

المؤسسة الوطنية لحقوق الإنسان
National Institution *for* Human Rights



Ninth Annual Report of the National Institution for Human Rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain

2021

www.nihr.org.bh



  NIHR Bahrain
    nihrbh
info@nihr.org.bh

 +973 17111666
 80001144
www.nihr.org.bh



“The State shall ensure the solidarity of the society in shouldering burdens resulting from public disasters and ordeals ...”

“The State ensures the provision of job opportunities for its citizens and fairness of work conditions.”

Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain
Articles (12) and (13/b)

Contents

Introduction:.....	5
Chapter One: Development of NIHR's Work	7
First Topic - Legal Framework of the National Institution for Human Rights' Work.....	8
Second Topic - Organizational Structure of the National Institution for Human Rights.....	17
Chapter Two: Progress Achieved in Human Rights Situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain.....	26
First Topic - Follow-up on the NIHR's Recommendations Contained in its Annual Reports for the Years 2018 and 2019	27
Second Topic - Digital Transformation in Government Services and its Impact on the Situation of Human Rights	69
Chapter Three: Major Issues that have a Direct Impact on the Human Rights Situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain	93
First Topic - The Right to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (the Right to Health).....	94
Second Topic - The Right to Communicate with the Outside World	111
Third Topic - The Right to Physical and Mental Integrity.....	122
Fourth Topic -The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (the Right to Work)	136
Fifth Topic - The Right to Recognition of Legal Personality (the Right to a Nationality)	146
Chapter Four: Efforts and Activities of the National Institution for Human Rights in the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.....	156
First Topic - Efforts Exerted by the NIHR in the Field of Protecting Human Rights.....	157
Second Topic - NIHR's Efforts to Promote Human Rights	207
Chapter Five: Advisory Opinions Submitted by the National Institution for Human Rights to the Constitutional Authorities	272
First Topic - Advisory Opinions Submitted by the National Institution for Human Rights to the House of Representatives	274
Second Topic - Advisory Opinions Submitted by the National Institution for Human Rights to the Shura Council.....	293

Vision

We hold the belief that the human rights issue is among national constants. Recognition of public rights and freedoms, civil, political, economic, social or cultural, whether individual or collective rights, is a commitment to the values of justice, equality and human dignity of all human beings without discrimination.

“Human Rights Culture is a Lifestyle”

Mission

We strive to develop, promote and protect human rights of the citizens and residents of Bahrain by providing protection and support for individuals to enable them to gain diverse knowledge to exercise their legitimate rights, determine their needs, how to demand and defend these needs through disseminating the culture of human rights by all means available.

“Together to Create a Better Practice of Human Rights”

Introduction:

Since His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa acceded to the throne, the Kingdom of Bahrain has witnessed important transformations toward fostering greater democratic frameworks, entrenching the foundations of the rule of law, and building an integrated legislative and regulatory system, actual and practical practices, and public institutions that work to support the human rights system. These are fundamental transformations aimed at advancing the course of human rights and public freedoms and ensuring that individuals fully enjoy such rights and liberties.

The Ninth Annual Report of the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) for the year 2021 comes - at a time of the continued spread of Covid-19 and its impact on a range of human rights and fundamental freedoms - in accordance with the provision of Article No. (21) of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the NIHR, as amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016, stating that:

“The Council of Commissioners shall produce an annual report on the efforts, activities and work streams of the Institution. It shall include a section explaining the level of progress on the human rights situation in the Kingdom, as well as any observations and comments within its competency, identifying any obstacles to the Institution’s performance and the solutions adopted to circumvent them. The Council of Commissioners shall present the report to the King, the Prime Ministers, the Presentative Council, and the Shura Council. The report shall be presented to the public in parallel.”

The Ninth Annual Report consists of five chapters preceded by an introduction. The First Chapter demonstrates the development of NIHR’s work in terms of its legal framework and the organizational structure of its functions. The Second Chapter shows the level of progress achieved in the human rights situation in the Kingdom by presenting the impact of the digital transformation in government services on human rights, and the actions taken regarding the recommendations contained in the NIHR’s annual reports during the past two years 2018 and 2019.

The Third Chapter is dedicated to five topics, which had an impact on the human rights situation considering the complaints received, requests for legal aid submitted, and cases monitored and observed by the NIHR during the planned period for preparing the annual report. It reviews the right to health of average persons and whose liberty is restricted, the right to communicate with the outside world of persons whose freedom is restricted, the right to physical and mental integrity of ordinary persons and whose liberty is restricted, the right to work, and the right to nationality.

The Fourth Chapter of the report deals with the NIHR's efforts and activities in the field of protecting and promoting human rights. The Fifth and Final Chapter reviews the advisory opinions submitted by the NIHR to the constitutional authorities.

The NIHR emphasizes that this report is a tool to improve the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in a manner consistent with the Kingdom's obligations arising from its accession to international and regional human rights instruments, or those obligations related to the Universal Periodic Review through the Working Group of the Human Rights Council. It aims to achieve best practices in the enjoyment of various public rights and freedoms so that human rights become a way of life.

Chapter One - Development of NIHR's Work

Preface and Partitioning:

1. Driven by the insightful vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Country may God protect him, on the importance of observing, promoting, and protecting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain; and to achieve His Majesty's comprehensive and enlightened reform project to advance the Kingdom of Bahrain making it one of the most prominent democratic systems in the region; Royal Order No. (48) of 2009 was issued to establish the National Institution for Human Rights, which was amended by Royal Order No. (28) of 2012, and the subsequent enactment of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the National Institution for Human Rights, which was amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016.
2. In view of that, this Chapter will briefly address the development of NIHR's work since its inception in 2009 up to the present time. This will be done through presenting the legal framework for NIHR's work, namely, the tasks, functions, and competencies entrusted to it. In addition, the controls over appointing the members of NIHR's Council of Commissioners will be reviewed under the First Topic, followed by the Second Topic, which deals with the organizational structure of NIHR's work and presents the competencies conferred on its Council of Commissioners, and the role played by the specific standing committees.

First Topic

Legal Framework of the National Institution for Human Rights' Work

Preface:

This topic will address the legal framework that regulates the work of the NIHR by outlining the tasks and competencies entrusted to it and contained in its establishing Law, in addition to the controls over appointing members of its Council of Commissioners, in two successive requirements as follows:

Requirement One

Functions and Competencies of the NIHR Contained in the Establishment Law

Section One: The legal basis for the NIHR

1. Maintaining the voluntary commitments of the Kingdom of Bahrain before the Human Rights Council during the Universal Periodic Review in April 2008, which included that the Kingdom **“is committed to establishing a national human rights body at the earliest possible date, taking into account the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular the Paris Principles; in November 2007, a decision was issued by the Council of Ministers regarding the establishment of a national human rights body that is expected, after its establishment, to draw up a national plan to promote and protect human rights in the Kingdom”**.¹
2. Royal Order No. (46) of 2009 was issued to establish the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR)² as a beacon of human rights awareness and a house of expertise and advice. The Royal Order included, in addition to the Preamble (15) articles dealing with the establishment of an independent institution called the “National Institution

¹ First National Report of the Kingdom of Bahrain submitted to the Human Rights Council in the First Session held on 7-18 April 2008- Document Number (A/HRC/WG.6/1/BHR/1) in Arabic.

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/115/42/PDF/G0811542.pdf?OpenElement> in English

Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review - Document No. A/HRC/8/19 in Arabic

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/136/05/PDF/G0813605.pdf?OpenElement>
<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/136/07/PDF/G0813607.pdf?OpenElement> in English

² Royal Order No (46) of 2009 on establishing the National Institution for Human Rights

<https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/PDF/NHRI/O4609.pdf>

for Human Rights” that exercises its functions freely, impartially, and with full independence.

3. To underline the importance of supporting the work of the NIHR being the independent entity in the Kingdom of Bahrain regarding the promotion and protection of human rights, a law was enacted giving the NIHR a real guarantee and independence, while granting it more powers and authorities in a manner consistent with the “Paris Principles” pertaining to the status of national institutions in promoting and protecting human rights. On 24 July 2014 and in accordance with the established constitutional procedures in this regard, His Majesty the King issued Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the National Institution for Human Rights³, after being approved by the legislative authority; the Law entered into force after its publication in the Official Gazette on 8 August 2014.
4. To ensure greater independence of the work of the NIHR and to confirm its conformity with the relevant international resolutions, taking into account the observations of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), the Law establishing the NIHR was amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016,⁴ and entered into force after its publication in the Official Gazette on 7 October 2016.

Section Two: The broad mandate of the National Institution for Human Rights

1. The “Paris Principles” affirmed that **“the national institution shall be vested with competence to promote and protect human rights,”** and that **“the national institution shall be given as broad a mandate as possible and clearly set forth in a constitutional or legislative text that determine its establishment and the scope of its competence”**,⁵

³ Law No. (26) of 2014. In Arabic

https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/download/NIHR-Law_26_2014_OG_ar.pdf

https://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/Download/LawNo26-of2014_engl.pdf in English

⁴ Decree-Law No (20) of 2016, in Arabic

https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/download/Law-Decree_No_20_of_2016.pdf

https://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/Download/LawDecree20-2016_amendingLaw26-2014.pdf in English

⁵ Paris Principles relating to the status of national institutions for promoting and protecting human rights (competence and responsibilities) in Arabic

https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/PDF/01.%20ParisPrinciples_Ar.pdf

which has the same meaning as that referred to in the general observations of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) emphasizing the need for the establishing law that assign specific functions to the national human rights institutions to “promote” and “protect” human rights.

2. Whereas, the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA)⁶ recognizes that the concept of “promotion” includes the functions that national human rights institutions seek to perform in information and knowledge dissemination, training, education and provision of advice on human rights issues to the general public or to specific target groups in order to instil a societal culture based on transforming knowledge of human rights into practical skills that are practiced on the ground, and that the concept of “protection” refers to its quasi-judicial authority to receive complaints pertaining to human rights and to monitor and observe anything that could undermine the right of individuals to enjoy their assigned rights and public freedoms, and to conduct field visits to places where human rights violations has likelihood of occurring. Moreover, the mandate of the national institution should be interpreted in a broad, free and targeted manner to promote a progressive definition of human rights that guarantees all rights enshrined in international, regional and national human rights instruments.
3. Rreferring to the provisions of Law No. (26) of 2014, it is noted that it has granted the NIHR a broad mandate in the field of human rights in Article No. (2), stipulating that, **“An independent institution is established named (The National Institution for Human Rights) 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.”**
4. In addition, in order for the National Institution for Human Rights to achieve its objectives, Article No. (12) of the same law granted it the freedom to comment on any human rights issue and to address any human rights

in English

https://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/PDF/HR/01.%20ParisPrinciples_En.pdf

⁶ General Observation of the SCA of GANHRI (1-2) Human Rights Mandate. In Arabic

<https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/PDF/04.%20SCA%20GENERAL%20OBSERVATIONS%20ARABIC.pdf>

<https://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/PDF/HR/04.%20SCA%20GENERAL%20OBSERVATIONS%20ENGLISH.pdf> in English

case as it deems appropriate; Where the National Institution for Human Rights undertakes the following tasks:

- To participate in the production and implementation of a national plan for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Kingdom;
- To study legislation and regulations enforced in the Kingdom which come under the human rights areas together with recommending amendments it deems fit in this respect particularly those consistent with such legislation and the Kingdom's international obligations in the human rights field. The institution shall be empowered to recommend issuing legislation related to human rights.
- To study the conformity of legislation and regulations with regional and international treaties related to human rights, submit proposals and recommendations to the competent authorities in any matter that promotes and protects human rights, including on accession to regional and international conventions and treaties concerning human rights.
- To submit parallel reports, participate in the drafting and discussion of the reports, which the Kingdom is committed to submit periodically for the implementation of human rights' regional and international conventions, and make remarks thereon, and publish such reports in the media.
- To monitor violation of human rights instances, conduct the necessary investigation, draw the attention of the competent authorities and provide them with proposals on initiatives to put an end to such violations and, where necessary, to express an opinion on the reactions and positions of the competent authorities.
- To receive, examine, and consider complaints related to human rights, refer the complaints, as the NIHR considers appropriate and necessary, to the relevant authorities, follow-up the complaints effectively, or inform those concerned of the procedures that must be followed, help them take such procedures, or assist in the settlement of complaints with the relevant authorities.
- To conduct announced and unannounced field visits in accordance with the applicable principles in order to monitor human rights situations in correctional institutions, detention centers, labor gatherings, health and education centers, or any other public place in which it is suspected that human rights violations are being committed.

- To initiate cooperation with the competent authorities concerned with cultural, media and educational affairs, and submit proposals and recommendations in any undertaking that can disseminate and promote a culture of consciousness and respect of human rights.
 - To cooperate with national bodies and regional and international organizations, as well as relevant institutions in other countries that are concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights.
 - To hold meetings and joint events, and cooperate, coordinate and consult with relevant civil society institutions, non-governmental organizations, various other groups, and human rights defenders. In addition, communicate directly with those who claim to have been subjected to any form of violation, and submitting reports thereon to the Council of Commissioners.
 - To host conferences and organize seminars, and training and educational events in the field of human rights and conduct research and studies in this regard.
 - To participate in national and international forums, as well as in meetings of regional and international bodies concerned with human rights issues.
 - To issue newsletters, publications, data and special reports, and upload them on NIHR website. NIHR shall be entitled to address the public opinion directly or through any of the media outlets.
5. Therefore, the NIHR, pursuant to its establishment Law No. (26) of 2014, has been guaranteed a broad mandate in the field of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, all of which lead to the promotion and protection of human rights, whether that person is a citizen or a resident of the Kingdom, regardless of the different legal status.
 6. Article No. (13) of the NIHR's establishment law has also granted it the authority to consider issues which are related to its mandate referred to it by His Majesty the King, or any of the constitutional authorities of the State, for consideration and expressing its opinion thereon.
 7. Pursuant to Article No (14) of the same Law, the NIHR is entitled to **“request any information, reports, or documents which it considers necessary for the attainment of its goals or the performance of its function from the ministries and relevant bodies in the Kingdom. These ministries and bodies shall cooperate with the institution in the pursuit of its tasks, facilitate the conduct of its**

competency, and provide it with what it requests, and to prepare the responses and comments on the recommendation contained in the reports of the institution, in this regard in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations.”

