

**Parallel Report submitted by the National Institution for
Human Rights on
The Periodic National Report of the Kingdom of Bahrain
combining the First and Second reports on the
progress made in the implementation of the provisions
of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with
Disabilities**

Submitted to:

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Geneva

November 2021

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Introduction

1. The National Institution for Human Rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain (NIHR) presents its parallel report on the national report of the Kingdom of Bahrain that combines the first and second periodic reports on the progress made in implementing the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which the Kingdom of Bahrain ratified under Law No. (22) of 2011.
2. The NIHR commends the efforts made by the Kingdom in submitting its national report - despite the delay in its submission – emanating from its belief in the importance and effectiveness of this international mechanism in promoting and protecting human rights at the national level, and in fulfillment of its international obligations arising from ratification and accession to international human rights instruments.
3. The NIHR received a request from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to obtain the NIHR's observations on some of the information included in the list of issues posted by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)¹, regarding the consideration of the combined report of the first and second periodic reports of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The NIHR responded to this request in a detailed manner², in line with its establishment Law No. (26) of 2016, as amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016, where paragraph (d) in Article (12) thereof provides that the NIHR **“To submit parallel reports, and participate in the drafting and discussion of the reports which the Kingdom is obliged periodically submit for the implementation of regional and international conventions concerning human rights together with notifying about such reports in the proper media means”**³.
4. Accordingly, the NIHR presents its parallel report, containing its observations on the progress made in implementing the provisions of the Convention, and addressing the most prominent rights sanctioned by the provisions of the Convention, which it believes that have cast a shadow on the practical reality, and touched on the actuality of the rights of persons with disabilities during past years, leading to presenting a number of

¹ The list of issues in relation to the consideration of the combined first and second periodic reports of the Kingdom of Bahrain, contained in document No. (CRPD/C/BHR/Q/1-2).

²Annex: Observations of the National Human Rights Institution on some of the information included in the list of issues issued by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in relation to the consideration of the combined first and second periodic reports on the progress made in implementing the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

³Check the NIHR website for a copy of Law No. (26) of 2014, amended by Decree Law No. (20) of 2016 establishing the NIHR <http://www.nihr.org.bh>



recommendations, which it deems appropriate to advance the actuality of the rights of persons with disabilities in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

General Purpose and Obligations (Articles 1-4)

(1) The constitutional and legal framework for implementing the Convention:

1.1 Although the rights of persons with disabilities are not explicitly stipulated in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain, paragraph (c) of Article No. (5) guarantees social security for a group of categories, by stating that: **“The state guarantees the achievement of the necessary social security for citizens in the event of old age, illness, inability to work, orphan hood, widowhood or unemployment, it also provides them with social insurance and health care services, and works to protect them from ignorance, fear and poverty.”**

1.2 On the national legislation level, Law No. (74) of 2006 regarding the care, rehabilitation and employment of the disabled and its amendment's guarantee for the category of persons with disabilities their right to care, rehabilitation and employment, through a number of provisions that included obligating ministries and concerned parties to provide organized and continuous services for this category, especially in the medical, social, educational, cultural, sports, employment, transportation, housing and other fields. To activate this, the law obligated the concerned ministry - the Ministry of Labor and Social Development - to establish rehabilitation centers and institutes, care homes and workshops for people with disabilities, and shelters for the cases that are in need of them.

1.3 The NIHR contributed to the process of developing and amending Law No. (74) of 2006 regarding the care, rehabilitation, and employment of people with disabilities. The NIHR submitted (4) advisory opinions to the Council of Representatives and the Shura Council regarding the amendment of the Law, which came as follows:

- a) The NIHR submitted its advisory opinion to the Shura Council at the request of the Council regarding a draft law to amend Article (5) of the Law, which grants the employee or worker with a degree of disability, and the employee or worker who takes care of his spouse or one of his disabled relatives, two hours of paid daily rest, in accordance with the conditions and controls determined by a decision of the competent minister. The NIHR concluded that this grant does not contradict the principle of equality, but rather is a form of positive discrimination that guarantees the empowerment of people with disabilities to preserve human dignity.



