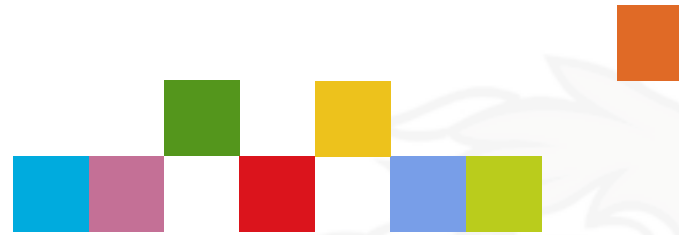
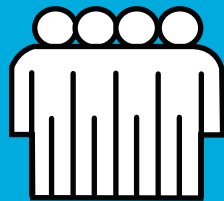
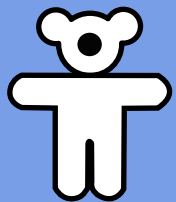


Goal 3

Promote Gender Equality and Empower Woman



Target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2015 and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

Indicators:

1. Female to male ratio in all education levels
2. Male to female literacy ratio in 15-24 years age group (canceled in the new amendment)
3. Woman's share in paid work outside the agricultural sector
4. Woman's share of parliamentary seats

Achieving gender equality and empowering women is one of the basic components of the concept of human development and constitutes not only a global priority but also a regional and national priority. This goal was positively formulated, since it discussed promoting equality and empowerment, and did not mention any shortcomings or problems. It included one target and four indicators, one of which was cancelled - the second indicator of male to female literacy ratio in 15-24 years age group, since this indicator is sufficiently covered by the second goal.

However, the only target included in this goal, which achievement is measured quantitatively, was a partial one, since it was restricted to equality in education. The quantitative achievement to be made is in reaching full equality in educational opportunities until the secondary stage by 2005 and in all levels of education until 2015. This represents distinguishes the third goal from other goals, since it identified two dates for completion, not one.



The indicators include three dimensions:

- Educational dimension (ratio of females to males in various stages of education),
- Economic dimension (women's share in paid work outside the agricultural sector),
- Political dimension (women's share of parliamentary seats)

Therefore, the selected indicators are broader than the goal, and are closer to the initial version of the goal, and empowerment most certainly includes economic and political participation.

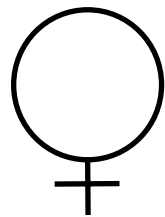
Generally speaking, the Kingdom of Bahrain has succeeded in achieving the only quantified target contained in the third goal regarding the elimination of disparities in all stages of education, where available data indicates that the ratio of females to males in various stages of education start as converging at the primary level, then become in favor of females in the other stages (intermediate, secondary, and university). These ratios have been stable in Bahrain since the early nineties, as will be seen later.

With regard to the participation of women in the labor force, significant progress has been achieved during previous years. Moreover, the progress achieved in political participation is also considered a real progress, but with less impact than the two other sectors, with more complex social and cultural difficulties.

This report will follow the same general layout, but will expand in the analysis of some complementary characteristics and indicators that will allow the formation of a clearer idea about women's empowerment, as it is a qualitative state more complicated than indicators and their quantitative values, pending a more in-depth discussion at a later stage.

What was achieved regarding the third goal

As previously noted, Bahrain has achieved the specific target of achieving gender equality in education, and the following paragraphs will address respectively the areas of education, employment and political participation. The presentation will first show the progress made according to globally-specified indicators then will present some qualitative aspects in each of three areas:



First Dimension: Education

The required achievement in the goal was specified as achieving full gender equality in education.

A – First indicator: the ratio of females to males in all stages of education from primary to university levels.

This quantitative indicator does not measure the qualitative aspects of equality in education, which exceeds academic enrolment.

Table 1: Female to male ratio in public schools according to education level
(1989/1990 – 2004 / 2005)

Year Academic	Education Level			
	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	Average
89/1990	973	1.007	958	978
94/1995	993	978	1.043	999
99/2000	997	1.024	1.129	1.029
04/2005	1.006	7999	1.071	1.019

Source: Central Body for Information – Statistics 2005

There is a closer female to male ratio to one during the primary stage, but it rises in the intermediate and secondary phases in general. Moreover, the ratio is more than one in favor of females in the total three phases. This means that this goal was achieved from the mid-nineties, i.e. ten years before the globally specified date.

