

**Project Document Revision**  
**Knowledge Project – UNDP RBAS**

**Project Title:** Knowledge Project

**Project Number:** 89271

**Implementing Partner:** UNDP

**Start Date:** 1 January 2020    **End Date:** 31 December 2030    **PAC Meeting date:** 16 April 2020

**Brief Description**

UNDP-RBAS and MBRF renewed their partnership through signing a new 10-year agreement (2021-2030) to harness the power of knowledge for development and promote thought leadership and evidence-based policymaking for sustainable development in the Arab States region and around the world.

The main objective of the Knowledge Project is to widen the joint efforts to building knowledge societies for sustainable development in the Arab States region and beyond. The new phase will engage various stakeholders, including the public and private sectors, as well as academia and civil society in the analysis and dialogue on relevant issues and supporting the identification of national, regional and global policies and priorities towards that end.

Initially launched in 2007, the UNDP-MBRF partnership was renewed for a new phase (2016-2020) during which the Arab Knowledge Reports were published, to support the establishment of a knowledge society and economy in the Arab States region, that is a society where knowledge is the ultimate tool and medium of effective integration between ICT, expertise, and governance capacities towards maximizing the gains and sustainability of human development. This led to the development of the Arab Knowledge Index, highlighting knowledge from a development perspective while taking into consideration the Arab region's specific context, needs and challenges, and focusing on the critical role of Arab youth in the establishment of the knowledge society. Under the wider vision of the Arab Knowledge Index, the Arab Reading Index was published providing an objective assessment of the state of reading in the Arab states region.

The high impact of the Arab Knowledge Index promoted the development of the Global Knowledge Index, which is the only index that measures knowledge on the global level as a broad concept that is intricately related to sustainable development, hence to all aspects of modern human life, in a systematic approach that builds on solid conceptual and methodological principles. As the Global Knowledge Index measures the current state of knowledge, the Future of Knowledge Foresight Report came to look through the future, aiming at better understanding the navigation of present societies to cope with the demands of the future fields that will shape the near and long-term future.

Within its overall objective, and building on the outcomes of the previous phase (2016-2019), the new phase will focus on achieving the following expected outputs:

- Awareness on building a knowledge society and knowledge economy enabled among policymakers, academia, youths and CSOs in the Arab region and beyond.
- Building a knowledge society supported in the Arab countries and beyond, through facilitating forward-thinking and skills gap assessment strategies.


**Contributing Outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD or GPD):**  
 RPD Outcome 1: Accelerate structural transformation of productive capacities in a sustainable and inclusive manner

**Indicative Output(s) with gender marker:**

- Output 1: Awareness on building a knowledge society and knowledge economy enabled among policymakers, academia, youths and CSOs in the Arab region and beyond (GEN1).
- Output 2: Building a knowledge society supported in the Arab countries and beyond, through facilitating forward-thinking and skills gap assessment strategies (GEN1).

<b>Total resources required:</b>	USD 25,400,000	
<b>Total resources allocated:</b>	<b>UNDP TRAC:</b>	
	<b>Donor:</b>	USD 25,400,000 (MBRF)
	<b>Government:</b>	
	<b>In-Kind:</b>	
<b>Unfunded:</b>	N/A	

Agreed by:

UNDP
 Khaled Abdelshafi <b>Director, Regional Hub for Arab States</b> <b>RBAS</b>
Date: May 5, 2020

## **Project context and need for substantive revision**

Sustainable development is a major concern for all countries around the globe. Countries strive to solve the many problems of poverty and underdevelopment while insuring sustainability to their economies. It is increasingly recognized that sustainability requires more and more knowledge assets and capabilities as the world witnesses the increasingly important role played by knowledge in the development of our societies. Knowledge development should be accelerated to assist country leaders in preparing their citizens for the future knowledge landscape and equipping them with adequate skillsets and to ensure the sustainable continued re/upskilling of workforces to cope with emerging crisis. Knowledge capabilities across socio-economic classes, across gender and across vulnerabilities are highly correlated with levels of sustainability, this is clearly exposed based on the results of the Global Knowledge Index. Knowledge should be a strong ally in our work and effort to achieve 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to close the skills and technological gap among countries. Its application develops capabilities and expands opportunities in multiple sectors of the lives of the whole of society, from education to economy to technology. Actions should be taken to how the potential of knowledge could be harnessed to transform global society by 2030 and shift it onto a sustainable and resilient path.