- b) The NIHR submitted its advisory opinion to the House of Representatives at the request of the House, regarding the proposed law to amend Article (2) of the Law, which came to expand the range of persons to whom the provisions of the aforementioned law, as the proposal came to allow the application of the provisions of the law to the children of Bahraini women married to foreigners and permanent residents in the Kingdom, in addition to the fact that it applies to persons with disabilities who hold Bahraini citizenship. In its views, the NIHR concluded that it agrees with what was stated in the proposed amendment, as it does not conflict with the provisions contained in the Constitution and international and regional instruments related to human rights and the rights of persons with disabilities.
- c) The NIHR submitted its advisory opinion to the Shura Council at its request and after it became a draft law. The NIHR came to the same conclusion, that the amendment does not conflict with the provisions contained in the Constitution and international and regional instruments related to human rights and the rights of persons with disabilities.
- d) The NIHR took the initiative to submit its advisory opinion to the House of Representatives regarding amending the text of Paragraph (2) of Article (21) of the Law. The proposed amendment came to intensify the penalty imposed on anyone who, through negligence, causes the death of the disabled person under his care, bringing the penalty to imprisonment for a period not exceeding ten years and a fine not exceeding five thousand dinars, while the penalty stipulated in the original law is imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and a fine not exceeding three thousand dinars, or one of these two penalties. The proposal aims to provide greater protection for persons with disabilities under the care of others and will contribute to ensuring their care and providing health care and fulfilling all their needs to enjoy a decent life.

1.4 The NIHR has also provided other advisory opinions ⁴ to the legislative authorities in the Kingdom related to the rights of people with disabilities, most notably of which:

- a) The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion to the House of Representatives at the request of the House, regarding the proposal with a desire to grant a permanent residence permit to children of a Bahraini women from a foreign father, which aims to maintain the stability of the family, its entity and interdependence, and facilitate the procedures for renewing residency permits for these children, in

⁴ To view the received advisory opinions submitted by the NIHR to the constitutional authorities and public institutions please check its website under icon Annual Reports: <http://www.nihr.org.bh>.



addition to taking into account the humanitarian dimension. The NIHR considered it to be more appropriate to extend the residency permits of the children of a Bahraini woman married to a foreigner until they reach the age of (25) years, unless they join work, instead of granting them permanent residency, and granting some others permanent residency, including: children with disabilities who are unable to support themselves because of that disability even after they reach the age of (25) years, since they still need direct and permanent care from the Bahraini mother.

- b) The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion to both the House of Representatives and the Shura Council, at their request, regarding the draft law to amend Article (56) of the Traffic Law promulgated by Law No. (23) of 2014, which takes into account people with disabilities by exempting them from the reconciliation fine for the crime of not abiding by parking in designated spaces stipulated in Clause (12) of Article (47) of this Law, when it is proven that there are no designated parking spaces or vacant at the time of issuing the violation. The NIHR agrees, in principle, with the goals and objectives of the draft law in question, and has made some observations regarding the text contained, calling for more efforts to be made to comply with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was ratified by the Kingdom of Bahrain under Law No. (22) for the year 2011, especially with regard to Article No. (9) of the Convention, which provides the right of accessibility for persons with disabilities, facilitating the surrounding environment, means of transportation and others, while increasing the number of parking spaces designated for persons with disabilities and making them close to places of public service provisions.

1.5 The NIHR's participation in providing its advisory opinions stems from its true belief in the Kingdom's need for a law regulating the rights of persons with disabilities in a manner that is more in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was ratified by the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain under Law No. (22) of 2011, which confirms the necessity that all persons with disabilities of all kinds shall enjoy all human rights and basic civil, political, economic, social and cultural freedoms, and to be able to exercise their rights on the ground.

1.6 In 2019, the NIHR studied the national legislation regulating the rights of persons with disabilities in the field of construction, transportation, and housing, comparing it with legislations of other countries in addition to international standards, specifically the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. ratified by the Kingdom under Law No. (22) of 2011. As a result of this study, it was found that the national legislation fails to achieve the objectives of the Convention, specifically in the field of



construction, transportation and housing, which calls for reconfirming the recommendation of the NIHR contained in the first annual report issued in 2013 urging the legislative authority to issue an integrated law on the rights of persons with disabilities in line with the provisions of the International Convention, addressing - at the very least - the broad outlines of the specifications and requirements of the infrastructure and the appropriate engineering needs for individuals with disabilities in public facilities, tourist facilities, various means of transportation, and housing services, in addition to issuing an executive regulation attached to the law dealing in detail with these specifications, requirements and needs, similar to legislations of other countries, which reflects the essence of the law agreement.

