implement projects and programmes.

Believing in the importance of income-generating activities for women, the Government is carrying out a number of projects relating to the setting up of small businesses. The implementation of their activities means and mechanisms in this respect of which we would like to mention the projects of the Women and Children Information Centre of the Children and Mothers Welfare Society. The Centre was opened on 20th December 1995 and was set up following agreement between the CMWS and the Arab-based Arab Childhood and Development Council (ACDC) for the establishment of an Arab sub-network in Bahrain dealing with women and children.

The Centre seeks to collect and compile data concerning women in terms of numbers, services, projects and contributions made by them. Its other duties include collection of the studies and reports conducted by national organisations and associations through the Centre. The ultimate aim will be to draw up strategies, policies and plans related to the economic, social, educational and health developments that have a major impact on the status of women and children in Bahrain.

The Centre will be linked to the Arab sub-network of the ACDC and to the data network shared by the Office of Nahdat Fatah Al-Bahrain Society. This was opened on 21st March 1996 at the offices of the Society and provides services to all members of the Society and its branches.

The data network shared by the Office of Nahdat Fatah Al-Bahrain Society and the Arab Childhood and Development Council (ACDC) will be linked to the data network shared by the Office of Nahdat Fatah Al-Bahrain Society. This was opened on 21st March 1996 at the offices of the Society and provides services to all members of the Society and its branches.

The data network shared by the Office of Nahdat Fatah Al-Bahrain Society and the Arab Childhood and Development Council (ACDC) will be linked to the data network shared by the Office of Nahdat Fatah Al-Bahrain Society. This was opened on 21st March 1996 at the offices of the Society and provides services to all members of the Society and its branches.

The data network shared by the Office of Nahdat Fatah Al-Bahrain Society and the Arab Childhood and Development Council (ACDC) will be linked to the data network shared by the Office of Nahdat Fatah Al-Bahrain Society. This was opened on 21st March 1996 at the offices of the Society and provides services to all members of the Society and its branches.



family by qualified and trained staff in family guidance and advice. This office co-ordinates with the community development centres, health centres and Ministry of Education schools so that its services will be offered to a larger base of beneficiaries and people who need such service.

\* **Legal Advice Office of the Awal Women Society:** Prior to this.

Hotline Service was launched in 1992 to receive women's complaints. It was followed by introduction of the Psychiatric and  
ice Service in 1994. Subsequently, the Legal Advice Office  
to provide free legal advice to women in general and  
particular by specialised lawyers. A specialised committee  
this office. Women's rights awareness activities represent  
part of the operations of this office. Its latest publication is a  
women's rights in Islamic Shariaa.

rights and legal protection for women progress and how far it keeps of justice, equal opportunities and has been very keen on introducing at all levels. These laws and

The rights, social and economic are considered a reflection of a abreast of living conditions in a ra ambitions. Therefore, the state of legislation that secures women measures include the following:

relationship to enable people including a number of d require her to be with her

Granting Pen remaining from court judgements. W of submission judgements. W husband regardless of the wife

rights to alimony for her and her children and to are heard before the Courts of Summary

court. Maintaining w orpces

The Courts are obliged according to the Code of Law comply with the time limits provided for in the law (Judgements handed down in presence of the parties 45 days from date of handing down the judgement and in respect of judgements in absentia 45 days from notifying the judgement to the concerned party) which would help reduce the period of settling personal status cases that concern women in particular.

The media have played a significant role in educating the general public with respect to women's issues and personal status matters. This has resulted in improving the Shariaa Court judges' awareness of women's rights, which has positively affected their respect for women's rights in their rulings.

women should have their financial rights are maintained and respected in Islamic Shariaa. Such rights include the rights to ownership, having a separate financial position and inheritance. However, it remains for the Government to introduce the Personal Status Law based upon the provisions of Islamic Shariaa to secure the rights of women and family.

In addition, the State of Bahrain has been very keen on taking part in a regional and international conferences related to women since the 1975

participate in the extraordinary Women 2000 (Beijing 95) for and evaluation of the

Conference Declaration and Plan of Action. As mentioned earlier, the State of Bahrain is seeking to provide the appropriate institutional mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations adopted by such conferences.