Furthermore, the Knowledge Project will be complementing HDR methodology that addresses sustainable issues in the world, which leads to decrease in the knowledge gap.

Knowledge as a developmental priority is vital as both an output and an input, despite the different requirements for measuring and developing the knowledge situation across countries, and within each one of them. In fact, some countries made historic achievements that indeed turned knowledge into a stepping-stone towards sustaining success, while others still face developmental and transitional problems that make knowledge a crucial factor for any progress, taking into consideration that access to information and the means of knowledge distribution to different segments of society is of substantial importance.

Investing in knowledge is a priority for any country striving to meet the ambitious vision of the 2030 Agenda. To maximize its impact on the ground, any development plan, strategy or framework must be grounded in knowledge and evidence. The UNDP-RBAS Knowledge Project through its knowledge products supports national development strategies in many ways, such as helping to gather, analyse, and disseminate data that can inform policymaking and promote thought leadership.

Data are the lifeblood of decision-making and the raw material for accountability. By investing in data-driven solutions and solid knowledge management platforms, we can take concrete steps to provide men and women in decision making positions with timely and trustworthy information for more effective decisions. To navigate a world where data are bigger, faster and more detailed than ever before, the new phase shall place additional attention on innovation and new technology whilst ensuring its accessibility to all the population, including the most vulnerable.

Furthermore, investing in knowledge positively affects education and skills development, which are key to ensuring that youth and women can drive sustainable change in the years to come. To succeed in this process, young men and women must be engaged in the process of devising policies and solutions.

In line with UNDP's goal of enhancing stakeholders' capacity to acquire and apply knowledge produced in policy processes, UNDP-RBAS partnered with one of the leading foundations promoting knowledge in the Arab region, the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation (MBRF), for the production of a series of indices and reports to help countries formulate forward-thinking strategies to support knowledge and promote it as a main component in building a stronger knowledge economy while ensuring sustainable development.

During the preceding phase (2016-2020), the project went global by producing a unique index that measures knowledge at the global level i.e. touching on 136 countries in 2019. Furthermore, this phase witnessed the launching of an exclusive report that looks through the future, aiming at better understanding the navigation of present societies to cope with the demands of the future fields that will shape the near and long-term future: The Future of Knowledge Foresight Report will assist country leaders in preparing their citizens for the future knowledge landscape and equipping them with adequate skillsets. Furthermore, the project has influenced policy development in a number of countries, e.g. Egypt had formed a 'Higher Council of Knowledge' composed of deans of relevant universities, and from which a 'Knowledge Committee' will be formed, with the participants of the Knowledge Week forming its first members. The council and the committee are responsible for developing a proposal for a strategy to build a knowledge society in Egypt. In Jordan, a "Knowledge Committee" in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth is formed and active. The United Arab Emirates used the Global Knowledge Index to address the data gap, achieving progress in producing data on many variables throughout the last period.

UNDP-RBAS and MBRF renewed their partnership through signing a new 10-year agreement (2021-2030) to harness the power of knowledge for development and promote thought leadership and evidence-based policymaking for sustainable development in the Arab States region and around the world.