1.7 The NIHR's third annual report issued in 2015, once again urged the legislative authority to issue a law on the rights of individuals with disabilities in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In the same report, the NIHR also monitored the lack of implementation of Law No. (59) of 2014 amending Article (5) of Law No. (74) of 2006 regarding the care, rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities, which added two new paragraphs, the first of which states,

“An employee or worker with a disability or a person caring for a disabled relative of the first degree, who proves by a certificate issued by the competent medical committee that they need special care, shall be granted two hours of paid daily rest, in accordance with the conditions and controls issued by a decision of the Minister”. The second paragraph stipulates that: **“It is not permissible to combine the two hours of rest established under this law and the hours of care, breastfeeding or rest prescribed in other laws and decisions”.**

1.8 After four years of not implementing Law No. (59) of 2014 amending Article (5) of the above-mentioned law, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development issued Resolution No. (80) of 2018 regarding the conditions and controls for granting two hours of rest to an employee or worker with disability, or who takes care of a person with a disability, to oblige the concerned authorities to take all necessary measures to implement the law, by stating the mechanism for implementing the provisions stipulated in Article (5) of Law No. (74) of 2006 and its amendments.

1.9 Also, Civil Service issued Directives No. (2) of 2019 regarding granting two hours of rest to any employee with a disability, or who takes care of a person with a disability, which aims to clarify how to implement the provisions of Article (5) of Law No. (74) of 2006 and its amendments regarding Civil Service Bureau, and Ministry of Labor and Social Development Decision No. (80) of 2018, regarding the conditions and controls for granting two hours of rest to any employee or worker with a disability or who takes care of a person with a disability, in which must be



applied to employees in the Kingdom's ministries and its various agencies subject to Civil Service Law No. (48) for the year 2010.⁵

1.10 In order to provide more protection to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy their rights, the Higher Committee for the Care of Persons with Disabilities has been reconstituted pursuant to Prime Minister's Decision No. (5) of 2020 re-forming the Higher Committee for the Care of Persons with Disabilities, its headed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, and representatives of various Government agencies, civil society, and the civil sector, as members.

1.11 This Committee is responsible for planning and coordinating programs for the care, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, and setting rules for determining the basic needs for their care, rehabilitation, employment and conditions for their admission to rehabilitation centers, in addition to setting regulations and determining procedures for implementing the obligations stipulated in Law No. (74) of 2006 regarding care and rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, it also oversees the implementation of the national strategy and plan for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Specific rights (Articles 5-30)

(2) The right to equality and non-discrimination (Article 5), recognition of equality before the law (Article 12) and access to justice (Article 13):

2.1 With regard to the enjoyment of civil rights by persons with disabilities, in particular the right to equality with others before the law and access to justice, the NIHR monitored the adoption by the Supreme Judicial Council, the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, and the Public Prosecution Office, several facilitative measures that enable persons with disabilities to enjoy their right to equality before the law and access to justice, through the provision of sign interpreters for the deaf and speech impaired, with the possibility of the judge or one of the employees moving to the place of residence of those who cannot attend court due to disability to complete any of the litigation or documentation procedures.

(3) Accessibility (Article 9) and Personal Mobility (Article 20):

3.1 The NIHR commends the many pioneering initiatives offered by government agencies and the private sector to people with disabilities. Of which for example, the initiative of the Ministry of Interior to launch a video call center service within

⁵ To view the Civil Service Directive No. (2) of 2019 regarding granting two hours' rest for employee with disability or taking care of disabled person, check the link:

<https://www.csb.gov.bh/ar/civil-service-legislation/csb-in-effect/governance/gov-02-2019.html>



emergency services to answer emergency calls for the hearing and speech impaired category, to provide protection for this category, and facilitate their transactions without the need to rely on others, and employees have been trained to assist this group by using sign language.

3.2 The Ministry of Labor and Social Development also launched a qualitative initiative represented in equipping a special computer for the blind with a speaking program called “Bassar” that enables this category to use computer programs to read Arabic and English web pages in an easy and clear way, help them to scan documents and read e-mail, take advantage of modern technology, develop their ability to communicate, and develop their integration into public and practical life.

3.3 Emanating from its belief in the importance of concerted efforts to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy all their rights on an equal basis and without discrimination with others, the NIHR launched the #Let's_Help_Access campaign. This initiative aims to invite the honorable public and persons with disabilities to report and monitor public or private facilities intended for public use and whose design or surrounding physical environment, make it difficult for this category to enjoy their right to access and use those facilities on an equal basis with others.

3.4 This initiative comes to report and monitor any situation that prevents facilitating access for persons with disabilities to facilities intended for public use, workplaces, governmental or private establishments, markets, commercial complexes, or service places, which require that the surrounding streets be suitable for the use of this category.

