# 

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

**KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN**

**National Childhood Strategy and**

**National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**Final Evaluation**

**Evaluation conducted by: Essam Ali**

**May 2014**

**The findings and recommendations of this report are based on the consultant analysis of the interviews and documents reflecting the opinion of the consultant, but they are not necessary representing UNDP opinion/ conclusions.**

**Executive Summary**

This is the report of the final evaluation of the National Childhood Strategy and the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which were developed in the cooperation framework between UNDP and Ministry of Social Development in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The evaluation focused on the value added by developing these two strategies, the content as well as the process of the development of the strategies, and finally looking forward to achieve the desired impact of this project.

In general, both strategies followed the human rights-based approach for development with the participation of main stakeholders. The project was relevant and effective for country’s needs as well as UNPD priorities. When the implementation of both strategies and plans of actions start, they are expected to have sustainable impact on children and persons with disabilities in Bahrain. **Bahrain ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2011; therefore, developing a comprehensive strategy based on this convention covering almost all the aspects of the lives of** persons with disabilities through **seven themes was necessary step to pave the way to the implementation of the convention, and to move from services delivery to provisions of rights. Getting all stakeholders on board, empowering them through capacity building, and preparing public sphere through inclusive education campaign were very effective plan. In addition, UNDP invested in recruiting human resources and devoting the appropriate time required for such tasks. All these factors contributed to solid strategy and action plans. The Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs, as coordination body, has partial power and resources to enforce the implementation, though. At the same time, Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) needs to develop its structure and strengthen some specialized capacitates to carry the tasks in full scale.** UNDP can support t**he Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs as well as Ministry of Social Development to have a plan for implementation in different phases, and advocating that in the first phase, being an integrated part of the National Development Plan 2015-2018.**

**T**he National Childhood Strategy came after big achievements for more than 20 years; therefore, it would be better to focus on removing the bottlenecks that prevent some children from enjoying their rights. The Childhood component consisted of two activities: updating the situation of the children (which consumed most of resources and time) and developing strategy (which was born prematurely). The existing strategy identified some of the direct bottlenecks and gaps (not the root causes) which led to the strategic issues. Some of these issues could have been focused on further when setting strategic goals. The involvement of the stakeholders could have been intensified at the during the consultative process, so that ownership of the final product could have been strengthened. The role and structure of the National Commission for Childhood were not clear in the strategy as well as among MoSD. There are different formulas to develop a strategy (for examples not all of them should cover everything or be for 5 years). I think it is essential that strategy and action plans should lead to positive change in the lives of those concerned (children and persons with disabilities in Bahrain). That ultimate goal should lead the way forward and should be the base to building alliance among UNDP, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. This could be an ideal way to work on issues facing two targeted vulnerable groups in the Kingdom of Bahrain: Persons with Disabilities and Children.

**Table of Content**

Introduction 4

Evaluation scope and objectives 5

Evaluation approach and methods 7

Description on the interventions and Findings 9

Conclusion and Recommendations 14

Looking forward 16

Annexes 18

**Introduction**

A joint project was signed in June 2010 between UNDP- Bahrain and the Ministry of Social Development to work simultaneously on issues facing two target vulnerable groups in the Kingdom of Bahrain: Persons with Disabilities and Children. The project focused on developing the National Strategy for Persons with Disability and National Childhood Strategy for the Kingdom of Bahrain. This process of developing the two strategies took note of the current situation with its strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in order to make sure it responds to all the concerns and builds on the successful implementation so far. The two strategies are an opportunity to enhance the status of children, persons with disabilities and further enhance the quality of their lives. They provide a vision for the future and are reference documents for policy makers, professionals and practitioners working with and for children and persons with disabilities, parents, children and persons with disabilities themselves.

**Intended outputs of the projects (as stated in UNDP Project Document):**

1. Information on current situation of persons with disabilities updated and SWOT analysis developed. Information on current situation of Children updated with National Situation Analysis (SITAN).

* Constitute an updated baseline for developing the Disability Strategy
* Needs and aspirations of persons with disabilities, children and communities incorporated
* Constitute an updated Situation Analysis for developing the Childhood Strategy
* SWOT analysis completed and gaps identified
* SITAN completed and gaps identified
* Final reports drafted and shared with lead consultants, and strategies are developed based on thematic reports

1. National Strategy for Persons with Disability[[1]](#footnote-1) and National Childhood Strategy in Bahrain developed

* National Strategy for Persons with Disability developed
* National Childhood Strategy developed
* Action Plan for implementing the National Strategy for Persons with Disability is completed
* Action plan for implementing the National Childhood Strategy is completed
* National Strategy for Persons with Disability responds to the aspirations of all stakeholders involved
* National Childhood Strategy is endorsed by all stakeholders
* Both strategies and their action plans were approved and endorsed by the Cabinet
* Both strategies were officially launched, along with their five-year plans of action (Disability 2012-2016 and Childhood 2013-1017)