8. In addition, the NIHR **“may inform the competent authorities in case the ministries and bodies fail to cooperate and provide the institution with the requested information, reports and documents or prevent it from examining them, so that the competent authorities take the necessary steps in accordance with the law.”**

Requirement Two

The Mechanism for Selecting the Members of the NIHR's Council of Commissioners and the Immunities Granted to them

1. In response to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (GANHRI), which emphasized the need for the NHRI's consultation and appointment process to be broad and transparent, and to include clear and standardized criteria for assessing the merit of all eligible candidates; where the SCA was of the view that the process of selecting and appointing the decision-making body in the national institution must be formalized, and that the law establishing the national institution should stipulate that full-time members must be among the members of the decision-making body, as this helps the independence of national institutions and eliminate actual or perceived conflict of interest, helps to achieve stable term of office of the members, and helps to realize organized and appropriate guidance of its personnel, in addition to the continuous and effective implementation of the functions of the institution.
2. In view of that, Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016 was enacted, amending several paragraphs contained in Law No. (26) of 2014 concerning the establishment of the NIHR, for the purpose of creating a real legal safeguard towards the independence of the institution, while granting the NIHR more competencies and powers in a manner consistent with the Paris Principles pertaining to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, and elevating its international ranking, in a manner that exemplifies the Kingdom's commitment to preserving and respecting human rights.
3. Perhaps one of the most prominent amendments contained in Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016 amending some provisions of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the NIHR is providing for full-time members in the Council of Commissioners, where Article No (1) defines a full-time member as a member who works full-time to fulfill the duties of his/her mandate in the NIHR and is not committed to perform another work or profession while carrying out his/her membership duties. Article No (4) stipulates the membership provisions permitting the selection of the members of the Council of Commissioners from among the members of the legislative authority, provided they shall not form a majority in the Council of Commissioners and that they can participate in the discussion only as a non-voting members. The same Article stipulates that a Royal Decree shall

be issued to determine the mechanism, procedures, and controls for selecting the members of the Council of Commissioners in order to enhance the transparency of consultations and appointments.

4. Moreover, to implement the provisions of Paragraph (a) of Article No (5) of the establishing Law, stating that, **“members of the Council of Commissioners shall be appointed by a Royal Order for a period of four years, renewable for similar terms,”** which also specified that these appointments take place **“after consultation with relevant bodies of civil society and various other organizations;”** and Paragraph (b) of the same Article also stated, which provided that the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are to be elected from among the full-time members; and Paragraph (c) of Article No (3) of Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016 stipulating that, **“A Royal Order shall be issued to determine the mechanisms, procedures, and the selection process of members of the Council of Commissioners;”** Royal Order No. (17) of 2017 was issued determining the controls governing the appointment of members of the Council of Commissioners at the National Institution for Human Rights⁷, which required that, **“to ensure their independence, a member of NIHR’s Council of Commissioners and in addition to membership conditions stipulated in Article No (4) of Law No (26) of 2014 on the Establishment of the NIHR, he/ she shall fulfill the following requirements:**
 1. **Not to belong to any political association, excluding members of the legislature who shall have the right to discussion without a vote;**
 2. **full-time members shall have a higher academic qualification and shall speak one of the official languages of the United Nations in addition to the Arabic language;**
 3. **For those appointed from civil society organizations and professional and trade union organizations, they shall have been members for a minimum of two years;**

⁷ Royal Order No. (17) of 2017 was issued determining the controls governing the appointment of members of the Council of Commissioners at the National Institution for Human Rights. In Arabic <https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/download/RoyalDecree17-2017.pdf> [https://www.nihr.org.bh/en/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/PDF/Royal%20Order%20No%20%20\(17\)%20of%202017%20English.pdf](https://www.nihr.org.bh/en/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/PDF/Royal%20Order%20No%20%20(17)%20of%202017%20English.pdf) In English

4. **For those appointed from academic bodies, they shall be at least at an assistant professor rank;**
 5. **They shall have clear and concrete contributions in the area of human rights.”**
5. Article No (2) of Royal Order No (17) of 2017 affirmed that the selection process of the members of the Council of Commissioners should ensure representation of the wide spectrum of society without any discrimination based on gender, origin, religion, creed, or disability. In addition, it must take account of representing women properly, as well as minorities. It also required that among the previous categories, there should be an appropriate number of specialists in the legal and human rights fields as well as other fields that fall into NIHR’s core work, bearing in mind preventing conflict of interests, either directly or indirectly. The Royal Order delegated the Royal Court Minister to carry out the necessary consultations for the nomination of the full-time and part-time members of the Council of Commissioners.
 6. Furthermore, Article No (9) of the NIHR’s Establishment Law stipulates that, **“A member of the Council of Commissioners may not hold accountable for (his/her) opinion and ideas on issues that fall within the competence of the Institution. A member may not be questioned without the consent of the Chairperson, and it must be done in the presence of the representative of the Council of Commissioners.”** In addition, **“The institution headquarters may not be searched except after obtaining a judicial order and in the presence of a representative of the public prosecution. The Chairperson must be notified of this and a representative of the Chairperson must be invited to be present during the search.”**

Second Topic

Organizational Structure of the National Institution for Human Rights

Preface:

This topic will address the organizational structure of the NIHR's work through showing the Council of Commissioners at the NIHR, the specific standing committees, and its executive body represented by the General Secretariat, in three successive requirements as follows:

Requirement One NIHR's Council of Commissioners

1. Article No (3) of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the NIHR stipulates that, **“(a) The Institution shall have a Council of Commissioners composed of eleven members, including the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson. They shall be known for their competence and integrity. (b) Members of the Council of Commissioners shall be selected from advisory firms, academic organizations, civil society organizations, unions, social, economic and professional institutions, human rights defenders, that women and minorities are adequately represented. Members may be selected from members of the legislative authorities. They shall not form a majority in the Council of Commissioners, and they can participate in the discussion as non- voting members.”**
2. Article No (5) follows stating that, **“(a) Members of the Council of Commissioners shall be appointed by a Royal Order for a period of four years, renewable for similar terms. Appointments shall take place after consultation with relevant bodies of civil society and various other organizations. The Royale Order shall identify the full-time and part-time members. The members shall practice their work in their personal capacity.”**
3. In addition, the NIHR's Establishment Law incorporated the powers of the Chairperson, his/her representation of the NIHR before the judiciary and in its relations with third parties, the mechanism for organizing the meetings of the Council at least every three months, and the need to develop an internal regulation to govern the work of the Council of Commissioners. The Law also touched on the terms for the termination of membership, the prevention of conflict of interests, in addition to the immunity of members, and not to reproach them for the opinions and ideas

they express in matters that fall within the mandate of the NIHR, and the immunity of the Institution's headquarters.

4. The Council of Commissioners also adopted the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Council of Commissioners of the NIHR. This aims to establish ethical standards and instill the values and principles that pertain to the Council's membership, through displaying work ethics of members while undertaking their duties and the rights arising from this membership.
5. The Code of Conduct focuses on seven basic principles that are the essence of ethical duties of the conduct of members of the Council of Commissioners during their term of membership in the NIHR and even after its termination, as follows:
 - Respect for the law: abide by the NIHR's governing legal norms in accordance with the laws, regulations, or bylaws and instructions issued thereunder and in force in the Kingdom of Bahrain;
 - Neutrality: commitment to complete impartiality in dealing with the public, and avoid factionalism and special interests and concerns when providing services;
 - Integrity: must preserve and strengthen the confidence of the constitutional authorities and the public, assert the integrity of the NIHR, uphold public interest, and must not use the membership for purposes other than those intended for it. In addition, the general interest of the NIHR should prevail over personal interests in the event of a conflict between these interests arises;
 - Equality: offer all the services provided by the NIHR to all citizens and residents, without discrimination between them on the grounds of gender, origin, language, religion or creed;
 - Diligence: utmost care to perform the duties truthfully, honestly, and with dedication, and to be free of any considerations that might prejudice it, while adhering to the values of transparency and integrity, and carry out all duties required by the nature of work, in addition to duties imposed by the law, regulations and instructions of the NIHR;
 - Confidentiality: Adherence to professional confidentiality with regard to work secrets or the private details of the beneficiaries of NIHR services, which was accessed by virtue of work, and not to disclose or use such information informally, other than as is stipulated by law;
 - Efficiency: ensure that public funds of the NIHR are not squandered, misused or used for purposes other than those designated for, with the need to manage all forms of available resources in a way that leads to

the preservation of general revenues while ensuring effective and high-quality service delivery.

6. The Code of Conduct also highlighted that the members shall not solicit, accept or take any gifts, directly or indirectly, to perform a task entrusted to them, or refrain from performing it. Members shall not accept any benefits that may have an impact on the exercise of their tasks, the performance of their duties, or on their decisions. In addition, members shall refrain from accepting a promise of such things and from placing themselves under any financial or other obligation that may have such an effect.
7. To implement Paragraph (a) of Article No (5) of the Law establishing the NIHR, which states that, “**Members of the Council of Commissioners shall be appointed by a Royal Order,**” Royal Order No (22) of 2021 was issued appointing the members of the Council of Commissioners of the NIHR. The Royal Order took effect on 9 May 2021, and included the appointment of 11 members, of which four were appointed as full-time members, five as part-time members, and two members represented the legislative authority from the House of Representatives and the Shura Council. From among the full-time and part-time members, five women members were appointed by the Royal Order, of which one is a full-time member. The term of membership for all members is four years, subject to renewal.
8. In implementation of Paragraph (b) of Article No (5) of the NIHR’s establishment Law stipulating that the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are to be elected from among the members of the Council of Commissioners in the first meeting. The Council of Commissioners held its first procedural meeting on Monday, 10 May 2021, during which the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson were elected. Engineer Ali Ahmed Alderazi won the Chair of the Council of Commissioners by acclamation, while Mr. Khaled Abdulaziz Alshaer won the position of Vice Chairperson.⁸

⁸ Resume of members- in Arabic <https://www.nihr.org.bh/Organisation/CommissionerMain>
<https://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/Organisation/CommissionerMain> in English

الرئيس
Chairman



المهندس علي أحمد الدرازي
Eng. Ali Ahmed Alderazi

لجنة الشكاوى والرصد والمتابعة
Complaint, Monitoring & Follow-up Committee



السيد خالد الشاعر
Mr. Khaled Alshaer
نائب الرئيس - رئيس اللجنة
Vice-chairman, Head



الدكتورة حورية حسن
Dr. Hooreya Hasan
عضو - Member



السيدة روضة العرادي
Mrs. Rawdha Alaradi
عضو - Member



السيدة هالة فايز
Mrs. Hala Fayez
عضو - Member

لجنة الحقوق والحريات العامة
General Rights and Freedoms Committee



الدكتورة فوزية الصالح
Dr. Fawzeya Alsaleh
رئيسة اللجنة - Head



الدكتور بدر عادل
Dr. Bader Adel
عضو - Member



السيد أحمد السلوم
Mr. Ahmed Alsaloom
عضو - Member

لجنة زيارة أماكن الاحتجاز والمرافق
Detention & Facilities Visitation Committee



الدكتور مال الله الحمادي
Dr. Malallah Alhammadi
رئيس اللجنة - Head



المحامية دينا اللطي
Lawyer. Deena Alladhi
عضو - Member



السيد مارك كوهين
Mr. Daniel Cohen
عضو - Member

اللجان النوعية الدائمة

-

Standing Committees

Requirement Two Specific Standing Committees of the NIHR

1. Pursuant to Paragraph (a) of Article No (7) of the NIHR’s establishment Law, which stipulates that, **“the Council of Commissioners shall form standing Committees from its members to undertake the institution functions. It may form ad-hoc Committees, if necessary.”** Accordingly, Article No (32) of the Rules of Procedure on Regulating the Function of the Council of Commissioners of the National Institution for Human Rights⁹ stipulated that, **“Three standing committees shall be formed in the Institution to assume the Institution’s functions, namely: Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee, General Rights and Freedoms Committee, and Detention and Facilities Visitation Committee.”**
2. The Rules of Procedure clarified that the number of members of each standing committee must not be less than three, provided no member shall be allowed to head more than one committee. Article No (36) of the Rules of Procedure stipulates that, **“At its first meeting, each committee shall elect its Head from among its members... for a period of one year, renewable for similar terms.”** Also, Article No (39) of the Rules of Procedure stipulated that, **“The Committees shall meet at least once a month...”**
3. The Rules of Procedure on Regulating the Function of the Council of Commissioners entrusted the standing committees with a number of tasks and responsibilities, as follows:
 - a) **Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee**
 - To receive, assess, and consider complaints and grievances related to human rights made by citizens, residents and organizations through various means, and to determine the best way to deal with.
 - To inform concerned citizens and residents of procedures to be followed if there is a complaint and to provide them with the required legal assistance, or to assist in resolving the complaint with the concerned authorities.

⁹ Rules of Procedure on Regulating the Function of the Council of Commissioners. In Arabic https://www.nihr.org.bh/Organisation/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/PDF/Procedures_ARB2020.pdf In English https://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/documents/PDF/Procedures_ENG2020.pdf

- To monitor and investigate the human rights situation in the Kingdom, through the media, social media or otherwise, and study or research to determine the best ways to deal with them.
- To transfer what the institution sees as referral of complaints, legal assistance and monitoring cases that have been identified to the competent authorities through the Chairperson and follow-up effectively.
- To consider the complaints referred by the Detention & Facilities Visitation Committee from detained persons in correctional and rehabilitation institutions, pre-trial detention, and detention centers, and to refer to the Detention and Facilities Visitation Committee to take the necessary action.
- To coordinate trial hearings, court proceedings to ensure fair trial guarantees, and to take necessary action to finalize attendance reports.
- To request information or data from any competent authorities in the Kingdom during the institution exercise of its mandate, through the Chairperson.
- To recommend to develop a guide on receiving complaints and the provided legal assistance, the mechanism for monitoring human rights situations and providing insights on facilitating the work of the Committee through the electronic complaints system.
- To prepare statistics on complaints received by the institution, legal assistance provided and cases of monitoring through the media and social media, indicating the actions taken.
- To contribute in the preparation of the draft parallel reports that the Kingdom undertakes to submit periodically, and to make observations thereon, as related to regional or international conventions pertaining to human rights.
- Any other competency referred to the Committee by the Chairperson, or the Council Bureau, or the Council of Commissioners.

b) General Rights and Freedoms Committee

- To prepare proposals and recommendations on any measures that would promote and protect civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and submit them to the Council of Commissioners to take the necessary action.