3.5 The NIHR would very much like to monitor cases where, for example, there is absence of corridors/lanes in streets leading to these facilities and complexes that are designated for the category of people with disabilities, and the failure to allocate parking spaces for their cars, or the distance from the place of service provision, locking parking spaces with a barrier that prevents them from being used, the existence of narrow corridors and doors, which prevents the smooth passage of wheel chairs, the absence of elevators to upper floors, the lack of toilets designated for the use of this category, or the presence of any other obstacles that prevent persons with disabilities from optimal use of the facility or complex.

3.6 The NIHR initiative, called on citizens, residents, and the honorable public to actively participate in monitoring these and other cases, determine their location and time, and report them to the NIHR through its WhatsApp app at 17111666. These abuses can also be reported through the toll-free hotline 80001144, or Email at complaint@nihr.org.bh.

3.7 As a result, the NIHR communicated with the concerned authorities in the Kingdom to inform them of the observed cases, and cooperated with those



authorities to find appropriate solutions, whether by amending the current legislation or proposing new legislation.

3.1 As the Kingdom - like other countries of the world - was affected by the spread of the new Corona virus (COVED19) within its territory, it has taken preventive measures, including social distancing measures and the prevention of gatherings, and as for the matter of freedom of movement and ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development continued to provide transportation services and the delivery of people with disabilities through the continuation of community partnership with NGOs in operating mobile units for people with disabilities, in addition to coordinating with the General Directorate of Traffic in the Ministry of Interior to ensure the continuation of providing driving training services for them.

(4) Living independently and being included in society (Article 19):

4.1 In the field of the right of persons with disabilities to enjoy independent housing, Law No. (7) of 2009 added an article to Decree-Law No. (10) of 1976, obligating the concerned authorities to take into account the condition of persons with disabilities or their families when allocating housing, highlighting the importance of the existence of special equipment for the handicapped, that commensurate with the type of his disability, which is consistent with what the relevant international convention indicated on the necessity of equalizing this group with others in a decent living by enabling them to benefit from those services.

4.2 With regard to inclusion in society, and with reference to Decree-Law No. (13) of 1977 promulgating the Building Regulations Law, and the relevant decisions, the NIHR notes that it did not include any provisions related to requirements, regulations and specifications that are consistent with the situation of persons with disabilities.

(5) Right to Education (Article 24):

5.1 In order for the category of persons with disabilities to obtain their right to education, Article No. (5) in Paragraph (10) of Law No. (27) of 2005 regarding education, referred to diversifying educational opportunities according to the different needs of individual students, and caring for people with disabilities by following up their progress and integrating those who can do so with their peers in educational institutions.

5.2 In this regard, the Ministry of Education has given this category remarkable attention, as it provided the necessary facilities and equipment for students with disabilities, by preparing remedial classes in some schools for slow learner students and for cases lagging in the process of learning. It worked to integrate



students with disabilities into regular classes with their peers, in order not to isolate them from their surroundings and society, which is the school and the regular classroom. In addition to studying and following up cases of mental retardation, speech disorder, hearing and vision impairment in government schools, and working to transfer them to institutes or specialized centers. It also took special measures that commensurate with the classification of the case according to the type and nature of disability by working to create the infrastructure for students with disabilities, in a manner that enables him/her to use the facilities, provide the specialized teacher and the appropriate educational tools, while providing treatment services to those who need them.

5.3 For the purpose of improving the quality of education for persons with special disabilities, the government has introduced an allowance for education, rehabilitation or care for persons with disabilities, in public schools affiliated with the Ministry of Education, and in rehabilitation centers affiliated with the Ministry of Social Development, amounting to one hundred dinars for employees in the group of educational jobs, and fifty dinars for employees in the group of general jobs, pursuant to Cabinet Resolution No. (16) of 2013.

5.4 Due to the suspension of attendance studies in public and private schools during the Covid-19 pandemic, and in order to preserve the safety and health of students, the Ministry of Education has provided a number of advanced remote services, including: An electronic educational portal service is provided, as this service provided a model platform that allows teachers Students communicate and interact with study materials and lectures remotely, through the Ministry of Education website: www.edunet.bh. The Ministry also presented a virtual laboratory project, which enables students to conduct various scientific experiments in a safe virtual environment that touches reality and provides students with basic skills related to scientific methods.