**Evaluation scope and objectives**

**Evaluation scope**

Evaluations should not be seen as an event but as part of an exercise whereby different stakeholders are able to participate in the continuous process of generating and applying evaluative knowledge. UNDP managers, together with government and other stakeholders, decide who participates in what part of this process (analyzing findings and lessons, developing a management response to an evaluation, disseminating knowledge) and to what extent they will be involved (informed, consulted, actively involved, equal partners or key decision makers).[[2]](#footnote-2)

The consultant was recruited to conduct final evaluation of the National Childhood Strategy and the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These two strategies were developed in the cooperation framework between UNDP and Ministry of Social Development in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

**The focus of this evaluation is on the following main points:**

1. **The value added by developing the two strategies. How they should contribute to** issues facing two target vulnerable groups in the Kingdom of Bahrain. How to build the institutional architecture that is capable to develop, to implement, and to monitor such strategies;
2. **The content of the results achieved; there are two strategies: the** National Childhood Strategy and the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and there is an action plan for each strategy that includes the total budget of main items. What are the feasibility and strength of their vision, goals and proposals? What were the quality and the depth of their analysis and recommendations? What has been achieved since they are launched, what are the bottlenecks causing delay/ tardiness
3. **The process of producing these two strategies or** the institutional architecture that underpinned the formulation process**: original plan, parties involved, how much the involvement of civil society actors, academia and depth of the this involvement, external expertise required;**
4. Way forward, which goes into two directions that complement each other: 1) the evaluation recommends action points to accelerate the implementation of these strategies. 2) Lessons learned from this project that could be useful for similar future projects.

**It is also important to mention here what this evaluation cannot accomplish; namely, the cost effectiveness, which would be out of the scope of this evaluation for the following reasons:**

* **There is an audit report for UNDP concerning this project. The consultant believes -after reviewing it- that the audit remarks are sufficient and does not need any further discussion**[[3]](#footnote-3)**;**
* **The project is completed operationally and financially; and**
* **By default, any type of evaluation has its own limitations, therefore, it cannot assume to cover everything.**

**Evaluation objectives**

* Provide an objective assessment of the achievements, constraints, performance, results, impact, relevance and sustainability of the project outcomes.
* Generate lessons from experiences in the respective intervention for the duration of the project.
* Provide clear and forward-looking recommendations in order to suggest effective and realistic policies by UNDP and partners.

In line with the overall purpose of this evaluation, its specific objectives will be as follows:

1. Determine the extent to which results stated in the project document were achieved, including progress on implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations.
2. Analyze sustainability of the project’s actions and key functions in financial, organizational, and expertise terms.
3. Highlight areas where significant progress has not been possible, noting the reasons for lack of progress and lessons learned.

Based on these findings, the report will provide recommendations and proposals for improving strategic decisions to ensure future sustainability of such a project.

**Evaluation criteria (**Bearing in mind the complexity of the situation in Bahrain during the development of these two strategies)

* UN Common Understanding on the **Human Rights Based Approach to Development** commits all UN agencies to: a) The realization of human rights, b) The use of human rights standards and human rights principles in guiding development cooperation and programming, c) Capacity building for both ‘duty bearers’ to meet their legal obligations and ‘rights holders’ to claim their rights.[[4]](#footnote-4)
* **Participation, inclusiveness, and empowerment** of different concerned parties (including children and persons with disability).
* **Relevance[[5]](#footnote-5):** Extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country‐needs, global priorities, partners, donors’ policies.
* **Effectiveness: The** extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. Effectiveness assesses the outcome level, intended as an uptake or result of an output;
* **Sustainability:** Continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long‐term benefits.

**Institutions interviewed or consulted** (full list of individuals in Annex 2 and the questions in Annex3):

* Ministry of Social Development
* National Commission for Childhood
* Childhood and Disability NGOs
* UNDP
* UNICEF

**Evaluation approach and methods**

According to UNDP’s HANDBOOK ON PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS, the consultant chose the current evaluation to be an outcome evaluation rather than project evaluation (see below table) because it is “strategic, addressing broad-based linkages with development; partnerships across agencies; analysis of the external local, regional and global environment in the analysis of success; and the comparative value of UNDP and significance in development. Another distinct characteristic of outcome evaluations is that they explicitly recognize the role of partners in the attainment of those outcomes and provide critical information for the purpose of enhancing development effectiveness and assisting decision and policy making beyond a particular project or initiative.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

****

**Steps to conduct the evaluation:**

1. Desk review includes but not limited to:

* Final strategies
* Reports of the consultants leading the process of development of those strategies
* Background documents used to build the strategies (e.g. Children Situation Analysis)
* UN and other international organizations reports of the situation in Bahrain
* Plans of UNDP implemented in Bahrain
* References on approaches, tools and processes to build strategy and action plan

1. Data collection and analysis: conducting field meetings/ interviews and verifying the findings with the main stakeholders. It’s an interwoven stage:

* UNDP (at the beginning and at the end of field visit)
* Ministry of Social Development
* Other main concerned ministries e.g. Education and Health
* National Commission for Childhood
* Childhood and disability NGOs which can be chosen by UNDP and MOSD

1. Reporting and discussing reports with UNDP
2. Dissemination of the findings hopefully to main stakeholders especially those who will most likely utilize these findings.