- To express opinion on issues related to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, which are referred to the Committee by the Chairperson or the Council Bureau or by the Council of Commissioners.
- To study and evaluate the progress made in the exercise of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in the Kingdom and make observations thereon for development in accordance with regional and international standards, in coordination with the concerned competent authorities.
- To examine the consistency of the legislative and regulatory provisions with the regional and international conventions on human rights issues, submit proposals and recommendations on any matter that would promote and protect human rights, including the recommendation to accede to regional and international conventions on civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and review the reservations made by the Kingdom on some of the provisions of the conventions to which it had already acceded.
- To study the legislation and regulations in force in the Kingdom on civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and recommend the appropriate amendments, and to express its views on the alignment of this legislation with international human rights standards, making the necessary proposals on such, and recommend new human rights legislation.
- To contribute in the preparation of the draft parallel reports that the Kingdom undertakes to submit periodically, and to make observations thereon, as related to regional or international conventions pertaining to human rights.
- Any other competency referred to the Committee by the Chairperson, or the Council Bureau, or the Council of Commissioners.

c) Detention & Facilities Visitation Committee

- To conduct announced and unannounced field visits, to monitor human rights situation in correctional and rehabilitation institutions, detention centers, labor gatherings, health and education centers, or any other public place in which it is suspected that human rights violations might take place, and to prepare the appropriate reports.
- Prepare reports on the status of persons deprived of their liberty within correctional and rehabilitation institutions and detention centers, on a

regular basis, and make necessary observations and recommendations.

- To refer to the Complain, Monitoring and follow-up Committee the Committee's observations during its visits to correctional and rehabilitation institutions and detention centers, as well as the complaints from persons deprived of their liberty in such institutions and centers.
- To review the national legislations concerning the reform of the correctional and rehabilitation institutions, and the related regulations and resolutions, propose appropriate recommendations thereon. Follow-up the implementation of the relevant international conventions and treaties, and formulate the proposals, recommendations, and observations necessary for the proper application of such, and submit them to the Chairperson or the Commission Bureau, or the Council of Commissioners.
- To contribute in the preparation of the draft parallel reports that the Kingdom undertakes to submit periodically, and to make observations thereon, in implementation of the relevant regional or international conventions.
- Any other competency referred to the Committee by the Chairperson, or the Council Bureau, or the Council of Commissioners.

Requirement Three Secretariat of the NIHR¹⁰

1. Article No (15) of the law establishing the NIHR stipulates that, **“the administrative body of the Institution shall consist of a General Secretariat, which shall act as its executive organ and a sufficient number of consultants, experts, researchers and other staff shall be in the General Secretariat. They shall be appointed by a resolution of the Chairperson based on the recommendation of the Secretary General.”**
2. In addition, Article No (17) of the law establishing the NIHR defines the responsibilities of the Secretary General, where **"The Secretary General shall supervise and oversee the affairs of the General Secretariat. (He/She) shall be directly responsible to the Chairperson for the performance of these duties, which shall include:**
 - a) **General supervision over the General Secretariat, the affairs of the employees, and financial and administrative matters in accordance with this Law and the rules and regulations promulgated in implementation of it.**
 - b) **Attendance at meetings of the Council of Commissioners, without having the right to vote, and the implementation of its decisions, as well as the the drafting of periodic reports every three months, which incorporate the activities of the Institution and the work of the General Secretariat, including which work has been completed according with to plans and programs.**
 - c) **Attendance at meetings of the Committees, following up on their work, and giving them the requisite support to pursue their specialisms, without having the right to vote.**

The Secretary General may delegate in writing any of (his/her) tasks and responsibilities to employees in the General Secretariat.”

¹⁰ In Arabic <https://www.nihr.org.bh/Organisation/SecretariatGeneral>
In English <https://www.nihr.org.bh/EN/Organisation/SecretariatGeneral>

Chapter Two

Progress Achieved in Human Rights Situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Preface and Partitioning:

1. The NIHR asserts that its annual and special reports, as well as the legislative, executive or judicial recommendations related to human rights and fundamental freedoms contained therein, certainly constitute a positive factor towards greater respect, promotion and protection of human rights in the national system. Keen to carry forward and advance the recommendations it reached in its annual and special reports, the NIHR disseminated them widely in the various available media. In addition, it obtained the views of ministries and official bodies on those recommendations and the extent to which they could be realistically implemented, or the progress made in their implementation.
2. In view of the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in curbing the exercise of some basic human rights and freedoms, it has become imperative for ministries and official bodies to shift towards digitization to provide their services in an electronic format. On the one hand, this facilitates the delivery of public services to individuals, and on the other hand, it guarantees the enjoyment by individuals of their established rights. This prompted the NIHR to monitor the efforts made by these ministries and agencies to ensure digital transformation and enhance the enjoyment of the various related rights and freedoms.
3. Thus, this Chapter of the report includes two main topics. The first topic addresses the views and opinions of ministries and government bodies regarding the NIHR's recommendations contained in its Sixth Annual Report of 2018, and its Seventh Annual Report of 2019, in addition to the recommendations of the special report on Observing the Parliamentary and Municipal Elections of 2018.
4. The second topic deals with the extent of digital transformation in the government services sector and its impact on the human rights situation. It presents the efforts made by the various service sectors, including the legal and judicial, diplomatic and consular, educational, health, housing, and others sectors related to labor and social development, nationality, passports, and residence affairs, traffic, and customs.

First Topi
- Follow-up on the NIHR's Recommendations Contained in its Annual Reports for the Years 2018 and 2019

Preface:

1. In its enduring keenness to follow up on its recommendations contained in its annual and special reports, given that these recommendations and their substance form a road map towards further promotion and protection of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The NIHR addressed the relevant ministries and government bodies to obtain their views on the recommendations, the extent to which such can be implemented, and the progress made in their implementation.
2. Accordingly, the NIHR has addressed (16) ministries and government bodies to obtain their views regarding the recommendations contained in its annual reports for the years 2018 and 2019. These bodies are as follows:
 1. Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf)
 2. Ministry of Labor and Social Development
 3. Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism
 4. Ministry of Health
 5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Higher Coordinating Committee for Human Rights)
 6. Ministry of Education
 7. Ministry of Information Affairs
 8. Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning
 9. Ministry of Housing
 10. Labor Market Regulatory Authority
 11. The National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons
 12. King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence
 13. Labor Fund (Tamkeen)
 14. National Audit Office
 15. Public Prosecution
 16. The Supreme Council for the Environment

In addition, the House of Representatives and the Shura Council were informed of the recommendations of a legislative nature.

3. The NIHR thanks the 13 ministries and official bodies that interacted with its requests; their responses contributed to clarifying their roles in protecting and promoting human rights in the Kingdom. The NIHR have not received responses from three agencies, namely the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, the Labor Market Regulatory Authority, and the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons during the timeframe for preparing this report; if such responses are received later, they will be incorporated in the annual report for next year 2022.
4. The NIHR also extends its gratitude to His Excellency the Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Supreme Committee for General Supervision of the Safety of Elections as regards his reply on the NIHR's recommendations contained in its report on Observing the Parliamentary and Municipal Elections of 2018, which is included in the topic, the third requirement.
5. It is worth noting that the total recommendations concluded by the NIHR in its Sixth Annual Report for the year 2018 amounted to (23) recommendations. These recommendations were among three main issues; (9) recommendations pertained to the right to work, a decent life, and equality; (6) recommendations were connected with the right to an adequate and healthy environment; and (8) recommendations were about promotion of justice and the rule of law.
6. Moreover, the NIHR concluded in its Seventh Annual Report for the year 2019 with (33) recommendations on issues that are of particular concern. Seven (7) recommendations pertain to the implications of environmental pollution and climate change on human rights. Ten (10) recommendations address the impact of promoting the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence on human rights. In addition, (8) recommendations tackle the right to equal treatment of the elderly, and (8) recommendations concern the protection of the rights of expatriate workers.

Requirement One
Recommendations Contained in the NIHR's Sixth Annual Report for the year 2018

Section One: The right to work, decent life, and equality

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Take action to develop a plan and a timetable through which jobs will be nationalized (Bahrainized) in the various sectors where there are abundant national cadres.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply from the competent authority during the timeframe of this report.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Link the training and qualification programs with the labor market requirements and needs for high school or university graduates or job seekers.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply from the competent authority during the timeframe of this report.

- **Summary of the Labor Fund (Tamkeen) reply to NIHR:**

It stated that, according to the objectives set forth in its establishment law, it has launched a range of programs to support employment, training, and stipend support for Bahrainis after linking them to the requirements and qualifications of high school and university graduates, and job seekers, in an effort to meet the needs and requirements of the labor market. Thus, the efficiency, productivity and competitiveness of Bahraini workers will be enhanced in the labor market. The Labor Fund asserted that it values the above recommendation and stated its continuing readiness to collaborate further in implementing the recommendation in accordance with the laws and regulations in force in this regard.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Create alternative and prompt measures and procedures for employers who are going through difficult conditions that prevent them from paying workers' wages to ensure maintaining their standard of living and that their right to decent work is not affected and sustained.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply from the competent authority during the timeframe of this report.

- **Summary of the Labor Fund (Tamkeen) reply to NIHR:**

The same response as that stated in the previous recommendation No (2).

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Make greater efforts to improve wages and job incentives commensurate with a decent standard of living and its sustainability for future generations.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply from the competent authority during the timeframe of this report.

- **Summary of the Labor Fund (Tamkeen) reply to NIHR:**

The same response as that stated in the previous recommendation No (2).

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Raise public awareness about the right to equality, non-discrimination, and the need to reduce the lack of awareness across all educational institutions, including schools, universities, private colleges, religious circles and military colleges, to ensure the enjoyment of all human rights.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Education reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that it is promoting and raising public awareness of the concept of equality and non-discrimination by incorporating it in the educational curricula, with a total of (23) lessons distributed over the various academic levels. This includes fourth, fifth and sixth grades of primary school; first, second and third preparatory grades; and tenth and eleventh grades of secondary school.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Take on developing a timetable to address and respond to the applications for housing services that have been filed five or more years ago by developing partnerships with the private banking and real estate sector and draw up suitable solutions and alternatives.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Housing reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it has encouraged citizens eligible for housing services to benefit from the immediate services and programs, such as the purchase and construction financing service and the Mazaya program. These services and programs enable the citizen to obtain adequate housing in a short period not exceeding six months without having to wait to benefit from the housing unit ownership service. In addition, the ministry is currently examining ways to increase the segment eligible for immediate services by expanding the financing options as an alternative to the traditional housing service.

(7) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Involve the beneficiaries of the provided housing service- once it is allocated to them- in developing the concept of the housing unit to be tailored to meet their family condition and living needs.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Housing reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that in 2013 it did a survey of citizens whose names are on the waiting lists, to learn about their needs and opinions on the planning of housing areas and the design of housing units. In addition, it pursues to get the feedback from the segment entitled to the housing service by means of a proactive questionnaire as part of the work system to be able to improve its services in line with the aspirations of the citizens.

(8) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Grant facilities to producers and exporters of construction and real estate development materials and supplies, which reduce the cost of real estate projects and make them affordable to all according to the financial resources of individuals.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that the scope of the recommendation is outside of its competence.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Housing reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that, although granting facilities to producers and exporters of building materials and supplies for real estate development falls within the jurisdiction of another body, it seeks to ensure that citizens obtain adequate housing. This is done through cooperating with the private sector, by granting them the privilege of developing governmental or private lands to provide housing units that are suitable for the eligible segment according to approved models and at competitive prices that enable the beneficiary of the financing housing services to obtain an appropriate housing unit.

(9) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Engage the largest number of beneficiaries of housing applications in (Mazaya) project without taking into consideration the salary or age of the beneficiary, provided the real criterion to be considered is the need for the housing service while taking into consideration the change in living standards in the community.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Housing reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that it had proposed the concept of Mazaya program, which is based on contributing to support the monthly installment of the finances that benefit the citizens from the participating commercial/Islamic banks. According to this project, the citizen chooses the suitable property for himself and his family in line with the specified criteria, and then chooses the financing bank to disburse the funding, if the monthly deduction does not exceed one quarter of the beneficiary's income.
- b) Mazaya Program is subject to the regulations and requirements of banks as a primary partner in this service, provided that the maximum age limit for the acceptance of the application is from (35) years to (60) years - that is, reaching retirement age- for a repayment period extending to (25) years. The competent authority provides other financing services, namely a purchase financing service and a construction financing service, which allows the eligible citizen for housing services to apply from the age of (21) years as a minimum to the age of (50) years as a maximum.

Section Two: The right to a safe and suitable environment

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Enact a new comprehensive and integral law on environment to provide the necessary protection for the different types of environmental issues, whether related to land, marine or climate change.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

This recommendation has not been answered.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Council stated that the substance of the recommendation has been achieved in practice. It explained that the government, composed of the competent authority and the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Shura and Representatives Councils, has been involved in drafting an environmental bill, in line with modern legislation, for the purpose of preserving the environment, protecting natural resources, and sustainable development, in conformity with international environmental conventions and treaties.
- b) It clarified that the government has submitted the draft law (bill) and presented it to the House of Representatives, and it was referred to the Shura Council after voting on it. On the last day of the previous session (the third session of the fifth legislative term), the Shura Council returned the draft law to the Council of Representatives to consider some articles. It is hoped that this draft law will be approved, submitted to His Majesty the King to be ratified and published in the Official Gazette to enter into force.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Update and disseminate the national environment strategy, and conduct national consultations with the constitutional authorities, civil society institutions, academics and environmental rights defenders during all stages of the formulation of this strategy.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry did not provide a reply on this recommendation.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

The Council reported that it had published the National Strategy for the Environment on its website. In addition, there are other national strategies related to the right to a safe and suitable environment, such as the National Strategy for Air Quality, the National Strategy for Waste Management, and the National Strategy for the Gradual Phase-out of Ozone Depleting Substances.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Establish a public prosecution unit specialized in environment, whose task is to initiate criminal proceedings on behalf of the society before the competent courts, with the aim of enhancing the role of the inspectors of the Supreme Council for Environment who are granted the status of law enforcement officers under the law to carry out their required roles.

- **Summary of the Public Prosecution reply to NIHR:**

The Public Prosecution stated that according to the Attorney General's resolution No (15) of 2007, there exists, within its structure, a specialized prosecution for the ministries' and public authorities' cases. In turn, it is competent to apply special criminal laws and the implementing regulations and decisions with regard to crimes regulated by these laws, and it has a section that deals with environmental crimes. The specialized prosecution exercises the powers of the competent authority for the initiation of criminal proceedings and prosecution of the cases before the courts.

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

The competent authorities need to urgently sort, treat or recycle the waste disposed of in Askar landfill.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it is working within the framework of the National Strategy for Waste Management of 2019, which includes (180) recommendations. The Ministry is in the process of reviewing the Strategy to strengthen and update it. Accordingly, two recycling facilities have been established. The first is the construction and demolition waste recycling facility, which has contributed to reducing 30-40% of the waste received by the landfill since its commissioning in the Askar area in 2019. The second facility is the pilot plant in Hawrat A'ali for green waste recycling.