(6) Right to health (Article 25):

6.1 people who suffer from some diseases that may make them in advanced stages of the disease among people with disabilities, such as severe sickle cell anemia (Sickler), multiple sclerosis (MS), and hereditary blood disease (thalassemia), were not neglected from the services provided by the State, where the NIHR monitored meetings held by a number of relevant official bodies such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, with representatives of a number of associations concerned with these diseases in attendance, work was done to facilitate their access to services provided by the State, by providing medicines and treatment or issuing their own cards for the purpose of facilitating the procedures for their access to medical and treatment services in health centers, or parking in spaces for persons with disabilities, and working to issue their own cards in the name of the category of people with special needs.



6.2 The NIHR also monitored that the Division of People with Disabilities at the University of Bahrain issued a special card to students suffering from severe sickle cell anemia (Sickler) and opened a health file at the university clinic in order to provide accommodation services, and to provide appropriate attention to their health condition. The NIHR hopes that other universities and educational centers will follow suit.

6.3 During the NIHR's follow-up to the condition of this category of persons with disabilities or those who suffer from medical conditions that put them in the ranks of that category, the NIHR monitored the inauguration and operation of a therapeutic medical center for genetic blood diseases, which is one of the most prominent and most important leading centers in the Arab Gulf region, as it was established and prepared at the highest technical and technological levels. The Center includes a section for accidents and emergencies and another for diagnostics. It also monitored, through local newspapers, the intention of the Ministry of Health to open the first specialized center for patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) in Bahrain and the region during the year 2020 in Muharra Governorate, which will include everything the patient needs from diagnosis to treatment, by providing all the necessary facilities and equipment to extend health care and service to patients with MS, in addition to preparing specialized medical and nursing cadres for this center. In this regard, the NIHR appreciates these efforts because of their significant role in ensuring that this group enjoys their rights, particularly in the field of treatment and health care.

6.4 In view of the impact on the Kingdom - like other countries of the world - due to the spread of the new Corona virus (Covid 19) within its territories, it has taken preventive and curative measures to limit the spread of this virus among all people on its territory, whether they are citizens or foreigners. These health measures have been described as completely non-discriminatory, as they provide comprehensive and free health care to people living with the virus, their contacts, or suspected cases, including people with disabilities.

(7) Habilitation and rehabilitation (Article 26):

7.1 There are many rehabilitation centers in the Kingdom of Bahrain that provide care and all the support and services needed for this category. The Kingdom is working to establish an integrated building under the name "Comprehensive Disability Complex", by order of His Majesty the King and allocating a land for the project with an area of three hectares, with the participation of interested parties in this category. The foundation stone was laid in 2012 and will be gradually operated. The complex includes eleven buildings for various cases of disabilities and is to be supplied by human cadres specialized in psychological, social, and other fields. The complex aims to provide integrated care and rehabilitation, health and psychological care and physiotherapy, family and social guidance, display market products produced by this category, introduce



prosthetic devices and train families of persons with disabilities, workers, and members of NGOs in this field. The complex was to be inaugurated in 2020 but has not yet opened.

7.2 Despite the suspension of students' attendance at all public and private rehabilitation centers since February 2020 to protect them and preserve their health, NIHR monitored the continued provision of care and rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, through activating the distance learning and training service, the application of electronic lessons and rehabilitation sessions through distance education systems. The total number of students with disabilities benefiting from these centers - according to the latest statistics authorized by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development in June 2020 - is 1562 students benefiting from six government centers, 15 rehabilitation centers run by civil society organizations and financially supported by the Ministry, and 18 private rehabilitation centers⁶.

(8) Right to Work (Article 27):

8.1 Affirming the right of persons with disabilities to work and training, The Employment and Training Center for People with Disabilities has been opened, in September 2016. The Centre provides comprehensive services to persons with disabilities, including employment, training, and assessing abilities of job seekers within this category. The Center also provides integrated services for the disabled, as it is equipped with modern techniques and equipment for assessing cases and capabilities in order to nominate for suitable jobs, streamlining the obstacles for this category of people to integrate them in suitable jobs concomitant with their potential competencies and attentive to their needs to be able to perform their duties and contribute to the development of the society.

8.2 Another support is provided through The Services Center for People with Disabilities (You Are Not Alone) under the Ministry of Labor & Social Development opened in 2007. This Center provides a broad variety of services to meet the needs of the persons with disabilities in the areas of work and training. The Center seeks to employing the disabled in the private sector and public institutions in accordance with their capabilities and potential, while availing suitable training in coordination with relevant institutes, institutions, and companies, granting prosthetic devices, issue IDs for persons with disabilities, provide counselling to their families, and receive any complaints they raise to find the appropriate solutions.