**Description of the intervention and Findings:**

**The National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The fundamental purpose of the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was to improve the promotion and protection of human rights of the persons with disabilities in Bahrain. The strategy was expected to provide guidance to government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), professional groups, educators, advocates and other members of civil society regarding the tasks that need to be accomplished to ensure that the human rights of the persons with disabilities are effectively observed and realized. The formulation of the national strategy was carried out in a consultative manner engaging all stakeholders from various institutions. A lead consultant[[7]](#footnote-7) was recruited to provide the necessary expertise guidance and policy options in the processes of developing the Strategy, which was completed and lately endorsed by the Cabinet.

**The process** of developing the strategy as mentioned in the printed copy:

* Consultations with the persons with disabilities and their families in collaboration with the associations representing persons with disabilities
* Reviewing previous researches, studies and reports as well as the recommendations of conferences
* Assessing the current situation by group of experts
* Forming specialized teams in each area of the strategy with the participation of persons with disabilities and their families
* Field visits to institutions and NGOs
* Meetings with officials and decision-makers
* Asking all the relevant ministries for feedback on the draft document
* A consultative meeting with all parties to review the final draft

In addition, the persons interviewed mentioned that:

* National seminar on the rights of Persons with Disabilities was organized in November 2010 where 160 persons participated;
* Hiring main consultant to lead the process of developing the strategy;
* Organizing a conference in October 2011 where 220 persons participated. The participants were distributed to the seven themes;
* Seven consultants were developing papers on the seven themes of the strategy, which became as background papers of the strategy;
* Launching public campaign on inclusive education (Disabling environment not me);
* In 2012, a training workshop was organized for NGOs representing persons with disability on preparing non-governmental reports to the international committees;
* The executive plan was prepared by ministerial committee from concerned ministries;
* The Cabinet approved the strategy in 2013
* There were some initiatives taking place as: Ministry of Labor is enforcing certain percentage of manpower for the persons with disability; Ministry of Housing is enforcing accessibility codes in all new buildings; availability of public buses for the persons with disability;

The report of the main consultant[[8]](#footnote-8) was well planned, with clear steps that modified in the later stage (i.e. the themes of the strategy) and set terms of reference of each working group which was good idea. Therefore, the list of people involved in developing the strategy mentioned was the responsibility of every person.

The process of developing this strategy was a participatory process where all concerned stakeholders governmental and non-governmental were involved in equal footing. The process was a learning process involving training on NGOs reporting as well as coaching/ mentoring from the main consultant who was available during all through the production period. The process was very rich in collecting data and producing seven reports on the main areas of strategy. These seven reports were the background and basis to draft the strategy.

The National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2012 -2016 focuses on **seven themes** as the following:

1. Legislation: Legislative reform to be in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
2. Health and Rehabilitation: Promote policies and programs of health education, detection and diagnosis in addition to health care programs, rehabilitation and support services.
3. Developing policies to provide inclusive educational opportunities for persons with disabilities in early childhood education, in public schools (including teacher training on how to deal with people with disabilities) and to provide opportunities for higher education and continuous learning.
4. Economic empowerment: Developing policies and programs to promote opportunities for persons with disabilities in employment, lending, and vocational training
5. Social inclusion: Developing policies and programs to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the society including the promotion of individual care and inclusion mechanisms in specialized rehabilitation programs, this includes strengthening the participation of this group -including women with disabilities-in the sports, cultural and recreational activities.
6. Physical accessibility: Developing policies and legislations that facilitate the access of persons with disabilities to public facilities including public transportation, parks, entertainment venues, buildings, housing, and access to the information technology.
7. Media and awareness: Developing policies to target the public media in order to highlight disability issues and to train the media professionals to deal with the persons with disabilities as well as other service providers, at the same time, enabling persons with disabilities themselves to acquire media and communication skills.