- As for university education, there are 1.6 times more females than males in higher education in 2005 in all universities. In the University of Bahrain the number of females exceeded by 2.2 times that of males, in the Gulf University by about 3 times, and in the Faculty of Health Sciences by 5.4 times. The Bahrain Training Institute constituted the exception, with around 2.1 times more males than females. This may be due to the wish of male students to acquire the training skills that would enable them to enter the labor market. This means that the goal of gender equality between men and women is also achieved at the level of university education.

B - Second indicator: Literacy rate for males and females

This indicator was removed from the third goal since it was covered by the second goal pertaining to education. As stated there, there is an almost 100% literacy rate for both women and men in this age group. Statistics relating to male and female illiteracy rates for different age groups have not been updated since 2001.

There was a significant and rapid progress, since the Kingdom of Bahrain was able to bridge the illiteracy gap in a decade. The 2001 census indicates that equality in the literacy rate for young people was 0.7 (the proportion of illiteracy among women in this category was 19% to 5% for men, while the index of equality in the index settled at 1 (gender equality)).

Second Dimension: Economic Empowerment

Third Indicator: Woman's share in paid work outside the agricultural sector

The third MDG goal suggests measuring economic empowerment through the evolution of the contribution of women in the labor force in non-agricultural sectors. The reason behind excluding the agriculture sector is the assumption that it is a sector where women traditionally participate in, and where their work may be part of unpaid family work, or that the agricultural wage is lower than in other sectors, and on this basis there is an implicit assumption that the participation of women in agricultural work is not an indicator of the empowerment of women.

The overall contribution of women in the labor force was 16.7% in 1991, compared to 20.7% in 2001. However, it shrunk to about 12.5% in 2007, given the significant influx of foreign labor during the past years in response to the needs of the construction sector that primarily employs males. While the participation of Bahraini women is one third of the total Bahraini labor force, did not exceed a mere 4.9% for incoming female foreigners.

Table 2: Overall Labor Force Ranked according To Sex, Nationality, And Women’s Contribution to the Labor Force (%)

	2003	2007	Proportion (%)	
			2003	2007
Bahrainis				
Total	95.313	101.681	100.0	100.0
Males	65.906	67.871	69.1	66.7
Females	29.407	33.810	9.03	33.3
Total				
Total	154.180	277.790	100.0	100.0
Males	144.399	264.054	93.7	95.1
Females	9.781	13.736	6.3	4.9
Total				
Total	249.493	379.471	100.0	100.0
Males	210.305	331.925	84.3	87.5
Females	39.188	47.546	15.7	12.5

However, the evolution of women’s contribution to work as an important indicator of participation and economic empowerment must be completed to achieve parity in other aspects associated with work. In this regard, there are still disparities, such as the inequality in wages between women and men, in addition to the disparities in accessing higher positions, not to mention women’s focus or participation in certain professions and sectors corresponding to the common stereotype of women’s role:

- Disparity in pay: the average salaries and wages ratio of female to male Bahrainis in the public sector were 91.4% for the period 2002 - 2006. As for the average salary ratio of female to male Bahrainis in the private sector, it amounted to about 66.5%, knowing that this great gap did not change in the private sector since 2002, while the salaries of females accounted for about 63.6% those of males in 2002, 67.6% in 2006 and 66% in 2007. It is noteworthy that there is no legal differentiation in the public sector salaries between men and women, but the disparity results from disparities in the contribution of both men and women in the high ranking and high paying positions.

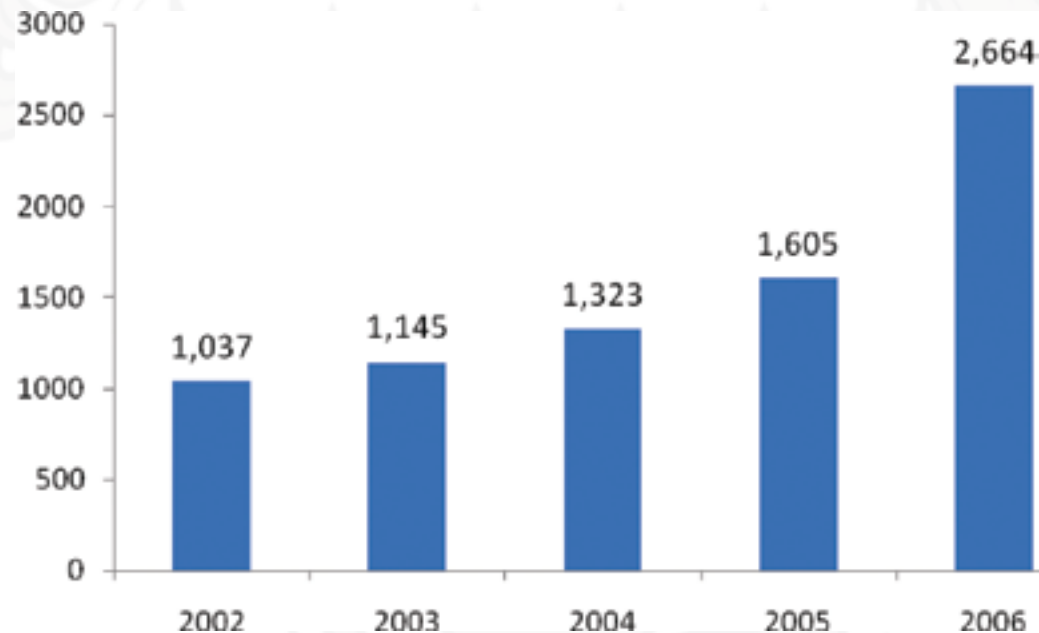
Table 3: Wages of men and women in the public and private sectors (dinars per month)