It should be noted that during the year 1999, an Amiri Order was issued for the formation of the Human Rights Committee at the Consultative Council. This Order taken into account the question of human rights in Bahrain. One of the Committee's priorities is to investigate the legislation and regulations in force to respect and protection of human rights. The Committee also proposes amendments concerning human rights in order to protect them and find the suitable solutions for them. Since the Committee seeks the support of women's human rights and treating them on an equal footing with men as an integral part of human rights, the Committee is currently reviewing the applicable legislation from a human rights perspective and women's rights in particular. Also monitored are issues concerning women's rights in order to refer recommendations in His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Prime Minister.

**Eighth: Women and the Media:**

Women represent fifty per cent of the society. As mothers, wives, sisters, housewives and working women, they take part with men in building and developing the community in almost all areas of life. In reality, women make additional contributions because they constitute one half of the productive force and also look after one half of the country's products.

The State of Bahrain looks upon women with a great deal of respect. In the field of information, women have been actively involved over a long period in various areas of audio, video and print media. At the Bahrain Radio and TV Corporation, women represent around 35% of the total workforce. Women were able to rise up the ladder and occupy key positions by participating in the policies contributing to the Corporation's development. Furthermore, many women are working as engineers, technicians (camerawomen, lighting, sound technicians, machine operators, etc.) and as announcers and programme producers.

The Corporation is seeking to create a suitable atmosphere for working women to enable them to strike a balance between their duties as employees and also their domestic duties as mothers. A day care centre was set up for workers of the Information Ministry in 1991. The Corporation is striving to ensure that its different programmes provide a positive presentation of Arab woman as an effective participant in development. Therefore, it has produced

programmes, mainly prepared by women to discuss vital issues. These

programmes cover various areas of employment. There is also the programme entitled "Other

Half" that discusses the needs and issues of concern to Bahraini

Women take an active role in discussing such issues especially

programmes presented by Bahrain Television. Famous pioneer

women are given coverage and the light is shed on women

who have contributed to developing the community. Also covered are the

activities of local and women's societies dealing with women's issues. The

Corporation co-operates with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

and other Ministries that are concerned with women's activities and

their cultural role.

The local daily and weekly newspapers and magazines devote

special features for women's issues and activities. The coverage is a reflection

of the progress of women in the country. The media are also

concerned with women's activities and their role in the community.

Women's involvement in the media is significant. There are female

journalists, reporters, columnists and programme designers in the

media. Some of the prominent women working in Akhbar Al Khaleej total 11,

Bahrain Tribune 9. Women's prominent role in the media is

well known and is no less than that of men. Given the

role of the community, we can conclude that the

participation of Bahraini women in the media is true and

realistic.

### Ninth: Women and the Environment

The international concern with women and their significant role in protection of the environment, its resources and wealth has been prompted by the belief in women's ability to make effective and influential contributions in this field.

... people can be raised in a ...  
... the environment without ...  
... useful to the future generations ...  
... as and active members of our ...  
... ple" in the overall economic ...  
... to carry out their mission and ...  
... the environment is both vital ...  
... to give women assistance to ...  
... the economic, social and

... loves and respects the environment ...  
... balanced and moderate manner ...  
... damaging its ability to be useful and ...  
... Women are our mothers and are the h ...  
... society." In brief, they "play an imp ...  
... development. Therefore, facilitating th ...  
... enabling them to play a key role in p ...  
... and significant. It is a duty of all con ...  
... achieve their overall development ...  
... environmental aspects.

... focused on women to play a ...  
... environment. This takes place by ...  
... main urgent environmental ...  
... of such environmental

The relevant Government authorities ...  
... leading to the management of ...  
... enhancing their awareness and education

... questions they can make a contribution to ...  
... example, educational field campaigns have targeted women to train them o ...  
... how to properly dispose of domestic waste in a proper manner for th ...  
... were also advised on ways of reducing ...

... issues of concern to the country ...  
... production of domestic ...  
... protection of the environme ...

... and recycling some components of it. The ...  
... sought to familiarise women with the risks posed by waste and ...  
... how to deal with such risks ...  
... the quantity of waste produced by local homes, thus ...  
... as the concerned government authorities and reducing the ...  
... ing such waste.

... production of domestic ...  
... ear ...  
... and area us ...

Government authorities organise continuous courses to

On the other

Bahrain and the discernible decline in the quantity and quality of

water. Such courses give practical steps that can be taken in terms of quantity and quality.

Meanwhile, the Government is making concerted efforts for rationalisation of power consumption, with particular emphasis on domestic consumption, in this area, women play an undeniably vital role.