Addressing all themes shows that the strategy put the issue of comprehensive inclusion within the context of social, economic, and human development of the whole country, therefore, the first chapter was very important for setting the tone of this strategy. In addition, the strategy was based on accurate study of the existing services, legislations, and policies. For example, reviewing the compatibility of 21 articles between the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the existing Bahraini Law shows -in details- 13 articles were incompatible, 4 articles were partially compatible, and 4 articles were fully compatible, then proposing to delete some articles in the national laws and reviewing others. Another example, the first goal of the work plan is “accurate national census on the prevalence, types and characteristics of disability” based on the strategy’s finding that there is underestimation and misconception of disability in Bahrain, this goal is a basis of any good planning. Moreover, the strategy is not just gender sensitive, but also has a direct and strong gender component. These examples show firm commitment to human rights conventions as a reference, at the same time reflect strong causality analysis proposing structural changes (e.g. law), not fallen into the common solutions as increasing services and raising awareness.

The approach of the strategy is human rights based approach, not just introducing persons with disability as equal citizens in the society, but also promoting the rights terminology to public sphere (“don’t say- do say” as an example). Moreover, the approach was empowering to all stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental) through training, mass media campaign and societal debates.

**The work plan 2012-2016** of The National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities added one theme to the seven themes mentioned before which is the prevalence, types and characteristics of disability. Each theme has ONE goal; each goal has outcomes and its indicators, outputs and its indicators and then the activities with implementing partners, timeframe for implementation, and estimated costs.

The design of this work plan made the monitoring easier when the monitoring body check with the implementing partner/s whether the activity is done or not, when, and what it costs. Then the outputs can be measured through its list of indictors, which are mostly quantitative. It simply can be put in dynamic/ active excel sheets to become a toolkit for monitoring by just filling in the value of each indicator, or yes/ no when it is about the availability (e.g. of services).

Although the estimated cost for the activities sounds realistic, it seems problematic in funding. All interviewees have different interpretation for the funding issue. Some stated that the partners responsible for each activity should cover the estimated cost from their own budget, which might be true for some activities that explicitly state that, for example accessibility of parks, sports clubs and places of worship would be funded from the budget of responsible institutions. While another group said that funding should be allocated from the Ministry of Finance, a third group said that there is no mechanism to enforce the implementation of such a plan and to channel the budget through it. The only clear answer was the budget of the Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs (20,000 Bahraini Dinar equal 53,000 US$ per year), which covers the admin costs of the committee.

The final section of the strategy is about **coordination mechanism**, which is the Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs. HRH Prime Minister issued Decree number 1 in January 2012 to restructure the Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs under MoSD. The representatives of NGOs are advocating for an independent committee, able to raise fund, with authority to coordinate the implementation of the plan of actions, advocates for the rights of the persons with disability. This was a recommendation[[9]](#footnote-9) of the main consultant in her report that the implementation of the strategy requires: 1) a national independent institution that has its budget and its executive body; 2) a national fund that supports the rights and programs for persons with disabilities. While the representatives of MoSD are happy that this committee is under the ministry although they admitted that, this limits the resources mobilization for the committee.

All governmental and non-governmental stakeholders admitted that there is delay in the implementation of the plan of action, which covers the period 2012- 2017. There were no major achievements until the evaluation carried out in 2014. The vision of the representatives of MoSD to enforce the implementation in their own ministry and in other ministries is limited to hiring a consultant to follow up the implementation of the plan of actions that is an administrative procedure. When the consultant asked a person working with persons with disabilities what are the differences this strategy made in her daily work, the answer was “I have it in my desk all the time and review it when I do anything”. While the representatives of NGOs are advocating for policy mainstreaming among all ministries and institutions and they are thinking that an independent Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs can be an enforcement body.

Why is there delay in the implementation? Is it the political will (the strategy and work plan endorsed by the Cabinet), is it lack of financial resources (Bahrain is a high-income country), or the work plan is not realistic?

In the opinion of the evaluator, it is a combination of several factors causing delay in the implementation. Firstly, lack of organizational and human resources among major implementing governmental institutions (e.g. MoSD still doing business in the field of disability in the same way as before the strategy,. The Ministry of Education organized a seminar on inclusive education[[10]](#footnote-10), and they did not mention the strategy and inclusive education campaign). These institutions might need to realize/ recognize what it takes to implement the work plan (e.g. inclusive education). Secondly, social mobilization has receded after the strategy was endorsed, the active stakeholders –especially civil society- might have to build solid social movement for inclusion rather than social mobilization. Thirdly, the timeframe 2012-2016 for such comprehensive strategy –especially after 2 years without major achievements- seems unrealistic. Persons with Disabilities as well as NGOs representing them proposed –during interviews- setting phases for implementation of the work plan, but they are against setting priorities for implementation as all actions are their rights that cannot be prioritized. This option sounds more applicable and sustainable, but it requires analysis of the activities and classification to immediate action as exemption of certain fees and long-term process as adaptability of the curriculum to different types of disability. The crucial point here is that this option should be put within transparent analysis of the financial, organizational and human resources available in Bahrain.