The main objective of the Knowledge Project is to contribute to the efforts to building knowledge societies for sustainable development in the Arab States region and beyond. The new phase aims to do so by way of engaging various stakeholders including the public and private sectors as well as academia and civil society in analysis and dialogue on relevant issues and supporting the identification of national, regional and global policies and priorities towards that end. Within this overall objective, and building on the outcomes of the previous work, the new phase will focus on achieving the following expected outputs and result areas:

**Output 1:** Awareness on building a knowledge society and knowledge economy accessible to all and used by men and women equally, enabled among policymakers, academia, youths and CSOs, including women's organisations, in the Arab region and beyond. Result areas:

1. Knowledge products that assist in formulating forward-thinking inclusive strategies produced and updated
  - Global Knowledge Index (GKI) methodology revised in line with the supervision of the advisory board and core team.
  - Global Knowledge Index (GKI) updated and produced on a yearly basis.
  - Future gender sensitive Technology- and Skills-Related Report produced annually.
  - The new technologies, namely Artificial Intelligence, are harnessed to analyze and visualize GKI and Future of Knowledge Results and to produce a new tool on matching skills with job opportunities.
  - The knowledge4all portal and mobile application updated and enhanced annually.
2. The outreach strategy set and applied to disseminate the project's knowledge products and address policymakers within the Arab region and beyond.

**Output 2:** Building a knowledge society supported in the Arab region and beyond, through facilitating forward-thinking and skills gap assessment strategies, thus contributing to the achievement of the 2030 agenda. Result areas:

1. Inclusive Knowledge-based strategies set for the Arab region and beyond.
2. Skills gap assessment strategies implemented in the Arab region and beyond.

*Output 1 result areas:*

## **Global Knowledge Index (GKI)**

The Global Knowledge Index (GKI) is a roadmap for the sustainable development of societies. It helps countries formulate forward-thinking strategies to support knowledge and promote it as a main component in building a stronger knowledge economy while ensuring sustainable development.

The GKI aims to measure knowledge as a broad concept that intricately relates to all aspects of modern human life, in a systematic approach that builds on solid conceptual and methodological principles. It comprises seven sectoral indices covering: pre-university education; technical and vocational education and training (TVET); higher education; research, development and innovation (RDI); information and communications technology (ICT); economy; and general enabling environment.

The structure of the GKI reflects the many dimensions of knowledge. It proceeds from the assumption that the more these sectors interact with each other and are integrated in a given country, the greater the level of knowledge in a country. This virtuous cycle renders a nation more capable of achieving sustainable development.

## **Future Technology- and Skills-Related Report**

The Future Technology- and Skills-Related Report will be produced aiming to harness AI to analyse and visualize GKI results.

After years of measuring the current state of knowledge based on data from national statistical and data systems, and given the exponential growth of knowledge creation, a new knowledge measurement tool using big data is necessary to better understand the future of knowledge societies, the future technologies, and the future skills gap.

The reports, covering multiple countries on the global level, present studies on the future fields of knowledge that will shape the future of knowledge societies.

The purpose of these reports is:

- To have a better understanding of today's strong and weak signals in the next wave of (technology) disruption by testing a new way to capture and analyse real-time data associated with five key future fields of knowledge: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cybersecurity, Blockchain, Biotechnology, and Future Skills;
- To accelerate knowledge development by helping country leaders to benchmark their performance against that of front-runners. As the Global Knowledge Index measures the current state of knowledge, the Future Technology- and Skills-Related Reports come to look through the future, aiming at better understanding the navigation of all sectors of present societies to cope with the demands of the future fields that will shape the near and long-term future.

## **Knowledge Portal [[www.Knowledge4all.org](http://www.Knowledge4all.org)]**

The knowledge4all portal and mobile application are bilingual digital platforms dedicated to all researchers, professionals, students, stakeholders, journalists, media persons, civil society organizations, and the public. They offer easy access to the different knowledge products achieved within the Global Knowledge Project and to various data, publications and events on knowledge-related topics.

The importance of such platforms stems from the central role of knowledge in the development of modern-day societies, and from deficiencies in data and publications concerning the knowledge scene and its various components, mainly in the Arab States region. The platforms contribute to the promotion of research about knowledge and for development in the region and beyond, thus contributing to achieving sustainable development.