⁶ Bahrain News Agency: Bahrain demonstrates its experience in servicing persons with disabilities during the coronavirus pandemic on 4 June 2020 through the link:

<https://www.csb.gov.bh/ar/civil-service-legislation/csb-in-effect/governance/gov-02-2019.htm>



8.3 In this regard, the NIHR refers to the Ministerial Decision No. (67) of 2016 issued by the Ministry of Labor & Social Development regarding the data for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities based on it the person is granted a rehabilitation certificate free of charge that includes the personal information and the qualifications attained, and the professions they can perform. This decision completed the legislative ecosystem in providing work, training, and rehabilitation for this category.

8.4 To ensure that this category enjoys their right to work optimally, the provisions of Law No (74) of 2006 regarding care, rehabilitation, and employment of the disabled stipulated to ensure the equality principle such that they receive all the laborers' rights and privileges without discrimination, mandating that enterprises with more than 50 laborers employ around (2%) disabled workers from the total. This commitment is extended to all government apparatuses, institutions, and public authorities in the country.

8.5 The law did not ignore the right of persons with disabilities, especially pregnant workers, to take full unreduced leave from their other vacations. The law granted this category the pension after they worked for 15 years or more for males and 10 years for women if any of them is not entitled to a salary in accordance with the provisions of the laws regulating this matter.

8.6 Taking into account the health status of persons with disabilities, including workers suffering from severe sickle cell disease (Sickler), which may be affected by working conditions, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development Resolution No. (24) of 2013 was issued regarding reducing the maximum working hours by no less than an hour. With regard to some categories of workers and some industries and businesses whose circumstances or nature require this, the decision specified the industries and businesses in which the condition of that category must be taken into account. In addition, the decision of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development No. (80) of 2018 was issued regarding the conditions and controls for granting two hours of rest to an employee or worker with a disability or who cares for a person with a disability.

(9) Adequate standard of living and social protection (Article 28)

9.1 The provisions of Law No. (40) of 2010 amending some provisions of Law No. (74) of 2006 regarding the care, rehabilitation and employment of the disabled to provide legal cover in providing social assistance to persons with disabilities by giving them a monthly allowance of no less than 100 Bahraini Dinars to ensure decent living conditions. In this regard, the relevant ministry issues an ID for the person with disability to grant him varying reductions on certain commodities and services. The NIHR detected through the Ministry of Labor and Social Development website the presence of a list of support to this initiative which contributes to improve the living conditions of this category.



9.2 As part of its permanent efforts to provide the umbrella of social protection and a decent life for citizens, and with regard to the disability allowance, the NIHR monitored the action taken by the Ministry of Labour & Social Development to double the monthly allowance for the disabled from (100) Bahraini Dinars to (200) Bahraini Dinars, on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadhan which was during the month of April 2020.

9.3 In order to complement the precautionary measures against the Corona Virus (Covid-19), Civil Service Directives No. (4) of 2020 was issued regarding the application of the work-from-home policy to on government staff, as it gave priority to the application of the work-from-home policy by a maximum of 50% of the employees, to a number of employees which are: for pregnant employees, employees entitled to two care hours, elderly employees and those who suffer from chronic diseases and underlying health conditions, including persons with disabilities, considering that most of them suffer from chronic diseases besides their low immunity, provided that employees perform the tasks of their jobs alternately between them for a period Two weeks between working from home and being at the workplace.

9.4 In the context of valuing the household and the family, the Supreme Council for Women launched a national campaign entitled “Mutakatifeen” to provide support for the Bahraini women and families to combat the coronavirus (Covid-19), by monitoring the emergency needs of the woman and her family and attempt to provide it in cooperation with other partners in order to reach the psychological and social stability of all members of the family. Also work on creating an enlightened societal culture by providing support to the needy according to the best-known practices.

9.5 The campaign targeted all categories of women, particularly: divorced, widowed, abandoned, self-supporting (single and married) and her relatives (next of kin), retired, pregnant working women, nurturers (breast feeding) , and mothers to children under 10 years old, infected women with respiratory diseases, chronic diseases, lack of immunity, and people with disabilities. Those who take care of people with disabilities, including children, relatives and the elderly, in addition to families with low incomes, and owners of faltering business projects.

9.6 As to societal awareness, the NIHR monitored the interactive response of the civil society in solidarity with efforts exerted in the Kingdom of Bahrain to combat the spread of the coronavirus, by volunteering to provide simultaneous sign language interpretation during the live broadcasts of the news relating to the spread of the coronavirus in all the Kingdom’s official media channels, headed by the deputy president of the Bahrain Deaf Society and the head of the translators committee at this society in order to raise awareness of the persons with disabilities form the danger of getting infected by the virus and means to combat it.