In addition, there are more than 250 sorting containers distributed in all governorates of the Kingdom and are supervised by the contracted cleaning companies that provide collection and cleaning services.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Council stated that it is working with the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning within the framework of the National Strategy for Waste Management to find sustainable solutions for certain types of waste that are disposed of in the Askar landfill. A national company was contracted to recycle construction and demolition waste, which represents around (33%) of municipal waste. Moreover, an integrated draft policy has been prepared to ensure the proper management of the used tires received at Askar landfill site amounting to approximately (9,000) tons in 2020.
- b) In addition to the above, the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning has contracted an international company to develop waste disposal procedures at Askar Municipal Waste Landfill and increase the lifespan of the landfill. In addition, a licensed consulting company has been contracted to conduct a financial and technical study on the waste-to-energy project.

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

The need to relocate promptly Askar Landfill to another area, due to increased urban sprawl and the construction of new cities close to the landfill location.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that the landfill is approaching end of its useful life and that a plan exists to monitor air quality, emissions and environmental standards in the current landfill, as the management and operation of the landfill has been privatized by contracting a specialized European company. The Ministry also indicated that it is studying together with the Urban Planning and Development Authority the construction of a new-engineered landfill that meets environmental, urban and health requirements for human safety.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

The Council reported that transferring waste from the current landfill to another site is not a logical option because an alternative and suitable site for the transfer of such waste does not exist, as well as the high cost of transportation and rehabilitation of the site. Therefore, in implementation of the National Waste Strategy, the competent authority together with the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning are working on a number of options that achieve sustainability and reduce the reliance on backfilling.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Develop and conduct additional awareness-raising and education programs by governmental bodies and civil society organizations targeting individuals and the public on the importance of waste reduction, particularly non-recyclable or non-degradable solid and plastic wastes, and shifting to the use of alternative environmentally friendly materials, considering that the volume of generated waste has begun to exceed the world's average rates.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that awareness programs are constantly being carried out through the various platforms of the competent authority and solid waste and cleaning companies. The contracts with these companies include special provisions on information and awareness programs, in addition to shifting to biodegradable waste bags for municipal affairs as an alternative to the non-biodegradable plastic bags that were distributed previously to citizens and were included in the municipality's due fees. In addition, the competent authority has approved a new administration for the management of household waste, which will be restructured in 2022, to include a unit specialized in awareness and a sustainability center concerned with this in partnership with the private sector (cleaning companies).

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Council reported that several awareness lectures accompanying the projects implemented by the Supreme Council for Environment were presented targeting the public and private sectors, as well as other lectures aimed at consolidating environmental concepts, encouraging a change in the consumption pattern, and adopting the concept of responsible production and

consumption. More than (46) lectures were presented during the year 2019.

- b) Furthermore, the Council conducted a number of awareness programs for a number of entities, such as Al-Amal Special Education Institute, the Green Environment Program for the employees of the Ministry of Interior, the joint program with the Supreme Council for Women on the role of women and the family in the preservation of the environment, and the Environmental Exhibition in cooperation with Gulf Air. In addition, scientific materials, educational publications, and electronic boards were prepared and published through various media platforms aiming to open channels of support of outreach and awareness programs.

Section Three: Promotion of justice and the rule of law

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call for legislative amendments to the law concerning Financial and Administrative Audit Office (National Audit Office (NAO)) established by Decree-Law No. (16) of 2002, as amended, to grant the Office the right to refer irregularities and anomalies in the NAO's annual reports to the Public Prosecution for the purpose of initiating criminal proceedings against the perpetrators.

- **Summary of the National Audit Office reply to NIHR:**

The NAO stated that there is no serious and realistic justification for the amendment called for by the NIHR in its recommendation, because the competent authority, in accordance with Article No (11) of its Law issued by Decree-Law No. (16) of 2002, as amended, refers violations and irregularities to the Public Prosecution to initiate criminal cases, if there exists substantial evidence of a criminal offense.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call for issuing a new inclusive law that regulates issues related to electoral propaganda (campaigning) and the role of the various media and social media in the entire electoral process.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that the legislative system in the Kingdom of Bahrain is replete with legislative provisions regulating media and

electoral campaigns. Decree-Law No (15) of 2002 regarding the Shura and Representatives Councils regulates the controls that a candidate must abide by during his/her candidature. In addition, it regulates the illicit actions to be avoided during his/her electoral propaganda and imposes a parity requirement on the media in dealing with candidates, without ignoring the imposition of fines and imprisonment on anyone who violates the provisions stipulated in the above-mentioned Law.

- b) In addition to the above, Law No. (60) of 2014 concerning Information Technology Crimes contained provisions that ensure the criminalization of various types of crimes that may be committed using means of communication and other electronic means. Decree-Law No. (47) of 2002 also regulates the various provisions related to printing, publishing and the press, as well as criminalizing acts committed by publishing in newspapers. In addition to the above, the Minister of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning issues the necessary decisions to regulate advertising.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Work towards the issuance of a law on insolvency in line with international standards and operational practices, to deal with insolvency of individuals, enable them to get out of default, and develop effective mechanisms to cooperate with the insolvent debtor.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that, in an effort to foster greater confidence in the economic and financial system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Law No. (22) of 2018 concerning Reorganization and Bankruptcy was issued. The Law maximized the value of bankrupt estates by encouraging the reorganization of the debtor over liquidation whenever possible, while ensuring equitable distribution to creditors and equal treatment. The law does not omit establishing effective mechanisms to cooperate with the insolvent debtor and to facilitate his affairs while ensuring the right to maintain the confidentiality of information, data, and accounts.
- b) In addition to the foregoing, the law organized the decision to initiate bankruptcy proceedings and staying proceedings in lawsuits, legal proceedings, and execution on the bankruptcy assets or against the debtor. In addition, the Law provided for straightforward and quick

provisions regulating small debtors, as well as forming a committee to support small and medium-sized enterprises by providing the necessary financial support. This issue is dealt with by issuing Decree-Law No. (22) of 2021 concerning the new implementation law in civil and commercial matters.

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call for issuing a comprehensive and integrated national strategy for the promotion and protection of human rights through the involvement of constitutional authorities, public and private institutions, civil society organizations, the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), and human rights defenders.

Summary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Higher Coordinating Committee for Human Rights) reply to NIHR:

The Higher Coordinating Committee stated that it has already started the process of preparing the National Plan for Human Rights after conducting extensive consultations with stakeholders. This resulted in more than (300) recommendations and insights made by the participants from government and private agencies, members of the legislative and judicial authorities, law enforcement officials, the media, the press, United Nations agencies, and others.

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Develop a comprehensive national strategy aimed at combating and preventing the crime of trafficking in persons by the “National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons”. Such strategy should include, in particular, measures to prevent such crime, protect its victims, and seek the punishment of the perpetrators, and to address the evolving practices in the patterns of such crime.

- **Summary of the Labor Market Regulatory Authority (National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons) reply to NIHR**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Take the necessary measure to ensure that the NIHR, which has a broad mandate for the promotion and protection of human rights, is represented in the “National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons”.

- **Summary of the Labor Market Regulatory Authority (National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons) reply to NIHR**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(7) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call on the social centers operating in the governorates of the Kingdom and the family reconciliation offices, to pay more attention and care in the education and awareness of individuals who are going to get married and victims of domestic violence on issues related to violence and the procedures to be followed in the event such crimes take place.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that Article No (3) of resolution No. (84) of 2015 regarding the formation of the Family Reconciliation Office has established the rules and procedures necessary to settle family disputes. Initially, amicable settlement is sought to preserve the family's entity and find ways to resolve the differences and the causes of discord and disagreement between family members. However, educating individuals who are about to get married is outside the scope of these offices, and it has been mandated by law to other specialized centers and bodies.
- b) The Second Article of Law No. (17) of 2015 regarding Protection against Domestic Violence established the Family Guidance Department in the Ministry concerned with social development affairs, to provide awareness services in the field of domestic violence and take the necessary measures to reduce it. In addition to the above, resolution No. (96) of 2021 was issued to regulate Mediation in family matters, which enables the parties to a dispute to resort to a mediator to help them reach an agreement that involves ending family disputes.

(8) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Incorporate in the curricula of public and private schools topics on family protection from domestic violence in all of its types and forms, and the due procedures to follow should it occur.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Education reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it included topics pertaining to protecting the family from violence in all its forms and the procedures to be followed if it occurs in educational curricula. There is a total of (23) lessons distributed over the various academic levels. This includes fourth, fifth and sixth grades of primary school; first, second and third preparatory grades; and tenth and eleventh grades of secondary school, in order to fully operationalize the National Strategy to Protect Women from Domestic Violence launched by the Kingdom through the Supreme Council for Women, as well as to actuate the relevant sustainable development goals.

Requirement Two

Recommendations Contained in the NIHR's Seventh Annual Report for the year 2019

Section One: Environmental impact and climate change in human rights

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call on the competent authorities to review relevant environmental laws and regulations in force and make the necessary amendments thereon, in a manner consistent with environmental changes and emerging issues. Alternatively, enact a comprehensive and integrated law on the environment to provide for the necessary protection of all types of environmental issues, whether it is land, marine, or those related to climate change.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry did not provide a reply on this recommendation.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Council stated that the substance of the recommendation has been achieved in practice. It explained that the government, composed of the competent authority and the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Shura and Representatives Councils, has been involved in drafting an environmental bill, in line with modern legislation, for the purpose of preserving the environment, protecting natural resources, and sustainable development, in conformity with international environmental conventions and treaties.
- b) It clarified that the government has submitted the draft law (bill) and presented it to the House of Representatives, and it was referred to the Shura Council after voting on it. On the last day of the previous session (the third session of the fifth legislative term), the Shura Council returned the draft law to the Council of Representatives to consider some articles. It is hoped that this draft law will be approved, submitted to His Majesty the King to be ratified and published in the Official Gazette to enter into force.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Update and publish the National Environment Strategy, and conduct national consultations with the constitutional authorities, civil society organizations, academics, and defenders of environmental rights throughout the course of drafting it.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry did not provide a reply on this recommendation.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

The Council reported that it had published the National Strategy for the Environment on its website. In addition, there are other national strategies related to the right to a safe and suitable environment, such as the National Strategy for Air Quality, the National Strategy for Waste Management, and the National Strategy for the Gradual Phase-out of Ozone Depleting Substances.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Start a comprehensive publicity on how everyone can contribute to the optimal implementation of the National Waste Management Strategy, and include in it projects, policies, and programs on the mechanisms to handle hazardous waste that is being dumped in Hafira landfill.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The competent authority reported that there is a national committee and technical working groups to follow up the implementation of the national strategy for waste management. The strategy also includes policies and projects, a number of which have been activated, and the strategy is currently under review. As for hazardous waste, it is dumped in the Hafira landfill, which is overseen by the Supreme Council for Environment. Regarding Askar landfill/ Hafira, it is dedicated for solid municipal only and does not receive any hazardous waste. Most of the rejected wastes are of doubtful nature and suspected to be hazardous, the Supreme Council for Environment must first approve its entry to Askar landfill.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

The Council stated that the substance of the recommendation is not within its mandate.

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Renew the call for the establishment of a public prosecution specialized in environment, whose mission is to initiate criminal proceedings on behalf of the community before the courts specialized in all kinds of environmental issues.

- **Summary of the Public Prosecution reply to NIHR:**

The Public Prosecution stated that according to the Attorney General's resolution No (15) of 2007, there exists, within its structure, a specialized prosecution for the ministries' and public authorities' cases. In turn, it is competent to apply special criminal laws and the implementing regulations and decisions with regard to crimes regulated by these laws, and it has a section that deals with environmental crimes. The specialized prosecution exercises the powers of the competent authority for the initiation of criminal proceedings and prosecution of the cases before the courts.

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Deal, as appropriate, with any administrative or legal transgressions or violations conducted by natural or legal persons, whether public (official) or private, performing acts or refraining from acts required by laws, by-laws, regulations, and decisions in force related to environmental protection.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry did not provide a reply on this recommendation.

- **Summary of the Public Prosecution reply to NIHR:**

The Public Prosecution stated that according to the Attorney General's resolution No (15) of 2007, there exists, within its structure, a specialized prosecution for the ministries' and public authorities' cases. In turn, it is competent to apply special criminal laws and the implementing regulations and decisions with regard to crimes regulated by these laws, and it has a section that deals with environmental crimes. The specialized prosecution exercises the powers of the competent authority for the initiation of criminal proceedings and prosecution of the cases before the courts.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

The Council stated that, according to the general and constitutional rule, “there is no crime or punishment except as defined by law” (*Nullum crimen sine lege*); and since the competent authority is the one implementing the environment law and the regulating decisions issued thereunder; thus, the law enforcement officers affiliated to the Council, who are qualified inspectors granted the status of judicial police under the law and pursuant to the resolution of the Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, are the ones who receive notifications and ascertain violations resulting from breaching the environment law or decisions issued in this regard, and refer the reports to the competent prosecution and from there to the competent court according to the type of violation committed.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority’s reply to NIHR:

Carry out additional awareness and educational programs by official authorities and civil society organizations targeting individuals and the public on the importance of reducing waste, especially solid waste and non-biodegradable non-recyclable plastic materials, and resorting to environmentally friendly alternative materials.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that awareness programs are constantly being carried out through the various platforms of the competent authority and solid waste and cleaning companies. The contracts with these companies include special provisions on information and awareness programs, in addition to shifting to biodegradable waste bags for municipal affairs as an alternative to the non-biodegradable plastic bags that were distributed previously to citizens and were included in the municipality’s due fees. In addition, the competent authority has approved a new administration for the management of household waste, which will be restructured in 2022, to include a unit specialized in awareness and a sustainability center concerned with this in partnership with the private sector (cleaning companies).

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Council reported that several awareness lectures accompanying the projects implemented by the Supreme Council

for Environment were presented targeting the public and private sectors, as well as other lectures aimed at consolidating environmental concepts, encouraging a change in the consumption pattern, and adopting the concept of responsible production and consumption. More than (46) lectures were presented during the year 2019.

- b) Furthermore, the Council conducted a number of awareness programs for a number of entities, such as Al-Amal Special Education Institute, the Green Environment Program for the employees of the Ministry of Interior, the joint program with the Supreme Council for Women on the role of women and the family in the preservation of the environment, and the Environmental Exhibition in cooperation with Gulf Air. In addition, scientific materials, educational publications, and electronic boards were prepared and published through various media platforms aiming to open channels of support of outreach and awareness programs.

(7) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call upon the competent authorities to raise, on an ongoing basis, the awareness of anglers on the safer methods for fishing shrimp that preserve the environment, and at the same time do not negatively affect their income.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs, and Urban Planning reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry did not provide a reply on this recommendation.

- **Summary of the Supreme Council for Environment reply to NIHR:**

The Council stated that the substance of the recommendation is not within its mandate.