The main features of the portal and mobile application are the Global Knowledge Index, the different Global Knowledge Project publications, news and various events and publications.

*Output 2 result areas:*

## **Forward-Thinking Strategies**

This will include model countries on a yearly basis, where an inclusive forward-thinking strategy will be drafted in coordination with the decision-makers to support knowledge and promote it as a main component in building a stronger knowledge society and economy. The strategy will be built based on the countries' results in the Global Knowledge Index and the Future Technology- and Skills-Related Report. It will include assessment of the weakness and strength of the countries and their readiness for the future in terms of being knowledge society and embracing the new technologies, including accessibility to such knowledge by all sectors of the population; recommendations to enhance the production, localization, and sharing of knowledge, hence improving living conditions for all; and practical policy recommendations, which will be presented to decision-makers to reinforce the efforts towards building a knowledge-based society.

### **Skills-Gap Assessment Strategies**

This will include model countries on a yearly basis, where studies will be conducted to assess the labour market in the countries, the skills needed during the time of the study and the future skills needed, in line with the educational system and how much it is addressing the needs of the labour market, taking into consideration the gender gap. The strategy will be based on national and international sources, with sex-disaggregated data. A set of recommendations and strategy will be presented to the decision makers and an action plan will be set accordingly to implement the strategy. The Global Knowledge Project will coordinate with the stakeholders to implement the strategy.

## I. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

**Intended Outcome as stated in the Regional Programme Results and Resource Framework:**

Accelerate structural transformation of productive capacities in a sustainable and inclusive manner

**Outcome indicators as stated in the Regional Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:**

N/A

**Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan:** Capacities and systems developed to promote knowledge-based economic transformations that foster collaboration between education and industry (Strategic Plan 1.1.2)

**Project title and Atlas Project Number:** Knowledge Project (89271)

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)		DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1 (2020)	Year 2 – 11 (2021-2030)	

<b>Output 1</b> <b>Awareness on building a knowledge society and knowledge economy enabled among policymakers, academia, youths and CSOs in the Arab region and beyond</b>	1.1 Number of knowledge products		2 [Global Knowledge Index 2019 (136 countries); The Future of Knowledge Foresight Report 2019 (40 countries)]	2019	2	2 per year	<i>Data compilation, variables updates, methodology revisions, surveys, and experts' consultations</i>
	1.2 Number of downloads and visitors to the <i>Knowledge for All</i> portal and knowledge products and number of <i>Knowledge4All</i> social media platforms followers		200,942 users	2019	100,000 users	100,000 per year	<i>Website and social media platforms data analysis and reporting</i>
	1.3 Number of youth participants in workshops and trainings (sex-disaggregated)		60	2019	70	70 per year	<i>Workshops and progress reports</i>
<b>Output 2</b> <b>Building a knowledge</b>	2.1 Number of knowledge-based strategies in Arab countries and beyond		0	2019	0	1 strategy per year	<i>Surveys, consultations with experts and consultations with decision-makers</i>



<b>society supported in the Arab countries and beyond, through facilitating forward-thinking and skills gap assessment strategies</b>	2.2 Level of implementation of skills gap assessment strategies [Low, moderate, high, significant] <i>(Number of countries benefiting from skills gap assessment strategies; Number of participants benefiting from training courses)</i>		Low	2019	Low	Significant (1 skill gap strategy per year; 200 participants per year)	<i>Surveys, consultations with experts and consultations with decision-makers</i>
---	--	--	-----	------	-----	---	---

## II. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation plans:

### Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)	Cost (if any)
<b>Track results progress</b>	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Bi-annually	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.		
<b>Monitor and Manage Risk</b>	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Bi-annually	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.		
<b>Learn</b>	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.	At least annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.		
<b>Annual Project Quality Assurance</b>	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.	In the frequency required	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.		
<b>Review and Make Course Corrections</b>	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	At least annually	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.		
<b>Project Report</b>	A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders,	Annually, and at the end of the			

	consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	project (final report)			
<b>Project Review (Project Board)</b>	The project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	Annually	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.		