	Wages (in Dinars)		Ratio of female to male salaries	
	2003	2007	2003	2007
Bahrainis in the private sector				
Total	355	513		
Males	387	573		
Females	258	350	66.7%	61.1%
Incoming foreigners in the private sector				
Total	163	163		
Males	161	159		
Females	203	250	126.1 %	157.2%
Bahrainis in the public sector				
Total	555	757		
Males	575	785		
Females	526	723	91.5 %	157.2 %
Incoming foreigners in the public sector				
Total	647	912		
Males	720	1.030		
Females	493	680	68.5%	66.0%

- Disparity in the position level and responsibilities at work: This is very obvious in the public sector, where according to data published by the Civil Service Board for 2001/2002, disparities depend on the position held. The contribution of women is strongest in the first category (where there are 111 women for every 100 men), then is reduced starting from the sixth category (80 women for every 100 men) until the tenth, where there are 26.5 women for every 100 men. These figures clearly reflect the control of men over decision-making positions in public administration, despite there being more equality in the female to male ratio as of 2004. Women also make up around 13% of professional managers (according to the census of 2001), compared with 87% of men.

- Disparities in the sectors and occupations: It reflects the continuous traditional division of labor according to the stereotypical image of women and men, where women's economic activity is seen as an extension of family and household responsibilities and roles. This applies to both public and private sectors. According to 2007 statistics, women are more numerous in ministries related to education (58%), health (59%), social development (58%), and the Central Body for Information (53%). However, these ratios drop down to 6% in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, and 10.5% in the Ministry of Electricity and Water, and 15% in the Ministry of Finance. According to the 2001 census, women accounted for 7.6% of the workers in the service sector, compared to 22% in sales, 24% in administrative work, 27% in scientific professions, 33% in technical professions, and 34% in industry.
- There was a recent evolution in women's role as businesswomen, with 3% of women out of the total number of working women against 6% of men, according to the 2001 census, and 1% self-employed compared to 4% of men. Women in the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry represented 17% of the total number of members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2006. Also, female membership in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry outweighed the double as shown in the graph below.

Figure 1: Evolution of the number of women in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2002-2006



Source: 2002-2005 figures from the e-commerce and information department, 2006 figures from the member service department at the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Participation in Politics

Fourth indicator: Women's share of parliamentary seats

The third goal included an indicator of the number of parliamentary seats occupied by women in order to assess the level of participation and political empowerment in view of the importance of the role of parliaments in democratic life and from the legislative viewpoint. Moreover, they are the result of an electoral process rather than government appointments, and this is more reflective of empowerment.

While no women were elected in the 2002 parliament, a woman won a seat in parliament in 2006 among 40 members, which constitutes approximately 2.5% of the total seats. The proportion of women in the State Council is 11 out of 40 members, i.e. 27.5% of the seats. To provide a more detailed explanation about the level of participation and political empowerment of women in Bahrain, the report will include a presentation and analysis covering the following areas:

- Political participation in elections, including participation in voting, candidacy, and winning in a charter referendum in 2002, and in municipal and parliamentary elections in 2002 and 2006.
- Political participation through appointments, including the participation of women in the State Council and government
- Participation at the governing level of civil society organizations (unions, associations, business sector entities).