**National Childhood Strategy**

On the Childhood side, and towards achieving children’s rights, the project focused on updating the Situation Analysis for Children in Bahrain (SITAN) and consequently developed the “National Childhood Strategy” which was expected to pave the way for nationwide, multi-sectorial discussions on the priority areas addressed in the strategy. The strategy was endorsed by the Cabinet.

**The process** of developing this strategy as describe by interviewee:

Updating the situation of the children in Bahrain was the first step. In a parallel process, consultants[[11]](#footnote-11) was recruited to get the voices of the adolescents in Bahrain heard through consultations, focus group discussions, life stories, dairies and drawings with children and adolescents. The consultants produced a report that describes the existing problems from the perspective of children and adolescents with some recommendations for actions. This report claimed in the introduction that was prepared for strategy while the SITAN report mentioned it (p. 10) as a main source of SITAN.

A main consultant was recruited for setting the plan for developing childhood strategy, but seems that some difficulties were experienced in his mission according to UNDP and MoSD. That resulted in concluding the mission with some problems, namely: proposing long process and estimating high budget. The mission report was one-page (238 words). This short report –in the opinion of evaluator- can be steps for training sessions on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Situation Analysis for Children in Bahrain and strategic planning rather than steps to develop a strategy.

Then MoSD formed a committee for the strategy headed by Ms. Amal Al-Dossari, chairperson of the committee responsible for Childhood Strategy, who was later named as a member of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Three papers were developed on survival and health, education, and child protection. Those papers included an opening statement from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, short description of the current situation, SWOT analysis, and finally setting targets and actions for each target. These papers were copied into the strategy not used as background papers to form the strategy.

The list of participating persons mentioned at the end the strategy was mixing –in confusing matter- the process of updating the Situation Analysis for Children in Bahrain (SITAN) and process of developing strategy. Some of governmental bodies as well as NGOs interviewed mentioned that their role was limited to participating in workshop/s to review the draft of the strategy or sending their feedback to strategy committee, and were not involved from the beginning: from thinking and planning to drafting.

UNICEF reviewed three or four drafts of the strategy and participated in a reviewing workshop where they noticed that NGOs were not strong advocates of child rights and were not into strategic thinking.

This combination of updating SITAN and developing strategy caused confusion in the process. Moreover, it was affecting the content of the strategy and action plan. It is better to discuss this confusion after presenting the strategy and action plan.

The National Childhood Strategy 2013-2017, which addresses the age group under 18 years-old, adopts the four clusters of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as the **themes** of the strategy:

1. The right to health and survival
2. The right to education and development
3. The right to protection
4. The right to participation and non-discrimination

The outline of each theme includes current situation (SITAN study), SWOT analysis (strengths, opportunities, and merging threats and weaknesses in one category called challenges), then presenting the priorities of the themes (might be different from challenges), finally, identifying the goals and mechanisms of actions. Usually SWOT analysis generates information to reach achievable objectives in the planning process, bear in mind that SITAN also identifies gaps and bottlenecks. These were very good steps to produce an action plan in one condition that following the results of such analyses. In the health theme, the strategy identified five priorities; number 3 was “children mental health challenges and lack of specialists”, but goals were not including any goal related to that, instead they created goal number 3 reducing child mortality which was not identified by both SITAN study and SWOT analysis. Another example, five priorities identified in the education theme, only one of them has a goal “making secondary schools obligatory”. Therefore, it is justified to ask why doing such analyses when we have ready a set of objectives. **The main process of developing a strategy usually are: 1)** Vision and Mission; 2) Environmental Scan using SWOT analysis or other tools; 3) Gap Analysis; 4) Strategic Issues; 5) Strategic Programming: setting goals, action plans, and Tactics; 6) Emergent Strategies: "a realized pattern [that] was not expressly intended" in the original planning of strategy.

**The plan of actions 2013-2017** was launched in 2013. Each of the four thematic areas of the strategy has five goals except protection has four goals, and each goal has mechanism of action, responsible institution, indicators timeframe, and estimated cost. Most of the mechanisms of action are raising awareness/ community awareness that somehow assuming the rights holders are source of the problems while in the Convention on the Rights of the Child especially the major responsibility laying within duty bearers. The final section of the strategy on **coordination and implementation** was proposing to set the strategy-working group as a coordination body with a new name strategy unit.