Section Two: Human rights and promotion of the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call upon the competent authorities to include the terms "tolerance and peaceful coexistence between sects and religions" in the provisions of the Penal Code, and other complementary laws that criminalize the acts that encroach upon these values.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that the protection of sects and religions is guaranteed and firmly regulated under the provisions of the Penal Code, specifically Chapter Seven. Articles (309-315) of the same Law criminalize a number of acts that would undermine the promotion of the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, such as assaulting a religion, expressing contempt for religious rites, deliberately disturbing worship rituals having religious sanctity, violating the sanctity of graves, and disrupting or obstructing funerals or obsequies.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Consolidate the culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in the educational curricula at all stages, incorporate its concepts into teaching plans, and include them in courses of study, with a focus on the practical aspect.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Education reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it has included topics related to the promotion and consolidation of a culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in all educational curricula. A total of (30) lessons are distributed over the different academic levels, to include first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth primary grades, and first, second and third preparatory grades, as well as tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades of secondary school.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Implement more guidance programs to build up a culture of tolerance and human goodwill among students within schools and universities, and encourage dialogue among them in order to promote coexistence and social peace.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Education reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that it has implemented many projects and programs that encourage dialogue and promote peaceful and social coexistence. In its response, it attached a list of (25) projects and programs that have been implemented regarding the recommendation.

- **Summary of the Board of Trustees of King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence reply to NIHR:**

The competent authority stated that it is in the process of cooperating with the Ministry of Education to allocate a special chapter under the umbrella of the Center and within the citizenship syllabuses for all public schools. The purpose is to spread a culture of tolerance among young people and youth through a curriculum, that consolidates the noble human values that have shaped the fabric of Bahraini society since ancient times, and move away from all forms of violence, hatred, sectarianism and intolerance.

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Launch press and electronic channels and institutions specialized in building a culture of tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and acceptance of the other and link it to human rights, in multiple languages, directed to every segment of society.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Information Affairs reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that it is committed to the substance of the recommendation through developing the role of the national media through broadcasting outlets to reflect the Bahraini community with all its components in accordance with the Code of Honor for Audio-Visual Media and the Media Conduct of Conduct of 2012. Programs, episodes, television interviews, and news reports about the Kingdom's efforts to instill tolerance and peaceful coexistence between religions in foreign languages, which contribute to the promotion of human rights, are broadcasted on Bahrain Channel One.
- b) The competent authority added that the Bahrain News Agency supplied many news, reports, press conferences and interviews and distributed them to national newspapers and media to coincide with national events and regional and global occasions. This enhances the role of national press while adhering to the etiquette and ethics of expressing opinion, and prohibiting incitement to violence, terrorism or hatred because of race, gender, religion or sect, according to the Press Code of Honor that was approved in partnership with the Bahrain Journalists Association.
- c) The competent authority indicated that it urges users of social media and digital platforms to uphold the values of tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and kind words, and to reject incitement to division, hatred and extremism. In doing so, it launched a national awareness media campaign under the slogan "Say kind words" (قل خيراً) in its second session on combating "digital (electronic) bullying"

with the participation of media professionals, artists and influential figures in the community.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it agrees with the principle contained in the recommendation, which requires coordination with several parties.

- **Summary of the Board of Trustees of King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence reply to NIHR:**

The competent authority stated that it believes that traditional press institutions are no longer popular due to the dominance of new media over the media landscape. Therefore, it proposes to focus on social media channels, and to broadcast radio segments through Bahrain Radio focusing on the objectives and themes of this recommendation in a manner that serves to promote the concepts of religious tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and respect for human rights among the various components of society.

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Develop additional intellectual mass media qualification and training programs for workers in the various media fields, to enable them to interact positively with intellectual issues, diverse culture, and building a moderate media discourse that strengthens the values of tolerance and coexistence and rejects extremism.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Information Affairs reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it has prepared and organized programs, training courses, and specialized workshops via videoconference with the participation of media professionals in order to raise their capabilities and skills and develop their knowledge of human and legal rights that would contribute to fostering a culture of peaceful coexistence and combating extremism and terrorism. Efforts are made to implement the standardized terminology guide in media coverage of terrorism, which is approved by the Council of Arab Information Ministers. Emphasis is placed on national press and media institutions to adhere to the relevant professional charters and codes of conduct.

- **Summary of the Board of Trustees of King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence reply to NIHR:**

The competent authority stated that cooperation and coordination with the Bahrain Journalists Association, the Ministry of Information and the

National Communication Center could be enhanced to prepare this type of programs and distribute it among the workers in daily newspapers, other news centers, Bahrain News Agency, Bahrain TV, and others.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Pursue building participatory relations between media organizations and other cultural, educational, social, and civil organizations that enhance openness, engagement, and dialogue.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Information Affairs reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that it prepares and presents radio and television programs and press coverage on human rights and spreading a culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, with the participation of representatives of national institutions, in daily programs and news reports. These are intensified during national events and international occasions by highlighting national initiatives advocating tolerance and peaceful coexistence. In addition, the Ministry of Information cooperates with the Ministry of Education in teaching the principles and ethics of media and the expression of opinion in schools and universities.
- b) The Ministry has also implemented the initiatives of the National Plan for the Promotion of National Belonging and Consolidation of Citizenship Values (Our Bahrain), by implementing, in cooperation with government agencies, (19) media initiatives, which constitutes 18% of the initiatives of the National Plan that was launched in 2019.
- c) In addition, the Ministry followed up on the preparation of the National Human Rights Plan in coordination with the legislative authority, the private sector, and civil society institutions as part of the efforts undertaken by the Higher Coordinating Committee for Human Rights in this regard.

(7) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Put more emphasis on the importance of adopting moderate discourse by all types and forms of media, and tightening censorship of materials that may contain hate speech and rejection of the other in a manner that threatens tolerance and peaceful coexistence in society.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Information Affairs reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that the substance of the recommendation is taken into consideration by highlighting the common issues that foster national unity, tolerance and peaceful coexistence in all media outlets, and by the resolute commitment to prevent the broadcast, transmission or entry of any media materials in violation of national laws and international instruments that would incite religious hatred, sectarianism, racism, extremism, violation of public morality, or offending the beliefs of others, and the rights of society, in coordination with the competent authorities.
- b) Moreover, the role of the Cyber Crime Directorate under the General Department of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security in the Ministry of Interior, and its efforts in raising awareness and preventing these crimes, and enforcing the law against suspicious accounts on the Internet and social media sites has emerged, in implementation of Law No. (60) of 2014 on Information Technology Crimes.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it agrees with the principle contained in the recommendation, which requires coordination with several other bodies.

- **Summary of the Board of Trustees of King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence reply to NIHR:**

The competent authority stated that it could see the commitment of local newspapers and official media outlets in complying with moderate discourse in their daily presentation of news and reports. On the other hand, new media channels and social media are still a limitless arena for spreading hate speech, which necessitates enforcing legal control tools to curb the spread of any destructive or anti-human rights ideas.

(8) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Continue efforts to rationalize religious discourse - regardless of its source - and distance it from inflammatory rhetoric that carries toxic malicious sectarianism, and direct it towards spreading the spirit of tolerance, love, and unity based on respect for the other.

(9) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Spare religious platforms of whatever affects their status and mission, by confronting attempts to nurture the spirit of hatred, polarization,

inflammatory sectarianism, and fanaticism based on doctrinal affiliations, in order to preserve a climate of coexistence, acceptance of the other, national unity, and social cohesion.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that both recommendations are realized on the ground with the issuance of resolution No. (23) of 2009 issuing the Ethics of Religious Discourse, which provided for a set of controls and manners when delivering religious sermons, lessons and lectures. These are, spreading patriotic feelings, respecting the principle of good citizenship and coexistence, considering doctrinal specificities, adopting moderation and reasonableness in the presentation of views, urging respect for oneself, the sanctity of blood, money and honor, fulfillment of rights, avoiding offending the nation's authorities and Islamic figures and mobilizing people with fatwas calling for disobedience and takfir (accusing another Muslim of apostasy), and spreading a spirit of optimism and hope while not rushing into judgment, taking into account the different levels of people.

(10) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call on everyone to protect the democratic path, preserve the climate of coexistence, moderation, and acceptance of others; assert respect for human rights, democratization, and the values of peace, security, and stability, as well as direct efforts towards development, opposition to sedition and extremism, and respect the rule of law.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that it agrees with the principle contained in the recommendation, which requires coordination with several other bodies.

- **Summary of the Board of Trustees of King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence reply to NIHR:**

The competent authority stated that it would like to identify the mechanisms and bodies concerned with protecting the democratic course, and to prepare a plan and a working group to achieve this goal.

Section Three: The Right to Equal Treatment of the Elderly

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call on the competent authorities to study the relevant laws and regulations in force concerning the rights of the elderly and make the necessary amendments thereto in a manner consistent with the relevant international principles, rules, and resolutions. Or, to enact a comprehensive and integrated law on the rights of the elderly, provided that the new law keeps pace with economic, social, cultural, civil, and political developments in the last decade.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Issue the elderly service card provided for in Law No. (58) of 2009 on the Rights of the Elderly, for every person who has reached the age of 60 years, automatically, without the need to submit an application for that purpose or any other procedure.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Revise the conditions for obtaining housing services prescribed in resolution No. (909) of 2015 regarding the Housing System and its amendments by the competent authorities, to raise the age of beneficiaries of housing services and include the age group (over 60 years) among those benefiting from the various housing services, as the current maximum age to be eligible to benefit from most housing services is (55 years).

- **Summary of the Ministry of Housing reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry reported that the housing system allows accepting applications for all basic housing services except for the Mazaya Program, from the minimum age of (21) years to a maximum age of (51) years to apply for the service. If the application is accepted, the age does not affect the allocation or benefiting from the housing service. Regarding the secondary services, the current housing system allows applicants up to (60) years old to obtain a renovation and restoration financing service.

- b) The Ministry indicated that it has expanded in the acceptance of categories entitled to housing services by including a third category for those who have exceeded the specified age for accepting the application. This category can apply together with one of his children, namely unmarried daughter or son who have reached the age of 21 years, and lives with his Bahraini parents or one of them.
- c) The competent authority, in cooperation with the Supreme Council for Women, has also introduced a new category (women application category) until reaching the age of (60) years, these are the divorced, abandoned, or widowed women who do not have children, or single women orphaned (both parents). This category is granted permanent housing until the social status changes.

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call on the National Committee for the Elderly - established by resolution No. (79) of 2011 - to exert further efforts and endeavors, with greater attention given to the media aspect, to highlight these efforts and endeavors, and the services it provides to become a national platform for promoting the rights of the elderly.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Update the National Strategy and the Action Plan for the Elderly, to match the development taking place in the field of promoting the rights of this group in various public fields, especially since the current Plan has been issued since nearly (8) years.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call upon the competent authorities to accelerate the pace of work on combating noncommunicable diseases, and to raise awareness about

such diseases, especially for the elderly, while ensuring the continuity of providing quality health care services for this group.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Health reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that it pays attention to providing integrated and comprehensive health services to protect the health of the population of all age groups, including the elderly. The Ministry provides health, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services and ensures that all individuals receive proper health care to achieve the goals, strategic plans and initiatives of the concerned departments and divisions of the Ministry.
- b) The Kingdom of Bahrain has been keen on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and the associated risk factors in all its health programs. The “National Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases and Associated Risk Factors” was developed in response to the “Political Declaration” adopted by the United Nations in September 2011, which emphasizes the need for governments to develop national plans to prevent and control these diseases. In addition, the Ministry is committed to complying with the goals set by the World Health Organization to reduce the death rate among adults due to non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases) in the world by 25% of its 2010 rate.
- c) The Plan includes a number of goals that pertain to the recommendation, and executive programs relating to the National Plan’s Strategy, all of which are focused on combating non-communicable diseases and raising awareness. This is achieved by promoting preventive methods and guidance through comprehensive health coverage and primary health care, supporting national research capacities in the field of prevention and control of non-communicable diseases to monitor and identify the limiting factors, above all the provision of essential medicines and vaccines for all. This would contribute to meeting the indicators for realizing the Third Goal of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), which seeks to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- d) Furthermore, government hospitals play a pivotal role in providing specialized services for the elderly, including psychiatry services, special care services and long-term stay for the elderly, depending on their health problems and mental, cognitive and motor abilities.

These services used to be provided in basic healthcare centers, as follows:

- **Mental health services provided by the Psychiatric Hospital:**

This hospital plays an important and vital role in mental health care for the elderly of both sexes. It provides its services through specialized clinics and admission of patients, as well as community care for the elderly. Specialized medical consultations are provided to the elderly, in particular intervention services and immediate home care and assistance, which is provided urgently to patients due to altered mental status, or because the family is unable to take care of them for psychological or behavioral reasons. A telephone line that operates during working hours is provided to facilitate communications between patients and their families.

- **Health services provided at Muharraq Special Healthcare Center for the Elderly:**

- This Center is affiliated to the Ministry of Health and it provides comprehensive health, nursing, rehabilitation and social services in an integrated manner to the elderly patients and those with severe physical disabilities. The Center offers periodic medical examination and evaluation of inpatients with the provision of treatment and appropriate care, as well as supervising the transfer of patients to other hospitals for acute or intensive care for routine check-ups. The Center offers periodic regular professional development programs in the field of geriatrics for health professionals.
- Due to the challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, the elderly and long-stay patients were transferred from Muharraq Special Healthcare Center for the Elderly to eight private hospitals in 2020-2021. This step was taken because the Center was transformed into a special center for the treatment and isolation of Covid-19 patients. Accordingly, integrated teams were formed in the private hospitals consisting of members of the departments of administration, rehabilitation, nursing, pharmacy, medical field, social services, and services provided to the elderly, so that their needs are best met.

- **Primary health care centers for the elderly:**

- Primary health services are provided to all segments of society, including the elderly. Such services, namely curative, preventive and rehabilitative, are easily accessible to the elderly. Family doctors' clinics specializing in family medicine and qualified

medical staff are available to provide health services for the treatment of emergency and chronic cases. Moreover, training and habilitation of families and caregivers on how to care for the elderly is provided, at the same time as studying and following-up the conditions of patients and devising appropriate solutions for them.

- Among the efforts that enhance the role of specialized services in the field of healthcare, the Ministry has launched the mobile unit service. This includes five mobile primary healthcare centers for elderly care, through which nursing services and basic care are provided to the elderly in their homes, especially those who are unable to reach primary health care centers.