### Evaluation Plan

<b>Evaluation Title</b>	<b>Partners (if joint)</b>	<b>Related Strategic Plan Output</b>	<b>RPD Outcome</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>	<b>Key Evaluation Stakeholders</b>	<b>Cost and Source of Funding</b>
Mid-Term Evaluation	MBRF	Capacities and systems developed to promote knowledge-based economic transformations that foster collaboration between education and industry (Strategic Plan 1.1.2)	Outcome 1: Accelerate structural transformation of productive capacities in a sustainable and inclusive manner	31 December 2025	Education and youth ministries; youth organizations and institutions	USD 20,000

### III. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year		RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1 2020	Y2-Y11 2021-2030		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
<b>Output 1</b> <b>Awareness on building a knowledge society and knowledge economy enabled among policymakers, academia, youths and CSOs in the Arab region and beyond</b>	1.1 Producing the Knowledge Products	663,225	6,856,093	UNDP	MBRF	Contractual Services	5,505,600
						Staff	638,250
						Travel	1,287,600
						Miscellaneous	87,867.6
	1.2 Enhancing the <i>Knowledge for All</i> portal and mobile application	352,425	2,238,493	UNDP	MBRF	Contractual Services	577,200
						Staff	638,250
						Travel	1,287,600
						Miscellaneous	87,867.6
	1.3 Holding workshops and trainings	430,125	3,415,093	UNDP	MBRF	Contractual Services	1,831,500
						Staff	638,250
						Travel	1,287,600
						Miscellaneous	87,867.6
	1.4 Implementing the outreach strategy to disseminate the knowledge products	485,625	3,970,093	UNDP	MBRF	Contractual Services	2,442,000
						Staff	638,250
						Travel	1,287,600
						Miscellaneous	87,867.6

	Sub-Total for Output 1						<b>18,411,170</b>
<b>Output 2</b> Building a knowledge society supported in the Arab countries and beyond, through facilitating forward-thinking and skills gap assessment strategies	2.1 Implementing knowledge-based strategies in Arab countries and beyond	0	2,305,093	UNDP	MBRF	Contractual Services	555,000
						Staff	555,000
						Travel	1,121,100
						Miscellaneous	73,992.6
	2.2 Implementing skills gap assessment strategies	0	2,305,093	UNDP	MBRF	Contractual Services	555,000
						Staff	555,000
						Travel	1,121,100
						Miscellaneous	73,992.6
	Sub-Total for Output 2						<b>4,610,185</b>
	<b>Evaluation</b>	EVALUATION					
<b>General Management Support</b>		154,512	1,688,796				1,843,308
<b>TOTAL</b>							<b>24,884,664</b>

## Annex 1: Risk Analysis

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Mngt response	Owner	Submitted, updated by	Last Update	Status
1	Deliverable time of the main products depends on the schedule of the yearly Knowledge Summit that takes place in Dubai every year		Organizational	1	UNDP team will make sure to publish the products as planned, but the official launching will have to follow the Knowledge Summit.	UNDP in coordination with MBRF			
2	Priorities suggested by the donor (MBRF is a public institution that follows priorities set by the Government of Dubai)		Political	3	UNDP team will negotiate the deliverables in line with the priorities set.	UNDP in coordination with MBRF			
3	Political instability in the Arab region may lead to postponement of few activities		Political	3	UNDP team will monitor the situation and plan accordingly.	UNDP and MBRF			
4	Natural/health risk may lead to postponement of few activities		Safety and security	3	UNDP team will be monitoring the situation and planning accordingly, including by considering alternative approaches (online meetings and consultations).	UNDP and MBRF			