The evaluator might propose to focus on major program with one or two ministries to achieve change in the lives of the children living in Bahrain. For example, within MoSD, the project could be: “making social protection floor child-sensitive” or “improving the quality of child protection services”. For Ministry of Education, the project could be: “inclusive basic education” which will put both strategies (disability and childhood) in actions.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

**The objectives of the project were achieved successfully, as the Kingdom of Bahrain has two strategies on childhood and disability. Each strategy has a plan of action for five years. There are some achievements in both fields, but all stakeholders agreed that it is quite limited achievements in comparison with what were planned as well as what are needed.**

**The process of developing both strategies was a participatory process which was a big achievement, bearing in minds the c**omplexity of the situation in Bahrain which has an impact on the social cohesion. **There are some differences between the civil society involvement in the childhood strategy and disability strategy, the last one was better structured and more participatory from the beginning to the end. The main reasons for that: 1) Persons with Disabilities and their NGOs are human rights-based than NGOs on childhood, which are mostly services providers; 2) organizing a set of events during the development of the disability strategy to empower the stakeholders such as training, media campaign; 3) availability of resources: human resources (full-time consultant) as well as financial resources;**

There is a sense of strong national capacities especially in academia that can be the base of new plans with limited guidance focused in new approaches, tools, innovations. In this context, it is worth to invest in persons as the head of the National Childhood Committee member responsible of the Childhood Strategy, who is a also member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Such members can bring her expertise from the committee to the national context.

**Coordination and mechanism of implementation for both strategies seems a complicated issue. The comparison between the Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs and the National Commission for Childhood shows that: the structure of the first is more solid especially with the strong participation of NGOs who advocates for the independence of the committee; the mandate of the first committee is clear especially after** HRH Prime Minister Decree number 1 in 2012.

The role of the National Commission for Childhood after adopting the strategy and actions plan is not clear, however the representatives of MoSD did not emphasis the role of the National Commission for Childhood as much as they are emphasizing the role of the Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs in the implementation phase.

The strengthening of some specialized capacities within Ministry of Social Development came out several times during the evaluation in two aspects: the wide-range of issues handled by the ministry and the availability of specialized capacities of the human resources to handle these issues. UNDP is expected to come up with some innovative ideas/ approaches to enhance some relevant capacities of its government counterparts, so that different specified issues can be addressed, as per international standards. NGOs and civil society representatives in both fields: childhood and disability strongly agreed that UNDP should play a major role in this triple relation: MoSD, NGOs, and UNDP. Sometimes, the role of UNDP sounds as building effective partnership, but sometimes this role might be a mediator role. In all cases, all stakeholders are expecting UNDP to get more involved in the future.

Bahraini government is preparing a new National Development Plan 2015-2018, which could be an excellent opportunity to push some programs/ actions stated in both strategies to include them in this national plan.

**In conclusion, it is quite clear that the project was implemented in light of:**

* **Human Rights Based Approach to Development**: a) both strategies are a realization of human rights, b) both strategies are the evidence that UNDP used human rights standards and human rights principles in guiding development cooperation and programming,

c) Capacity building for both ‘duty bearers’ to meet their legal obligations and ‘rights holders’ to claim their rights were stronger in disability strategy than childhood strategy;

* **Participation, inclusiveness, and empowerment** of different concerned parties was well-planned and systematic during the whole process of developing the disability strategy, while was limited to a consultative manner to review the draft of the childhood strategy;
* **Relevance** both strategies are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country‐needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies;
* **Effectiveness: the project achieved its outcome successfully and all stakeholders are justified or proud of these outcomes;**
* **Sustainability:** there is a high probability of continued long‐term benefits for both children and persons with disabilities. The Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs is a mature mechanism backed with strong advocates from persons with disabilities, their families and their associations, while National Commission for Childhood has no clear structure with the willingness of some parties to set it aside;
* **UNDP did their best to enrich the outcomes through a participatory process during the complex situation in Bahraini society.** Moreover, the disability strategy is a pioneer step within The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf

**Way forward**

Henry Mintzberg[[12]](#footnote-12) “has found that, implementing strategy is always a combination of deliberate and unplanned processes. In studying hundreds of companies over many years, he found that there is no such thing as a perfectly controlled, deliberate process in which intentions lead to formulation of plans, implementation, and the full realization of intended results. The real world does not unfold that way. As the graphic below shows, realized strategy (where you end up after some period of time) begins as intended strategy (planning), but not all of what is intended is realized. Some things get dropped or go undone because planning assumptions proved faulty in the face of real world processes; this he calls “unrealized strategy.” What remains of the intended strategy he calls the deliberate strategy, which intersects with emergent strategy to become realized strategy. Emergent strategy comes from seizing new opportunities, which is another reason some things that were planned remain undone as new and better opportunities arise”[[13]](#footnote-13)



The evaluation was timely as there are two emergent strategies for UNDP:

Firstly, UNDP will develop a cooperation agreement with MoSD for coming years. This will allow UNDP to address emergent issues from the project subject of this evaluation. The Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs and National Commission for Childhood, as the mechanism responsible for the implementation, childhood and disability strategies and actions plans need to have the authority to raise fund or/ and to have separate allocated fund for programmes as well as solid executing bodies. The Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs can lead the process of setting the implementation phases for the work plan for disability strategy from nowadays and beyond 2016. While the National Commission for Childhood is required to have a clear mandate with new structure involving all stakeholders in this Commission who has to identify childhood strategic objective/s for Bahrain now and to set the way forward. UNDP also has to find an innovation way to develop the capacity of staff working with children and persons with disability within the MoSD.