An increasing number of women are playing an effective part in protection of the environment through participation in committees concerned with the environment, such as the Environment Protection Committee, Water Consumption Rationalisation Committee, Bahrain Garden Club and Bahrain Health and Safety Society.

To support such Government efforts, non-government societies and clubs cooperate with government authorities in enhancing awareness and education to improve environmental awareness standards. Women's societies have been making commendable efforts in tackling urgent environmental issues such as the water shortage problem and growing production of domestic

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

workshops, seminars, lectures, etc. to exchange of information and expertise in the area of

- \* Drawing up a clearly defined national strategy and national programme of action to boost women's role in protecting the environment and wildlife wealth.

to enhance and deepen women's role in protecting the environment and wildlife wealth.

policies and giving them the field of the environment.

en the government authorities and natural resources and the non-women's societies, and deciding a mechanism to achieve such co-ordination.

balance between women's duties and employment outside their role in properly running their home environment.

in tandem with the introduction of increased reliance by

many women on foreign housemaids in running their domestic affairs. This will have the adverse effect of wasting the exhaustible natural resources such as water and electricity and improper handling of

and compile information materials and programmes to be presented by the environmental awareness and culture.

- \* Involving women in drawing up environmental policy and having the opportunity to take decisions.

- \* Promoting co-ordination between government authorities and non-governmental organizations concerned with the environment.

their non-domestic

domestic refuse or various



Tenth: Role and Mechanisms of the Private Sector Organisations in Boosting Women's Status:

boosting women and enabling them to assume their  
community by helping women raise their cultural  
to apply the principle  
to play a role in development of  
ers in the rural areas are qualified  
efforts of women to enable them to

and International  
relevant Arab and

have been actively  
women's societies in

and  
can  
arts

of Poverty: Societies have been keen on  
and aid to poor and needy people, especially  
items are distributed to the children of such  
have taken the lead in setting up the University

each society is setting up its own tailoring  
as well as training in other skills needed by

private s  
effective

"social" and rural status  
of social solidarity. Assistance  
the community. Bahraini girls a

and educated to undertake the work and  
confront the social, cultural and economic change  
levels. Efforts include strengthening ties  
international organisations.

Since the launch of such societies in the early 19  
involved in women's development. Bahrain has

in addition to women's activities  
charitable societies. Women's societies co-ordinate their ac  
exchange information. It should be noted that they have sho  
interest in applying the Beijing Conference Plan of Action. Soci  
may be summed up in the following:

1. Alleviating th  
extending financial  
women. School st  
families. Women's soc  
"Student Fund."

In the field of vocatio



### 3. Education and Awareness Programmes

These programmes are designed to overcome social and psychological difficulties and to create a better environment for women. They will do this by using all available communication methods or publication of leaflets. In addition to direct work, local societies are actively involved in awareness programmes and educating the public about women's rights. These programmes target women at community education centres, adult education centres, centres, schools and adult literacy

#### Microstart Project

Children and Mothers Welfare Society and Awal Women Society have been chosen for implementing this project which is the first of its kind in Bahrain. It is financed by the UNDP and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The project is aimed at raising living standards of low-income citizens by providing small loans to them.

#### Reproductive Health, Legal, Psychological and Social Advice Family Planning and Reproductive Health Consultancy Centre

In July 1998 the Bahrain Family Planning and Care Society launched a reproductive health consultancy centre to give advice concerning reproductive health and sexual health. Advice is given by voluntary staff. All personal information is dealt with on a confidential basis. This Centre further supports and complements the services provided by the Government sector. The Centre which is based in the premises of the Society, trains its own staff on how to give the necessary advice to women in

entation Office

Family Guidance

1998 at the premises of Nahdat Farat Al

Bahrain Society to provide family guidance services to families by specialists in the family guidance field. It also transfers patients to the Psychiatric Hospital and gives the necessary legal advice. This Office seeks to coordinate with community development centres, health centres and Education Ministry schools to ensure that its services are given to the greatest number of people who need such service.

Consultancy Office

the Social Consultancy Office

Awal women's society

charge to women and families through

This Office gives legal advice

3. Gulf Women in the New Millennium Conference: Opportunities, Obstacles and Required Roles - March 2000

The convention of the United Arab Emirates Society in Beijing  
March 2000 is considered to be one of the applications  
of the Millennium Declaration of Action which called for the ad