Specific Commitments (Articles 31-33)

(10) National implementation and monitoring (Article 33)

First: Strategies & Action plans

10.1 In implementation of the competencies of the Supreme Committee for the Care of Persons with Disabilities, the latter developed a national strategy based on a host of research and field studies on the conditions of persons with disabilities in the Kingdom. The outcome was Bahrain's National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2012-2016)⁷ which includes 7 pillars: legislation, health and rehabilitation, education, economic and social empowerment, and empowerment of women with disabilities, in addition to facilitating the access of persons with disabilities to buildings and services, highlighting the role of media and awareness of the importance of working to give persons with disabilities their full rights without derogation.

10.2 Despite the fact that the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, was very well complemented within the specified seven pillars, and that it provided a detailed overview of the Kingdom of Bahrain vision to reach quality of life for the persons with disabilities and facilitate their integration in the society, however it was limited to a period of 4 years (2012-2016). This necessitates that the committee tasked with assessing the strategy and the progress of what was achieved, identifying the challenges encountered during implementation, to design a new strategy according to modern principles and legal frameworks, as well as best practices, with the relevant KPIs.

10.3 Towards enhancing the human rights situation in general and paying attention to the categories of people that need special attention, in particular the rights of the persons with disabilities, the NIHR submitted a general proposal to the Government in 2019 to push towards issuing a comprehensive national plan for human rights⁸. This yielded the conclusion that any national plan for human rights should have certain characteristics that include: a dedicated committee for follow up and evaluation; adoption of international human rights principles; inclusive scope; specific targets and indicators; a national implementable project opens for the public; paying attention to the international dimensions; and placing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

10.4 The NIHR specified five strategic goals that any national plan for human rights should include, namely improve human rights conditions and advance it; spread and raise awareness of human rights culture; implement the commitments and voluntary obligations of the Kingdom of Bahrain; strengthening effective

⁷ To read about the Kingdom of Bahrain National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2012-2016) check the official website of the Ministry of Labour & Social Development <https://www.mlsd.gov.bh/sites/default/files/img/files/Disabled-people-strategy.pdf>

⁸ Attached a copy of NIHR proposal for a national plan for human rights.



cooperation framework; provision of support to national and international mechanisms and institutions relating to the protection and strengthening of human rights; as well as achieving the aspired sustainable development goals (SDGs) 2030.

10.5 The NIHR affirmed the necessity that the comprehensive national plan for human rights to be available to the public, with special attention to the person with disabilities in reading and comprehending it, and to be translated into the sign language for the deaf, and Braille for the blind and weak eyesight (poor vision).

Second: The National Institution for human Rights (NIHR)

10.6 Law No. (26) of 2014, as amended by Decree Law No. (20) of 2016⁹, granted a broad mandate to the NIHR in the field of human rights, as stated in Article No. (2), **“An independent Institution is established named “The National Institution for Human Right” " responsible for promoting and protecting human rights, and consolidating its values and contributing to securing its practice. It shall be located in the city of Manama. The building shall be accessible for persons with disabilities. The Institution shall have independent legal personality, as well as financial and administrative independence, and shall carry out its duties freely, neutrality and independently”**.

10.7 In this regard, the NIHR, in accordance with its establishing law, was granted a broad mandate in the field of human rights, which includes civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, including for the persons with disabilities. These tasks contribute to promote and protect the human rights, for both citizens and expatriates in the Kingdom, regardless of their legal status within the country's system, which is in line with the relevant national, regional and international decisions.¹⁰

10.8 Within the framework of the NIHR's mandate in the field of promoting human rights, organized a roundtable on (The reality surrounding people with Down syndrome in the Kingdom of Bahrain), and another round table entitled “The Reality of People with Autism Spectrum in Bahrain”, attended by a number of their Excellency members of the Council of Representatives, the Shura Council, representatives of relevant government agencies, civil society organizations and a number of parents of persons with disabilities. The roundtables agreed on a number of recommendations to perform legislative amendments to promote and protect the rights of the persons with disabilities, and how the society should deal

⁹ Check the NIHR website for a copy of Law No. (26) of 2014, amended by Decree Law No. (20) of 2016 establishing the NIHR <http://www.nihr.org.bh>

¹⁰ To read more on the NIHR establishing law and relevant amendments, its designated tasks, and its accreditation by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, check the NIHR Annual Report for the Year 2016, published on its website under Annual Reports icon: <http://www.nihr.org.bh>



with them, handling the obstacles facing them, and raising the bar for this segment human and basic rights.