Secondly, Bahraini government is developing a National Development Plan 2015-2018, UNDP can work with partners to set achievable objectives for these four years in both issues: children and persons with disability or one issue combine both as inclusive basic education for children with disability. UNDP can enforce the Higher Committee for Disabled Affairs and National Commission for Childhood as the mechanisms responsible for the implementation childhood and disability strategies and actions plans through allocation of direct financial resources in the coming four years.

**Report annexes**

**Annex 1:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**  **KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN** |

**Terms of Reference**

|  |
| --- |
| **Position Information** |
| **Job Title: National Childhood Strategy and National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Final Evaluation.**  **Reports to:** UNDP Programme Analyst  **Starting date:**  **Duration of Mission:** One week (Inclusive) |
| Overview |
| A joint project was signed with the Ministry of Social Development to work simultaneously on issues facing two target vulnerable groups in the Kingdom of Bahrain: Persons with Disabilities and on Children. On the “Disability” part, the fundamental purpose of the National Strategy for Persons with Disability” was to improve the promotion and protection of human rights of persons with disabilities in Bahrain. The Strategy was expected to provide guidance to governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), professional groups, educators, advocates and other members of civil society regarding the tasks that need to be accomplished to ensure that the human rights of persons with disabilities are effectively observed and realized. The formulation of the national strategy was carried out in a consultative manner engaging all stakeholders from various institutions. A lead consultant was recruited to provide the necessary expertise guidance and policy options in the processes of developing the Strategy, which was completed and lately endorsed by the Cabinet.  On the Childhood side, and ttowards achieving national rights for children, the project focused on updating the Situation Analysis for Children in Bahrain (SITAN) and consequently developed the “National Childhood Strategy” which is expected to pave the way for nationwide, multi-sectoral discussions on the priority areas addressed in the Strategy. This Strategy took note of the current situation with its strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in order to make sure it responds to all the concerns and issues. It provided a vision for the future and is a reference document for policy makers, professionals and practitioners working with and for children, parents, and children themselves. A gender analysis was an integral component of the Strategy to determine the levels of gender equality and equity. The Strategy was completed and endorsed by the Cabinet. |
| **Duties and Responsibilities** |
| * Provide an objective assessment of the achievements, constraints, performance, results, impact, relevance and sustainability of the project outcomes. * Generate lessons from experiences in the respective intervention for the duration of the project. * Identify whether past results represent sufficient foundation for future progress towards creating a microfinance industry in the country. * Provide clear and forward-looking recommendations in order to suggest effective and realistic policies by UNDP and partners.   In line with the overall purpose of this evaluation, its specific objectives will be as follows:   1. Determine the extent to which results stated in the project document were achieved, including progress on implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations. 2. Analyze sustainability of the project’s actions and key functions in financial, organizational, and expertise terms. 3. Highlight areas where significant progress has not been possible, noting the reasons for lack of progress and lessons learned.   Based on these findings, provide recommendations and proposals for improving strategic decisions to ensure future sustainability of such a project. |

|  |
| --- |
| Deliverables |
| The output of the mission will be an “Evaluation Report” in English. The structure and content of the report should meet the requirements of UNDP’s Monitoring and Evaluation” policy. The length of the report should not exceed 20 pages in total (excluding the annexes). The report is expected to:  **Include Executive summary**   1. **Be analytical in nature (Quantitative and qualitative)** 2. **Be structured around issues and related findings** 3. **Include conclusion** 4. **Include Recommendations.** |

**Annex 2:**

**List of individuals or groups interviewed or consulted and sites visited**

**Ministry of Social Development:**

Mr. Khalid Ishaq, Assistant Undersecretary of Community Development

Ms. Bahija Aldaylami, Supreme Council of Women, chairperson of the committee responsible for education in the childhood strategy

Dr. Jehan AlOmran, consultant

Ms. Badriya Al-Jeeb, Assistant Undersecretary of Care and Social Rehabilitation (by phone)

Ms. Mona Al-ghatam, Director of Social Rehabilitation

Mr. Sadiq Sahwan, Head of Child Welfare

Ms. May Al-Dossari, chairperson of child protection center

**National National Commission for Childhood**

Ms. Amal Al-Dossari, chairperson of the committee responsible for childhood strategy and member of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

**Childhood and Disability NGOs**:

Mr. Jassem Seyadi, chairperson of the committee responsible for disability strategy

Ms. Wasnaa Mohammed Al-Aradi, activist in disability issues

Mr. Abdul-Jabar Altayeb, chairperson of Bahraini Jurists Association and chairperson of the committee responsible for protection in the childhood strategy