A. Political Participation In Elections

Bahraini women took part in the referendum on the National Labor Charter in 2001, which received 49% of the people's votes, and in which the participation rate of women reached 98.4%, paving the way for constitutional amendments and political and legislative reforms that gave Bahraini women full political rights. The National Labor Charter (2001) and the amended Constitution (2002) enabled Bahraini women to enjoy all their political, civil, economic and social rights equally with men. Bahrain also established the Institute for Political Development under a royal decree in 2005 with the aim of spreading the culture of democracy and providing training and research programs related to the constitutional and legal spheres and political systems. This in addition to the dissemination and development of political awareness among citizens, the support of parliamentary and municipal councils, enforce the rule of law, and tackle human rights issues.

As a practical exercise of Bahraini women of their political rights, they took part in municipal elections held in 2002 both as candidates and voters. There were 31 female candidates against 275 men, and a 51% participation rate of women voters. They also participated in the municipal elections held in 2006. Despite the fact that no women won a seat in the municipal councils, it is estimated that the participation of Bahraini women as voters exceeded that of men, which shows the evolution of political awareness of Bahraini women and eagerness to participate in political life.

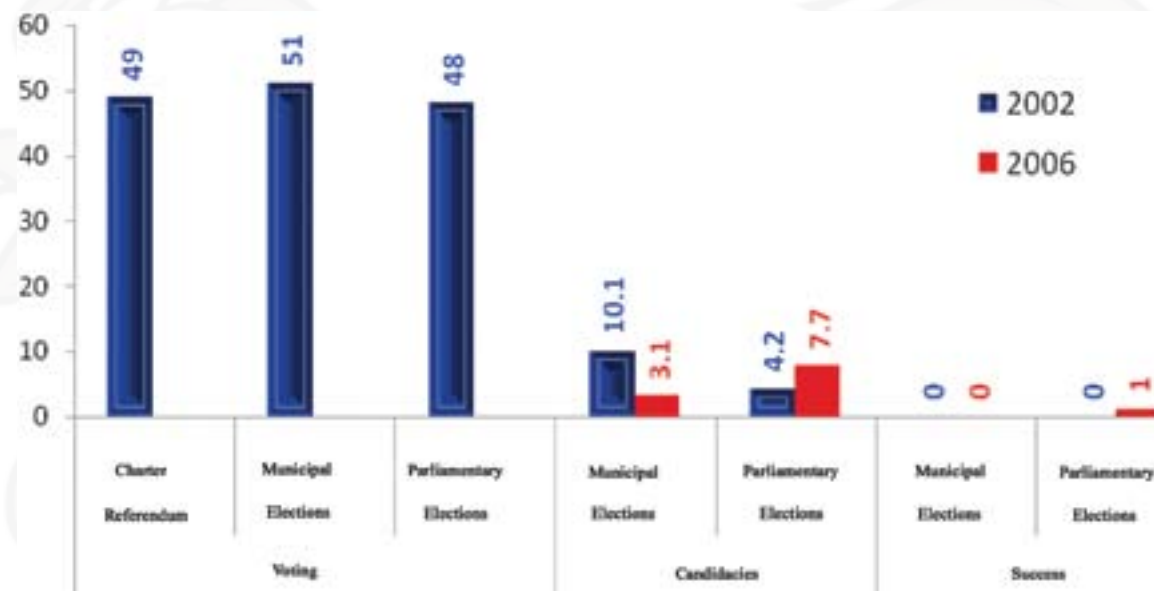
Bahraini women also participated in the parliamentary elections as candidates and voters since 2002, where there were 8 female and 169 male candidates. Although no women won in those elections, two female candidates reached the second round. There was a 47.7% participation of women in the 2002 parliamentary elections, which is a good ratio if we take into account how recent an experience it is. As for the participation of women in the 2006 parliamentary elections, the number of female candidates increased from 8 candidates in 2002 to 18 in 2006. Bahraini women have been able to obtain a seat in the House of Representatives, where a Bahraini woman won uncontested.

The figure below summarizes women's participation in electoral processes. It is clear that women's participation in voting is roughly equal to men's, but their participation as candidates was low, since it did not exceed 4% in the parliamentary elections and 10% in the municipal elections (2002). In both cases, women did not win any seats, with the exception of a single parliamentary seat in 2006. While this reflects a clear success in awareness campaigns and participation in the political mechanism, it also reflects a conservatory position about this participation in society in general.