- **Initiatives of government hospitals under health insurance:**

Two main bodies provide secondary care services to the elderly, namely:

- **Salmaniya Medical Complex:** The Elderly Care Committee, which was formed in 2010, provides high quality health services in implementing health and preventive plans provided through secondary and primary healthcare. The Committee's scope of work includes following up and studying health, social and habilitative services provided to the elderly in secondary care facilities within a clear and focused policy to improve the level of services provided to them.
- **Ebrahim Khalil Kanoo Community Medical Center:** This Center, which was established in 2009, is currently affiliated to Salmaniya Medical Complex. Its main role is to improve the quality of life of the elderly, integrate them into society, and promote self-reliance through providing support and assistance to overcome the acute stages of treatment. In early 2016, the new expansion of the Khalil Kanoo Community Medical Center was inaugurated, which included the Mohammad Kanoo Cardiac Rehabilitation Unit and the Fouad Kanoo Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy Unit.

(7) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call on the competent official authorities, in cooperation with civil society organizations concerned with the rights of the elderly, to benefit from the experiences and capabilities of the elderly in the post-retirement stage and utilize their knowledge in a manner that serves the government sector and the community.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(8) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Diversify the governmental exemptions for the elderly and raise the discount percentages on the various fees.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

Section Four: Protection of the rights of expatriate workers

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call for the prompt issuance of the bill on domestic workers (prepared in light of the proposed law submitted by the Council of Representatives), to include the rights and obligations of the relevant parties, in a manner consistent with the developments in the international community and in line with the Kingdom of Bahrain's international obligations in this regard.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call upon the competent authorities addressed in the provisions of Law No. (1) of 2008 on Combating Trafficking in Persons to develop a national strategy to combat this crime in cooperation with the NIHR.

- **Summary of the Labor Market Regulatory Authority (National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons) reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call upon the concerned authorities to activate the role of the Regional Research and Training Center for Combating Trafficking in Persons, which was established in cooperation between the Labor Market Regulatory Authority and The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries.

- **Summary of the Labor Market Regulatory Authority reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Take firm legal actions against employers who are found to have been unfair or abusive, or have delayed payment of workers' wages, and take preventive administrative measures that safeguard against abuse or delay in wage payment in such cases, including the mandatory transfer of wages to workers' bank accounts.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Reconsider the provisions of Decision No. (3) of 2013 on banning outdoor work at noon time, by extending the ban period prescribed therein in terms of time and place, in a manner commensurate with the high temperatures in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the months (June-September) of each year, and in a way that prevents workers from being exposed to the risks of sunstroke and falling when performing work outdoors as a result of heat stress

- **Summary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call for reaching a more broadly acceptable formula on the flexible work permit system between the competent government agencies and the legislative authority (Shura and Representatives Councils), and the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and relevant civil society

institutions, in a manner that preserves the rights of all stakeholders, and takes into account the international obligations of the Kingdom of Bahrain in this regard.

- **Summary of the Labor Market Regulatory Authority reply to NIHR:**

The NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that the substance of this recommendation is outside its competence.

(7) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Produce television awareness series to explain the rights of foreign workers, as well as the rights of business owners, and how to act in various cases that arise in the employer-worker relationship.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Information reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that news reports, programs, interviews and specialized television episodes were prepared and broadcasted on Bahrain Channel One on the efforts and achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain in protecting the rights of expatriate workers, combating trafficking in persons and regulating the labor market in both languages Arabic and English, and distributing such material to the local press. In addition, television and radio programs were dedicated to introduce the rights of expatriate workers and combating trafficking in persons on Bahrain Channel One, with the participation of officials of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, the Labor Market Regulatory Authority, and civil society and in cooperation with foreign embassies in the Kingdom. A comprehensive awareness media campaign was launched in eight languages to educate residents and foreign communities alongside citizens, about preventive and precautionary measures in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, which included (185) awareness breaks through Channel One, and (45) breaks through the International Channel, along with field awareness of expatriate workers wherever they are present conducted by the community police.

Requirement Three
Recommendations Contained in the NIHR's Report on Observing the
Parliamentary and Municipal Elections of 2018

(1) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Classify the referendum and elections crimes mentioned in Article No (30) of Decree-Law No. (14) of 2002 on the Exercise of Political Rights, as amended, as urgent; and establish a competent and temporary court to consider and adjudicate these crimes.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that Law No. (14) of 2002 regarding the Exercise of Political Right, as amended, and Decree-Law No. (3) of 2002 on the System for the Election of Members of Municipal Councils, as amended, contain a number of provisions criminalizing acts that would undermine the proper conduct of the electoral process. Article No. (34) of the Law on Exercising Political Rights stipulates that criminal suits in the crimes mentioned in the Law will be passed over after a period of six months from the date of the announcement of the results or from the date of the last legal process in the matter.
- b) In addition, the Attorney General shall issue, upon the beginning of the electoral process, a decision to form a committee specialized in electoral crimes, whose membership includes a sufficient number of members of the Public Prosecution specialized in investigating electoral crimes. These crimes are considered before specialized courts by the Supreme Judicial Council to ensure speed in resolving these types of cases. Given the above, the Ministry finds that the recommendation pertaining to classifying referendum and elections crimes as urgent is achieved on the ground without the need for a legislative amendment.

(2) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Issue a new law on organizing media and electoral propaganda for the elections of the members of the House of Representatives and the municipal councils, to include all the issues related to the organization of such propaganda, allocated funds, means of exercising it, and the related

prohibitions. In addition, the new law must include deterrent penalties that prevent the violation of its provisions. The said law must also provide for provisions that regulate the issue of electoral finance and campaign spending, and, in particular, include provisions to set a maximum limit on spending and financial expenditures on electoral campaigns.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry reported that the legislative system in the Kingdom of Bahrain is rich in legislative provisions regulating media and electoral campaigns. Decree-Law No. (15) of 2002 regarding the Shura and Representatives Councils regulates the controls by which a candidate must abide during the candidacy period, in addition to the unlawful acts that must be avoided during election campaigns. Moreover, the requirement of equality is imposed on the media in dealing with the candidates, without ignoring the imposition of fines and imprisonment on anyone who violates the provisions stipulated in the above-mentioned Law.
- b) Law No. (60) of 2014 on Information Technology Crimes contains provisions that criminalize various types of crimes that may be committed by using means of communication and other electronic means. In addition, Decree-Law No. (47) of 2002 contains provisions that regulate printing, publishing and the press, as well as criminalizing acts committed by publishing in newspapers. Under the Law, the Minister of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning issues the necessary decisions regarding regulating advertising.

(3) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Make available ballot papers in Braille for the blind to enable them to participate actively in the electoral process.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The competent authority stated that the Kingdom of Bahrain was keen to devote special attention to persons with disabilities in the society and facilitate all aspects of their lives, as well as guaranteeing all their rights in a way that enables them to integrate effectively into society. In this sense, there are special facilities for this category of persons who cannot themselves write down their opinions on the electoral paper. They can express their choice of candidates verbally, and then the head of the

committee writes down the voter's choice in the presence of one of the committee's members on the ballot and places it in the box. A report is drawn up and it remains confidential. Printing special ballot papers in Braille might disclose the voter's identity when counting the votes.

(4) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Amend the provisions of Articles No (60) and No (69) of Law No. (37) of 2012 on the Child Law regarding the criminalization of the use of children in elections, and proposing appropriate and deterrent penalties for such dangerous criminal acts, focusing on the best interest of the child.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that the necessary legislative protection for the child was granted to grow up in a sound environment suitable for his/her shaping. In this sense, Law No. (4) of 2021 on Restorative Justice for Children and their Protection from Maltreatment was issued to include several provisions to protect the child from all forms of abuse and abetting to delinquency by criminalizing all acts involving mistreatment of the child or exploitation in any activity in violation of the law.

(5) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Amend the provisions of Decree-Law No. (14) of 2002 on the Exercise of Political Rights, as amended, to allow the candidate to choose more than one agent to follow up on the electoral process, provided the number of such agents does not exceed the maximum number of the public electoral centers.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that, in the Law on Exercising Political Rights, as amended, the Bahraini legislator was keen to strike a balance between ensuring the attendance and participation of the candidate and his/her agent and the proper conduct of the electoral process. In this sense, the number of agents is limited to one as it achieves the purpose of the concept of representation itself, to represent the candidate in attending and following up on the procedures. Therefore, allowing more than one agent is a matter that will lead to confusion and overcrowding inside the elections headquarter, which will affect the proper functioning of the organizational process at the polling station.

(6) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Pay more attention to raise the awareness of voters on the need to ensure that their names are on the voters' lists during the period prescribed by the law, thus avoiding being prevented from casting their votes on polling day, through all forms of media and social media, well before the due date set by the law.

(7) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Pay more attention to raise the awareness of the individuals, whose names are not registered on the voters' lists, on the need to head to the supervisory centers of their governorate on polling day, using all the forms of media and social media. Such individuals were not aware of this procedure until after they went to the provincial or public centers to cast their votes. Thus, they went through the trouble of reaching those centers and had to wait there for a while.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that the content of the two recommendations is achieved on the ground, as the awareness process begins once the Royal Order calling for elections is issued. An integrated media awareness plan is prepared and implemented, with the participation of the various stakeholders, prior to the start of the electoral process. Accordingly, voters are informed of their rights and duties and the need to verify that their names are included in the voters' lists before heading to the polling stations. In the event their names are not listed, they must go to the supervisory centers of their residence address on voting day. In turn, the Supreme Committee always intensifies its efforts and broaden the sources and forms of media messages, to get such messages across to all the addressees in a simple and clear manner; thus, all voters are aware of their status and know their destination on polling day.

(8) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Conduct the counting and sorting process by a team other than those involved in the organization of the voting process. Such proposed team begins its work at the electoral center starting at 6:00 pm, and continues until the polling is closed and the counting process commences until the announcement of the results. This shall have a positive impact on the

performance of the said team and reduce the likelihood of any potential errors that may arise during this process, as well as accelerate the announcement of the results.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that all the participants in organizing the electoral process are subjected to intensive theoretical and practical training on the mechanism of supervision, coordination, sorting and counting, so that they are qualified to undertake these tasks in accordance with best practices, while committing themselves to the principles of impartiality, integrity, and diligence.

(9) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Use modern electronic technologies that ensure more accuracy in the counting and sorting of ballot papers. In addition, provide polling and counting centers with surveillance cameras and display monitors to allow the candidates and their agents as well as the observers of the conduct of the electoral process to follow up the process of sorting and counting ballot papers.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that candidates and their agents could be present at the election headquarters during the sorting and counting processes to monitor closely the procedures and safety. As for the issue of using modern electronic technologies in the counting and sorting processes, the matter could be considered.

(10) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Pay more attention to training and qualifying law enforcement personnel on controlling and tracking electoral crimes, especially those committed through modern means of communication, and bringing perpetrators to justice in order to ensure the proper conduct of the electoral process.

(11) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Pay more attention to the training aspect of the organizers of the polling and counting process in the electoral centers. In addition, issue a code of conduct to regulate their work, which includes that they must refrain from

expressing their opinion, explicitly or implicitly, or promoting one of the candidates, or interfering in the choices of the voter during the ballot. The neutrality and independence of the organizers at the polling and counting centers reflects the integrity of the entire electoral process.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

- a) The Ministry stated that all relevant judicial control officers, especially those working in the Directorate of Combating Electronic Crimes and those involved in organizing the electoral process, are subjected to continuous training that keeps up with the evolving changes in the way and means of committing electoral crimes. In addition, the training includes all applied and legal aspects pertaining to the stages of the electoral process and its procedures, the organization and proper management of polling stations, as well as the nature of electoral crimes in terms of their legal structure, punishment, control and reporting procedures, and referral to the competent judicial authorities.
- b) Moreover, before the start of the electoral process, clear and detailed instructions are issued regarding the duties and obligations of all participants in organizing the electoral process, especially those participating in the sorting and counting process, and focusing on integrity and impartiality. It is made sure that the participants have looked into the instructions and understood what it meant, the nature of the role assigned to them, and the degree of competence and professionalism required of them.

(12) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call for the establishing of a clearer, precise, and seamless mechanism that secures the smooth entry of veiled women to polling centers, ensures that their faces match their identity documents, and takes into account their privacy in this regard.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that practically, care is taken to verify the identity of veiled women by one of the women designated for that purpose in polling

stations in a designated place, without violating the duty of verifying the identity of participants in the elections as required by law.

(13) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Call for paying greater attention to civil society institutions and human rights defenders concerned with monitoring and observing the electoral process. This can be done by providing them with dedicated places within all polling, sorting and counting centers, close to polling and counting committees, enabling them to monitor and observe all stages of the electoral process on polling day, until counting of the ballots and announcing the results.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that the principles of justice and integrity, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain is committed, are the motivation to ensure an adequate opportunity for the representatives of civil society institutions to observe the electoral process and attend its proceedings on the ground inside and outside the polling stations. The previous years are testament to that, allowing representatives and observers inside the headquarters to observe and record their observations, as well as the design of the polling places that does not impede the smooth movement of organizers and participants.

(14) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Pay more attention to the ongoing media coverage of the electoral process by the Supreme Committee for the General Supervision of the Soundness of Elections, through prompt and continued updating of the information, data, and statistics posted on its website and electronic accounts, including the decisions and judicial rulings related to the electoral objections and appeals. Such will become the source of information and database for professionals, researchers, academics, and the public.

(15) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

Continue the efforts of the Ministry of Information Affairs in raising awareness of the electoral process using infographics to include all stages of the electoral process, as well as the rights and duties of voters and candidates, owing to their clear impact in promoting the concepts of the

electoral process and delivering such in a simplified form, easy to understand by all.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry reported that the Executive Committee for Elections, based on a comprehensive plan and strenuous efforts, formulates, prepares and conducts awareness campaigns related to the electoral process using various design tools and media, both visual and print, in order to reach all segments of society. The campaigns are subject to continuous improvement with more care and attention to intensify it to include all relevant statistics and provisions in a manner commensurate with the nature of the media content at present.

(16) Text of recommendation and summary of the competent authority's reply to NIHR:

On-going follow up by the chairs of the polling public electoral centers and the subsidiary electoral centers and their employees, to verify the adequacy of the remaining ballot papers to ensure that they do not run out, which influences the flow of the electoral process, so as no voter misses his/her right to vote.

- **Summary of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) reply to NIHR:**

The Ministry stated that continuous follow up through direct communication channels between the Supreme Committee for the General Supervision of the Soundness of Elections and the heads of polling centers and their employees is the main key to ensuring the smooth conduct of the electoral process without any obstacles. The follow up includes the continuous verification of the adequacy of ballot papers as well as other related issues. This has contributed to the success of the electoral process.