**UNDP:**

Mr. Ali Salman Saleh, Programme Analyst

Mr. Peter Grohmann, UN Resident Coordinator and Ms. Limya Eltayeb, Deputy Resident Representative (at the beginning and at the end of field visit):

**UNICEF:**

Ms. Lara Hussein, former child protection chief, UNICEF Gulf Area Office

**Annex 3: Evaluation questions**

Main areas of interviews:

* Description of the process of producing strategies and parties involved
* Approach/ approaches and methods of analysis (e.g. gender analysis) used in developing the strategies
* Background data/ information used to build up the strategies
* How the differences between different parties were managed and how much the results and outcome were compromised
* Did children were involved and how
* Did the implementation start and in which areas and what are the most difficult areas for implementation and why
* Recommendations to accelerate the implementation and to improve similar process in the future

**Annex 4: List of supporting documents reviewed**

**General:**

BDO: Audit Report for support of the development of the National Childhood Strategy and National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities for Kingdom of Bahrain, May 2012

Kingdom of Bahrain: Our Vision the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain

MoSD, UNDP: ANNUAL WORK PLAN January 2013 to June 2013, Project #: 00060062 Support to the Development of the National Childhood Strategy and the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities for the Kingdom of Bahrain

MoSD: the Strategy of the Ministry of Social Development, Published on www.social.gov.bh (<http://www.social.gov.bh>), last updated 12/10/2010

UNDP: Bahrain: Programme Document, June 2010

UNDP: Progress Report for UNDP projects, March 2011

**Childhood:**

Kamel Nabulsi& Rana Taher: A Report on the Consultation Process with Adolescents in the Kingdom of Bahrain, UNDP& UNICEF, November 2010

MoSD, National Commission for Childhood, UNDP, UNICEF: National Childhood Strategy, Kingdom of Bahrain, 2013-2017

MoSD, National Commission for Childhood, UNDP, UNICEF: Plan of Actions, National Childhood Strategy, Kingdom of Bahrain, 2013-2017

UNDP & UNICEF: first theme: Education, background paper for National Childhood Strategy

UNDP & UNICEF: second theme: Survival and Health, background paper for National Childhood Strategy

UNDP & UNICEF: Situation Analysis of Bahraini Children, 2010-2011

UNDP & UNICEF: third theme: Child Protection, background paper for National Childhood Strategy

**Disability:**

Alaa Sebeh: End of Mission Report to deliver training sessions on campaign development, networking, and advocacy concepts, 2010

Deena Ahmed: Social Inclusion, background paper for the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities

Heba Hagres: Empowerment of Women with Disabilities, background paper for the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities

Kingdom of Bahrain, MoSD, High Committee of Disabled Affairs, UNDP: National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Kingdom of Bahrain 2012-2016

Kingdom of Bahrain, MoSD, High Committee of Disabled Affairs, UNDP: the Executive Plan for the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Kingdom of Bahrain 2012-2016

Mona Abdel-Jawad: Project Plan to develop National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in the Kingdom of Bahrain, July 2010

UNDP: Legislation framework, background paper for the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities

UNDP: Mass Media Campaign on Inclusive Education

1. National Strategy for Persons with Disability is the name mentioned in the original UNDP documents, but the final printed product called “National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disability” which will be used in the evaluation report as it better reflects the strategy. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UNDP (2009) *HANDBOOK ON PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS*, United Nations Development Programme, New York [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Project was audited in line with the rules and regulations of UNDP for NIM UNDP supported Projects [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. UNDP, *Indicators for Human Rights Based Approaches to Development in UNDP Programming: A Users’ Guide*, United Nations Development Programme- Bureau for Development Policy- Democratic Governance Group, New York, March 2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. United Nations Evaluation Group, *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation –Towards UNEG Guidance*, New York, March 2011 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. UNDP (2009) *HANDBOOK ON PLANNING,MONITORING AND EVALUATING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS*, United Nations Development Programme, New York [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ms. Mona Abdul-Jawad [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Mona Abdul-Jawad, visit report and the plan of the Project, July 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Mona Abdul-Jawad’s report and plan for the project dated July 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. I participated in this seminar May 2014 not in my capacity as evaluator [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Kamel El-Nabolsi and Rana El-Taher, report on consultations with adolescents in Bahrain, November 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. one of the world’s foremost scholars on strategic thinking, organizational development, and the characteristics of high performing business [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Michael Quinn Patton (2012) *Developmental Evaluation for Equity-focused evaluations*, chapter in Segone, M. (ed.) *“Evaluation for equitable development results”*, 2012, UNICEF in partnership with Coneval, IDEAS, IDRC, ILO, IOCE, UNDP and UN Women [↑](#footnote-ref-13)