Table 4: Rate of Female Participation in the Electoral Process

	Electoral process	Participation of women in 2002 (%)	Participation of women in 2006 (%)
Voting	Charter referendum	49 %	-
	Municipal elections	51 %	-
	Parliamentary elections	48 %	-
Candidacy	Municipal elections	10.1 % (31 women and 275 men)	3.1 % (5 women)
	Parliamentary elections	4.2 % First round: 8 women and 196 men Second round: two women and 44 men	7.7 % (16 women)
Success	Municipal elections	0 %	0 %
	Parliamentary elections	0 %	2.5 % (One woman won)

Figure 2: Participation rate of women in elections and charter voting



B - Political Participation by Appointment

The number of appointed female State Council members increased from 6 members in 2002 to 10 in 2006, then to 11 members in 2007, which represents 27.5% of the members. It should be noted that a woman is currently the second chairman of the State Council.

Women participated at 7% in the previous government (Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Development), and it is noteworthy that these ministerial positions are commensurate with traditional inherited patterns, which revolve around the expected role of women in care and health. The number of women in ministerial positions was reduced in 2007 to only one woman (Ministry of Social Development). Moreover, there is one female minister, and 7% of women as deputy ministers, and 11% as assistant ministers. The proportion of female directors in the public sector is 16.3%. Moreover, Bahraini women entered the judicial sector in the positions of judge, chief prosecutor, prosecutor, and member of the Constitutional Court, along with a number of diplomatic posts such as ambassador to Bahrain and representation of Bahrain in a number of diplomatic missions.

On the regional and international levels, 2006 witnessed the appointment of the first Bahraini woman to preside over the General Assembly of the United Nations, who thus became the first Arab woman to hold such a high position, along with the appointment of a Bahraini woman in the higher advisory body of the GCC countries.

The levels of participation by appointment reflect the existence of a political will among officials in Bahrain for developing women's participation in political and administrative decisions, in line with national and international trends, as well as the international conventions signed by Bahrain. Therefore, the political will prevails over social acceptance and paves the way for a change process. In fact, there is cooperation between civil society organizations and the government in order to contribute to the gradual change of the stereotypical perceptions of women in culture and practices prevailing in society.

C- Women's participation in civil society

The first women's associations appeared in the late fifties and early sixties of the twentieth century. In 2007, the number of women's associations reached at least 19 in the Assembly which included a commission not belonging to any women's associations. They entered the governing bodies and presided over some of the Bahraini associations. In trade unions and professional associations, women represent 14% of the members of the Engineers Association, 23% of the Lawyers Association, 36% of the Doctors Association, and 70% of the Nursing Association.

With regard to trade unions, 4 out of 34 trade unions are headed by women: the hotel and catering association, free markets, garment and textile workers, and the EDS Gulf states established in Bahrain (information database services). Women also participate in the membership of the governing bodies of 17 trade unions, and constitute 22.5% of the total members of their governing bodies. A woman is member of the Board of Directors of the General Union of Bahrain Workers. In the business sector, the Association of Bahrain Women was founded in 2002, the second of its kind in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

What is noteworthy in this context is the advanced level of women participation in decision-making authorities in the institutions of civil society, particularly the trade unions, which indicates the need to avoid generalizations and prejudices with regard to the prevailing culture about the participation of women and stereotypes. Broad participation means the presence of a certain level of diversity and vulnerability to positive change with respect to the image of women in the event of the study of this phenomenon in scientific depth to find out the causes and factors impeding and helping the development of such a process.

What has been achieved in addressing this Goal?

The Supreme Council for Women was established in 2001. It was dedicated to proposing a public policy for the development and integration of women in comprehensive programs, fighting discrimination against them, evaluating public policies related to women, and making proposals to amend current legislations in this field.

The Council issued several recommendations that would reduce gender discrimination, in line with the Constitution and international treaties ratified by the Kingdom, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2002. In 2006, the Council developed a national strategy for the advancement of women which aims at achieving full participation of women. This strategy has been translated into a national action plan focusing on seven axes:

1. **Decision-making**
2. **Economic empowerment**
3. **Family**
4. **Civil society**
5. **Education and training**
6. **Health**
7. **Environment**

The Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Women seeks to implement this integrated plan across a national strategy for the advancement of Bahraini women. It should be noted that the preparation of the national strategy and its operational plan had been done with a broad collaboration of ministries and official institutions in addition to the various institutions of civil society.

The national strategy included a clear formulation of a large number of quantified targets in various areas, a great part of which coincides with the millennium goals. It is assumed that a national strategy for the advancement of women is essential for launching the process of drafting the national version of the third goal and the contents related to the equality between men and women in the other goals of the Millennium Goals, in the next phase of preparing the Millennium report after the completion of the current work (MDG PLUS).