Second Topic

Digital Transformation in Government Services and its Impact on the Situation of Human Rights

Preface:

1. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and its repercussions across the world, which cast a shadow over all aspects of life and paralyzed many vital sectors in countries, the most important of which are the education, transportation, and industrial sectors, the Kingdom of Bahrain acted to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on Bahraini society as much as possible. It imposed social distancing measures without resorting to complete closure, as was done in many countries of the world.
2. To ensure that social distancing is achieved on the ground, the government has transformed most of its services to be provided electronically to achieve physical distancing and curb the spread of the virus among individuals. Hence, in view of what has been achieved, the NIHR, to preserve the most important human rights, namely the right to life and to the right health, found itself bound to monitor the concerted efforts among the various ministries and official institutions in the Kingdom. This is reflected in the NIHR's report to demonstrate the consideration given to the health of individuals in the Bahraini society and the role played by the Kingdom in ensuring the continuity of life through digital transformation and enhancing access to various rights and services.
3. The NIHR has addressed the ministries and official bodies and requested information about the achievements made on digital transformation regarding services provided to the public in various fields during the years (2020-2021).
4. During the timeframe of this report, the NIHR received replies from the following agencies only: the Public Prosecution, the Information and e-Government Authority, the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Development.

Requirement One

Digital Transformation in the Judicial and Justice Sector

Section One: Services provided by the Public Prosecution

1. The Public Prosecution clarified that during the years (2020-2021) it relied on several electronic means in providing services and receiving requests from citizens, residents and stakeholders. The most important electronic means is the WhatsApp application, where each prosecution office was allocated a dedicated communication line on that application. The other electronic means are the Public Prosecution's website via the e-government portal and the e-mail of each prosecution office.
2. In addition to the above, the Public Prosecution indicated that the number of requests and transactions via the Whatsapp application and e-mail amounted to (27,726) requests and transactions, and via the Public Prosecution's website was (12,692) requests and transactions. It also initiated (296) remote investigations as permitted under the Code of Criminal Procedure. The number of cases examining detention orders remotely was (342) cases and the number of trials conducted remotely was (1,322) trials.

Section Two: Services provided by the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf)

1. The Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments clarified that, in order to enhance access to justice, they have taken key steps to digital transformation. The Ministry has completed what it started in the field of transforming all proceedings before civil, commercial and Sharia courts electronically. Work continues on developing electronic services for the justice sector in cooperation with the Supreme Judicial Council and the Information and e-Government Authority.
2. The Ministry sought to roll out a set of electronic services that enables individuals to benefit from them and allows courts to perform their duties in the pursuit of justice without prejudice to any of the litigants' rights or the basic principles of fair trial stipulated in national legislation and in line with international standards.
3. The electronic services provided by the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments (Waqf) through the National e-Government Portal are as follows: filing cases; submitting briefings and requests during all stages of the case, including first instance, appeals, and appeals before the Court

of Cassation, up to giving judgments; opening execution files, submitting applications, and making enquiries about their status; and paying due amounts, taking into account the provision of all judicial guarantees established by the law in this regard.

4. The Ministry confirmed that the list of its electronic services took into account all the inherent principles of fair trial, the most important of which are the principle of publicity, the adversarial principle (confrontation between litigants), and the principle of equality of arms (procedural equality) between litigants. This is being done by providing the opportunity for each party and its representative to attend court sessions, in face-to-face confrontation with the other party, after being electronically notified of such via text messages and e-mail according to the rules in this respect.
5. The electronic services also allow submitting requests and related documents, which are sent to the opponent to view electronically, and then respond to within the prescribed dates. These services are characterized by being available to everyone without exception, and that all parties to the case stand on an equal footing in confronting each other, without anyone having an advantage over the other. In addition, these services enable the parties to a lawsuit to initiate judicial procedures electronically twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, starting from filing the case and ending with the implementation of its judgment. The Ministry reported that the number of electronic judicial transactions completed in the year 2020 is (1,861,102) transactions.
6. As for the electronic means used in criminal proceedings, the Ministry made sure to observe all the guarantees of fair trial for the accused, by preserving the presumption of innocence, which is binding throughout the litigation procedures. The defendant is treated in accordance with this principle even after being informed of the accusation made against him/her, while allowed access to a lawyer. The latter can remotely participate in criminal trials via ethereal transmission means (visual communication) and submit a defense brief, so that the competent court can expeditiously decide on the case.
7. The ethereal transmission (visual communication) also ensured the right of the accused to defend himself / herself, examine witnesses, and hear their statements electronically in the presence of the accused and his lawyer, if any. Regarding the detained indictees, the Ministry has taken measures to ensure their safety in light of the Covid-19 pandemic by dedicating special places with ethereal transmission in the same places of their detention. One of the specialized members of the Public Prosecution

attends the visual communication and from there, it is broadcasted to the courtrooms, where the competent judge presses the charges against him and the reasons for his/her detention. The accused is entitled to raise defenses, pleas and requests, while allowing his/her to attend, if any.

8. Digital transformation and the use of electronic means in criminal proceedings are advantageous to children and juveniles as it spares them the adverse effects of attending court hearings. Ethereal transmission (visual communication) is activated in special rooms in which they are present and the hearing is broadcasted through screens in courtrooms.
9. The Ministry indicated in its response that digital transformation has also affected issues related to pronouncement of judgment. It made sure that all parties involved in the case are aware of the judgment in line with the principle of publicity, and to preserve the right of the opponent and the accused of being informed of the outcome of the case. For that reason, screens were installed in the outdoor courtyards of the Ministry's headquarters through which sentencing hearings are broadcasted by the competent courts, taking into account the applicable precautionary measures, as the case may be. The right to resort to a higher court to review judgments was also taken into account, by making it possible to appeal against judgments electronically in an easy and fast way.
10. Thus, the Ministry, in coordination with the relevant authorities, was able to move forward in the process of developing the judicial and justice services provided, while ensuring that rights and freedoms are not compromised in light of the challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Section Three: Services provided by the Information and e-Government Authority

1. The judicial and justice sector witnessed a qualitative leap in terms of services available online. These services are diversified and include the following: licensing of lawyers, experts and private notaries, and the related services of issuing and renewing their licenses; issuing a replacement of lost licenses; authentication services, and the subsequent services of issuing authentication certificates and certification of idiochira; issuing a true copy; collecting related fees, and submitting performance follow-up reports at the notary public level.
2. Among the services related to the justice sector are litigation services, which include filing a lawsuit and submitting briefs; submitting related applications; submitting power of attorneys and electronic notification;

presenting expert reports; service by publication; in addition to an information service.

3. Implementation services also witnessed a remarkable development during the years (2020-2021), for example, opening an implementation file and paying the fees for this service electronically, submitting related applications, and inquiry about travel bans.
4. The digital transformation process has not bypassed the services related to marriage and divorce certificates. The following electronic services were introduced: official divorce certificates, verifying the registered certificates, and providing a guide for officials legally authorized to perform marriages (Ma'thoun). Minors' money services have also been developed by providing a service for submitting minors' money requests, an inquiry service, and completing the application electronically, in addition to an advisory service on all applicable legislation and laws in the Kingdom.
5. Based on the information provided to the NIHR by the Authority, it is evident that the health and safety sector and the justice and security sector were among the sectors that benefited most from their electronic services, where the number of beneficiaries for each sector reached approximately (1.5 million individuals).

Requirement Two

Digital Transformation in the Diplomatic and Consular Sector

Section One: Services provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. From the perspective of developing the services provided to the public, a mechanism for the authentication of public documents has been developed by establishing an electronic system designed on the web technology. This system serves the authentication offices in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the offices of consular affairs in the diplomatic and consular missions of the Kingdom of Bahrain abroad, to facilitate and monitor all public documents' authentication transactions using high-quality security labels with security features in accordance with international best practices to prevent fraud.
2. The process of cash payment for consular transactions is canceled and switched to electronic payment using electronic payment cards, and electronic invoices are issued, which is one of the outcomes of the implementation of the electronic transformation for government payments project.
3. The Ministry has concluded a contract with (Skiplino) Company to provide online booking for authentication appointments service. In addition, easy and smooth payment channels have been provided using (BenefitPay) service to facilitate the process of paying the certification fees. The Ministry explained that work on the project pertaining to submitting certification requests online in a smooth, secure and easy way for the public is underway, in cooperation with the Information and e-Government Authority. The number of document authentication transactions reached (36,611) transactions in the year 2020 and (38,679) transactions in 2021.
4. The Ministry, in cooperation with the Information and e-Government Authority, launched "Wejhati" application, which is a free service that contains many facilities provided to Bahraini citizens and students abroad. The benefits of the application are as follows: Facilitate communication with diplomatic missions abroad and foreign embassies in the Kingdom when registering in it (register your travel), ability to attach special travel documents such as passports and identity documents for reference when needed, and guarantee the protection and confidentiality of these documents (travel files).
5. At the onset of Covid-19 pandemic, this application was used in the evacuation plan of Bahraini citizens abroad. "Wejhati" application was

used to register citizens' data to count the number of Bahrainis abroad and their locations in cooperation with the diplomatic and consular missions of the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as to facilitate their safe return home.

6. In implementation of His Majesty the King's Royal Directive regarding vaccinating Bahraini citizens residing abroad against Covid-19, the process to register citizens' data was carried out using Wejhati application to count the number of citizens abroad, know their whereabouts, and send the needed number of vaccine doses in cooperation with the diplomatic and consular missions of the Kingdom. The Ministry explained that travelers were notified via the application of any urgent matter and their return home was coordinated by sending notifications, as was the case under the Covid-19 pandemic.
7. This system also provides information on the status of authentication of public documents, and provides general information about the Kingdom of Bahrain that advises the visitors on the most important and famous landmarks in the Kingdom. The system also allows requesting assistance at any time through the virtual assistant, direct contact, Twitter, or through email.
8. By using Wejhati application, contact addresses of the Kingdom's missions abroad and foreign embassies, their official working hours, and their locations via Google map, can be obtained as a printable PDF file, which is easy to resend.
9. Wejhati application was linked with many services provided by other government agencies and a number of companies, such as passport renewal, travel ban, travel insurance, flight information inquiry, Bahrain International Circuit, Bahrain Tourism Guide, and Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities. The application has a link for electronic visa to enter the Kingdom. It is worth noting that, since launching the application, it was downloaded (37,278) times.
10. The Ministry reported that, in line with the objectives of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain on the digital transformation of services during the Covid-19 pandemic, the idea of utilizing an artificial intelligence-powered virtual assistant evolved. It is an electronic service for communicating and interacting with citizens and residents, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to answer their questions and inquiries on all services provided by the Ministry and the missions of the Kingdom of Bahrain abroad, while also

helping them to communicate live with the follow-up office if the need arises.

11. The service was launched on the Ministry's website and the Ministry's smart phone application, "Wejhati". The number of users of this service reached (8,351) users. Among these requests, only (728) services were transferred to the follow-up office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for assistance, while the other requests received the adequate answers and the required assistance through the virtual assistant, without the need to transfer them to the follow-up office.
12. The Ministry has also transformed consular procedures at the missions and consulates of the Kingdom of Bahrain abroad electronically to provide a number of electronic services and exchange such among the missions and the consular services sector in the Ministry to facilitate and expedite work and serve the public.
13. Visa issuance procedures have been facilitated for holders of diplomatic and special passports by creating a page to issue a letter to facilitate visa issuance procedures to automate the issuance of letters and support ease of search (findability) to be referenced whenever needed.
14. A joint committee was formed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Health to follow up on health emergencies of citizens abroad to promptly consider and treat. An annual amount of (200,000) dinars was approved to cover emergency treatment costs pursuant to the decision of the Ministerial Committee for Financial Affairs and Rationalizing Expenditure.
15. A joint working group was also formed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior regarding the renewal of passports, identity cards, driver's licenses for citizens, and certificates of good conduct outside the Kingdom. The Ministry explained that work is underway to adopt and implement updated mechanisms for the Ministry of Interior's services provided in the embassies abroad.
16. The Ministry's reply included a report on public outreach through communication channels available to the public and affiliated with the communication sector in the Ministry during the period (2020-2021). The total number of responses amounted to (1,875) responses, as follows:
 - (195) responses through Instagram
 - (40) responses through Twitter

- (827) responses through The National Suggestion & Complaint system “Tawasul”
- (813) responses through email

Section Two: Services provided by the Information and e-Government Authority

1. The security sector has provided electronic services connected with citizens abroad, and services related to security and safety, identity documents, road safety, and finally prosecution services. The Government was keen to facilitate services for citizens outside the Kingdom through about (11) services, including, for example, providing the service of registering Bahraini students through the Kingdom’s embassies abroad and following up on them, maintaining electronic personal documents of citizens, and listing the Kingdom’s embassies abroad.
2. According to the information provided by the Authority to the NIHR, it is noted that the health and safety and the justice and security sectors were among the sectors that benefited the most from its electronic services, where the number of beneficiaries for each sector reached approximately 1.5 million individuals.

Requirement Three

Digital Transformation in the Education Sector

Section One: Services provided by the Ministry of Education

1. In its reply, the Ministry of Education asserted that it considers education to be one of the basic rights guaranteed by all international and regional instruments and conventions. Simultaneously, it is an indispensable means of realizing other human rights. Education, as an enabling right, is the main tool through which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can get out of poverty. Education also has a vital role in empowering women and protecting children from exploitation in all its forms.
2. The Ministry clarified that digital transformation in the Kingdom of Bahrain is one of the main initiatives towards implementing the “Bahrain Economic Vision 2030” in accordance with the objectives of the comprehensive development process. Several steps have been taken to ensure the promotion of digital transformation in the public sector and focus on developing services and serving the citizen, in line with the Government’s program. The Ministry has implemented several services years ago, some of which are available on the website only, some are available on smart phones, while other services are on self-service platforms. These services target four groups (graduate students, school students, university graduates and the public).
3. In its response, the Ministry indicated that the Kingdom of Bahrain has always implemented projects and initiatives that support distance learning, not with the aim of transforming education to become distance learning, but rather to provide learning opportunities everywhere and anytime in a manner that ensures the sustainability of learning. The Kingdom of Bahrain has launched the national project “His Majesty King Hamad’s Schools of the Future” in 2005, which focuses on building infrastructure (interconnecting all schools with all their facilities) and providing technical equipment such as computers, electronic whiteboards and training. In addition, an e-learning team was formed in each school comprising all those concerned to manage the change process. Focus was placed on developing the capabilities of teachers and all stakeholders to keep pace with employing modern technology and foster an e-learning culture in schools.
4. In 2010, the development phase of the Project began, in which emphasis was placed on bringing about change at the classroom level by focusing

on developing teacher practices in integrating technology into the learning and teaching processes. In addition, several projects related to e-learning, such as the educational portal, technical guidance and safe use, and several digital tools, including virtual laboratories, were studied.