10.9 In order to strengthen the rights of persons with disabilities amongst researchers and university students, the NIHR organized for the segment of students enrolled in the Legal and Human Rights Clinic at the University of Bahrain an open meeting to discuss the athletic rights of the persons with disabilities, and the extent of enjoying equally their right to practice athletics with others. The students themselves discussed the topic as a scientific discussion run by the NIHR, based on international, regional, and national standards relating to this segment rights of relevance, and ended with suitable recommendations in this regard.

10.10 It is to be noted that the program of the Legal and Human Rights Clinic, is a practical training program for the Law College students to acquire the needed skills in the human rights field. It includes providing workshops and presentations on the role of the NIHR in the field of promoting and protecting human rights. The program extends to 15 weeks, and covers the specialization of the NIHR in the promotion and protecting of human rights, through demonstrating the mechanism for receiving complaints and relevant measures, providing assistance and legal counseling, besides its role in monitoring cases of violation of human rights.

10.11 The NIHR played an active role in the field of protecting human rights by receiving complaints¹¹ of all types related to human rights, review it and refer what is needed to competent authorities, as well as follow up effectively, or guide the relevant competent authorities of the required measures that should be undertaken, and help them to implement it or assist in settling it with competent authorities.

10.12 In the interest of the NIHR to provide the necessary protection for the most vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, it received one (1) complaint in the year (2020) regarding the right to education, in addition to (3) complaints in (2021); the context of these complaints covered different issues pertaining for right to education, right to physical and moral safety, and the right to health. The NIHR immediately contacted the competent authorities to tackle them.

10.13 The NIHR also provided three (3) legal assistance to persons with disabilities in the year (2019), in addition to providing six (6) legal assistance in the year (2020), and three (3) legal assistance in the year (2021). The NIHR contacted the competent authorities to tackle them for humanitarian

¹¹ To view the Guide for receiving complaints and providing legal assistance:

<http://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/PDF/NIHRComplaint%20ProceduresManualEN.pdf>

considerations and guided some of them on the measures that should be undertaken.

10.14 In the year (2019) the NIHR monitored one (1) case along with two (2) cases in the year (2020), and five (5) cases in the year (2021) pertaining to persons with disabilities, and it contacted the competent authorities to tackle them.

10.15 Within the context of the NIHR role in promoting and protecting human rights in the kingdom - which this report presented simple examples of – the NIHR was able to portray the practical reality of the rights of persons with disabilities; and to identify the main obstacles and challenges that they encounter almost daily in their lives. Based on this several important recommendations were articulated in order to improve the conditions of the persons with disabilities in the Kingdom, in fulfilling its international commitments stemming from its ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Final Recommendations

Based on the above, the NIHR recommends the following:

- (1) Expediting the issuance of a new comprehensive and advanced law regarding the rights of persons with disabilities, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and relevant international resolutions.
- (2) Updating urgently the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in cooperation with the relevant national stakeholders, emphasizing the importance to issue the National Plan for Human Rights, with guarantees to preserve the rights of this category of people in the way it is needed.
- (3) Working on improving the infrastructure to include the required engineering designs for persons with disabilities in the public facilities, especially in the new buildings and modern compounds.
- (4) Providing in public buildings and other facilities signage catering to some types of disabilities (blind, deaf and mute), in easy to read and understand forms, to ensure that the persons with disabilities can receive and access the available services.
- (5) Expediting the opening of “Comprehensive Disability Complex”, that contains several specialized centers, such as centers for autism, behavioral and communications disorders.
- (6) Incorporating the main concepts of education for human rights and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the academic

curriculum for primary, elementary, and secondary education to contribute to enhance the rights of this category of people.

- (7) Paying special attention to train the technical cadres to work in the field of rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and include specialized material for caring and rehabilitating persons with disabilities in the university curriculum for some specializations of relevance.
- (8) Paying further attention to the educational services offered to the category of persons with disabilities, in such a way that enables them to proceed fully in all the stages of their education (primary, elementary, and secondary), in an equitable manner to their normal peers.
- (9) Expanding the employment of persons with disabilities by the private sector, by offering certain incentives to the companies and private institutions to attract this category, by the competent government authorities in the labour affairs.
- (10) Engaging all media channels to contribute to the awareness campaign on the challenges facing the persons with disabilities, how to deal with them, and introduce to their families the offered government services and facilities to them.