5. Moreover, training of all teachers and school staff to make them productive and able to provide support to students, and provision of digital educational content has been expanded. To keep moving forward with developing operations within the Ministry of Education, an electronic correspondence and archiving system has been provided since 2014, to rationalize expenditures and develop efficient and effective work mechanisms, allowing the digital transformation of all traditional services into electronic services.
6. In 2015, the Digital Empowerment in Education program was launched. This is the stage where teachers and students are empowered to enhance the production of knowledge, not its consumption. Since the launch of “His Majesty King Hamad’s Schools of the Future”, the Kingdom of Bahrain has committed itself to blended learning, in which e-learning is blended with classroom education in an integrated manner. Several learning strategies have also been used that enhance this model of learning, such as the Flipped Classroom and Project-Based Learning, which allow the student to self-educate using the materials uploaded (sent) by the teacher through the educational portal (eduNET), then projects are presented and discussed during the lesson in face-to-face classes with the presence of the teacher and students.
7. As an immediate response to the Royal and Government Directives on the need to address the repercussions of the Covid-19 crisis in all aspects of life in general, and in learning and education processes in particular, the digital transformation projects previously launched by the Ministry of Education, contributed to providing learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. This took place through the educational portal launched on cloud computing platform, which in turn enabled teachers, administrators, students and parents access all administrative and educational services digitally and online.
8. Microsoft 365 accounts with all its cloud computing applications were also provided, including e-mails and file storage (One Drive) for all the employees of the Ministry and all the students of public schools to enable them to work and learn remotely. In addition, Microsoft Teams application was used to provide virtual classes that have contributed to enhancing live and interactive communication between teachers and their students. The

services that were provided in the field of e-learning and e-education can be divided into two parts, the first is related to distance learning resources, and the second is related to teaching methods for distance learning.

9. Regarding distance learning resources, the Government provided digital and traditional materials for distance learning to accommodate students who do not have access to the Internet or do not own digital devices that they could use in distance learning. Accordingly, the Government cooperated with the Ministry of Information Affairs to broadcast lessons on a TV channel, as well as uploading them on the Ministry's YouTube educational channels. This went hand in hand with the continued provision of other traditional teaching materials such as printed school textbooks and worksheets that were distributed to all students through schools.
10. Digital materials have also been made available to students at all levels through the Ministry's website and the content management system of the educational portal, to enable them to use these materials for self-learning. These materials included (793) e-books, (11,236) model lessons for teachers, (1,733) exam templates, and (22,271) learning objects. The number of lessons that teachers uploaded on the educational portal during the academic year (2020-2021) amounted to (299,927) lessons, (440,947) enrichments, (726,512) activities and applications, and (20,790) quizzes; the number of panel discussions held on the educational portal reached (214,951) discussions.
11. Regarding distance-teaching methods, the Ministry offered model lessons prepared earlier to teachers, which contributed to saving teachers' time and effort and served as a high-quality model that they depend on when designing their lessons and educational activities. In addition, the Ministry also provided for a degree of flexibility for teachers to prepare their lessons and activities on the educational portal. The teachers were able to create digital content on their personal YouTube channels or social media sites, for example.
12. The teachers were able to track students' attendance, evaluate their performance, monitor their participation in distance learning activities through applications and activities, and conduct standardized assessment tests to measure specific educational skills on the educational portal and through virtual classrooms during the school closure period. Whilst the students were able to complete the applications, activities and tests on the educational portal or on paper and hand them over to their teachers or schools. The Ministry also allowed students taking international tests

outside the Kingdom of Bahrain, to take these tests in their schools in accordance with the precautionary controls.

13. When students were allowed to go back to schools, and in-person instructions resumed, the Ministry prepared guidelines entitled “Back to School Guidelines” for all educational institutions. The aim of the Guidelines is to provide a safe environment and to guide educational and administrative bodies and students on how to deal with any suspected case of infection with Covid-19. The Guidelines included a list organizing precautionary measures and preventive health and safety measures for the safe return to schools.
14. Moreover, the Ministry has sterilized school and kindergarten buildings, as well as prepared a training program on procedures for disinfecting buildings using products approved by the competent authorities in the Kingdom and in accordance with the applicable standards and requirements in this field, in cooperation with the General Directorate of Civil Defense.
15. In cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry organized awareness campaigns, electronic lectures, and training programs on the prevention of Covid-19 and curbing its spread. All school and kindergarten staff were also directed to adhere to precautionary and preventive measures to limit the spread of the virus, based on the recommendations, health guidelines and directives issued by the National Taskforce for Combating the Corona virus (COVID-19), the Ministry of Health, and the Civil Service Bureau. In addition, the Ministry conducted a number of inspection visits to public and private schools and kindergartens to ensure their compliance with preventive measures and health guidelines.
16. The Ministry resorted to shortening the curricula provided via distance learning by focusing on the basic competencies and developed student assessment mechanisms and distribution of grades for each academic stage, while providing schools with a detailed guideline for exceptional students’ assessment procedures, including directions through which approved assessment methods in distance learning are applied.
17. In addition, summer vacation activities and programs for students were implemented remotely, as well as the participation of talented students in regional and international competitions. The summer enrichment program was organized remotely in 2020. A series of psychological adaptation programs were prepared to rehabilitate children, particularly students to return to school.

18. Regarding governmental rehabilitation centers and homes affiliated with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development and civil and private centers for persons with disabilities licensed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, the Ministry of Education indicated that after the suspension of schools, activities, and rehabilitation programs since the end of February 2020, they were reopened, and individual rehabilitation programs and sessions were resumed in mid-June 2020. Specific controls and measures to protect the health of children with disabilities were imposed, while ensuring that their rehabilitative and therapeutic needs are being met without interruption, to avoid a drop in their performance level due to the disruption of rehabilitation programs and sessions.
19. Furthermore, distance learning and training services in several disability rehabilitation centers were activated. E-lessons and rehabilitation sessions were applied through distance education systems, as well as electronic consultations with specialists working in rehabilitation centers, making sure weekly reports are sent to the concerned administration in the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to identify strengths and weaknesses of achievement levels of the beneficiary students in those centers.
20. Batelco Home, a social welfare institution affiliated to the Ministry of Labor and Social Development concerned with taking care of orphaned children of unknown parents and the like and children of broken families, has provided all the means and devices that are appropriate for the new education method. Batelco provides rooms equipped with computers and other educational means, as well as staff to help the children, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, pursuant to its decision on distance education, with the aim of preserving the child's right to education.

Section Two: Services provided by the Information and e-Government Authority

1. The number of beneficiaries of the digital transformation of education and youth services reached approximately (310,000) individuals. The services that were digitally transformed varied and included services for school students, university students, youth, and students abroad, as well as services pertaining to quality assurance.
2. Through the digital transformation in this sector, school students were able to issue copies of statements and transcripts electronically, submit applications for authentication of local qualifications, submit transfer requests between schools, register in summer clubs, and register for

continuing education courses. It also enables students to apply for scholarships, view results, and inquire about the status of the application, and search, reserve and borrow books.

3. In addition, university students were able to get and verify their transcripts and graduation certificates, edit their data electronically, learn about admission requirements in various universities and apply online. Both University of Bahrain and Bahrain Polytechnic students were able to pay tuition fees electronically, and University of Bahrain students were able to purchase textbooks online. As for students abroad, they were able to submit equivalency of certificates application and receive the results online, search for recommended universities, and verify approved qualifications.

Requirement Four

Digital Transformation in the Health Sector

Services provided by the Information and e-Government Authority

1. The services provided in the health and safety sector were health services related to the Covid-19 pandemic, where (39) electronic services were introduced. The services include, but not limited to: registration in “BeAware Bahrain” app and all the services related to this application such as displaying the Covid-19 test results, booking an appointment to test for Covid-19, print out Covid-19 test certificate (PCR), displaying the vaccination certificate, registration for home self-isolation, payment of Covid-19 test fees, registration of arriving travelers, contact notification, and other services.
2. According to the information provided by the Authority to the NIHR, it is noted that the health and safety sector and the justice and security sector were among the sectors that benefited the most from their electronic services, where the number of beneficiaries for each sector reached approximately (1.5 million individuals).

Requirement Five

Digital Transformation in the Housing Sector

Services provided by the Information and e-Government Authority

1. The Authority reported that the number of beneficiaries of digital transformation and electronic services in the housing sector is approximately (47,000) families. Digital transformation included three main services, the first of which is the housing service, which includes the service of submitting a housing application, and financing services, whether for renovation, construction or purchase. A person can update the housing application data electronically, submit a new housing application, or submit an application for Mazaya. The digital transformation in the field of housing services enables a person to update the contact details and bank account, and to submit declaration of family members. Citizens can also submit housing services letters and request a donation letter for housing services, or submit a request for maintenance of the apartment or housing unit.
2. The second service is housing financial services. Through the digital transformation of this service, citizen can submit a summary of the bank account to the Ministry of Housing, perform all banking transactions for the account, change the alternative payee, update his/her personal information, apply for a housing loan, obtain a formal statement of accounts, calculating loan repayments and loan arrears, and know returned cheques.
3. The third service that has been digitally transformed is the general information and inquiry service, through which citizens can electronically identify the eligibility criteria for housing services, inquire and fill out housing requests, and obtain information about His Majesty the King's benevolent deed for housing services of 2011.

Requirement Six

Digital Transformation in the Labor and Social Development Sectors

Section One: Services provided by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development

1. The Ministry of Labor and Social Development reported that in the years 2020 and 2021, its application of new digital technologies witnessed great development and use, especially with the worsening of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. The direct consequences of the pandemic were the restrictions imposed on the movement of people, the limitations on the number of customers visiting government departments, and the increased demand for online services. Therefore, the Ministry undertook to provide its services immediately through the external portal and electronic services in the easiest and simplest way by establishing a sound and secure infrastructure to ensure continuity of the Ministry's services.
2. In its response, the Ministry reviewed the services that were provided electronically to the public and the systems that were developed during the years 2020 and 2021. Such services and systems were in line with the directives of upper management, in terms of improving the quality of services provided to all citizens and, in particular, persons with disabilities, while achieving customer satisfaction.
3. The number of services provided by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to the various segments of society has reached (165) services, of which (136) services meet the conditions of electronic transformation. The rest of the services are of a tangible nature and cannot be applied electronically, such as a number of of the services provided by hospices for the elderly, rehabilitation centers, and care for people with disabilities. The services of the Ministry are provided through (12) departments specialized in citizen's services.
4. The number of services provided through the developed systems amounted to approximately (82) services, of which (79) services were developed internally, and (3) services were developed in cooperation with the Information and e-Government Authority. Noting that some of the systems that manage these services are old and need to be replaced. The Ministry has broken down such into modern systems and old ones.
5. Regarding the modern systems developed during the years 2020-2021, the Ministry, through the Information Systems Department, has developed systems and introduced new systems in order to improve the services

provided to the public, and to manage workflow accurately and proficiently. Twelve (12) electronic systems and projects have been developed, namely: recruitment system, Labor Market Regulatory Authority job vacancy system, Ministry's website, electronic content management system, labor and occupational safety inspection system, training management and manpower development system, job guarantee training system, on-the-job training system (Furas), attendance and leave management system, social rehabilitation system, stability of national employment system, and social welfare system for elderly.

6. The Ministry explained that the old systems have been developed during the period from 2006 to 2009; yet, these need to be updated or replaced by new systems to keep pace with technical development in preparation for integrated digital transformation. Most of the old systems, exactly (8) systems, are difficult to maintain, namely: Social Security System, Financial Support System, Disability Pension System, Social Welfare System - Elderly Services, Civil Organizations System, Training Institutes System, Training and Employment Agreements System, and Employment Project Accounts System.
7. The Ministry explained that to improve the services provided to the public, it has activated integrated electronic services that allow customers to access these services at any time and any place in an easy way. It has launched (18) new electronic services during the years 2020-2021, for example: notification about workers' housing, registration of researchers in training courses through the electronic exhibition, viewing the list of training courses, registering and updating of job seekers' data through the Bahrain electronic portal, registration of grievances, inquiries and complaints, registering for unemployment compensation and following up on the status of the application.
8. In addition, (30) electronic services have been developed during the past decade and are still serving large numbers of beneficiaries, such as licensing home-based businesses (Khotwa Program), requesting a license for rehabilitation centers for persons with disabilities as well as nurseries, viewing details of government support, requesting technical advice for civil organizations, registering volunteers in volunteering projects at the Voluntary Work Development Center, and other services.
9. Because of the incidental circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry has been able to create temporary solutions for services that could not be transformed electronically by creating (131) online electronic forms. Although this type of digital transformation did not live up to the level of the

aspirations of the Ministry, however, it played an important role in these difficult circumstances. The Ministry will include these services in the future in the integrated electronic transformation list.

10. The Ministry reported that linking the data of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development with the Information and e-Government Authority, Social Insurance Organization, and Labor Fund (Tamkeen) is another achievement in the field of digital transformation. In addition, the transfer of all services and systems of the Ministry to cloud computing has been completed (Amazon-ASW). All the difficulties have been overcome and facilities provided to the Ministry's employees during the Covid-19 pandemic, helping them to perform their work and providing the necessary tools. Network devices and components were transferred from the Data center in the Financial Harbor to the Data Center in Isa Town, which was permanently closed, and the staff of the Computer Operations Division was constantly present during the pandemic.
11. In its response, the Ministry explained that despite the difficulties and challenges encountered in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Social Assistance Directorate strived to offer all the direct cash support services that it provides through online platforms. This was achieved by allocating direct phone numbers for the Registration and Social Services Directorate to enable citizens to communicate directly with those concerned. In addition, this measure has taken into account those who find it difficult to deal with the new technologies, especially the elderly and persons with disabilities, by keeping the doors of the Ministry open to them.
12. Phone calls were also transferred to the phone numbers of female employees working remotely. In addition, all data and information related to the Social Assistance Directorate on the Ministry of Labor and Social Development website has been updated to enable citizens to view the required conditions and documents. The wording of the text messages sent to citizens on a monthly basis has been rewritten in such a way as to include a direct electronic link to visit the website directly instead of in person.
13. Programs that allow video meetings via the available technologies have also been operationalized to optimize time and productivity. The Social Assistance Directorate has always ensured that suggestions and complaints submitted to the National Suggestion and Complaint System "Tawasul" are being addressed, and that cooperation with government agencies regarding issuing statements electronically is strengthened.

Citizens were satisfied with all of these measures because the procedures were streamlined and simplified.

14. With the spread of Covid-19, the need to use modern technologies by the Social Welfare Directorate in communicating with beneficiaries in all sectors increased. In the years 2020 and 2021, the number of children benefiting from the helpline and support for children subjected to violence have reached (100) cases, whilst the number of children subjected to violence and benefited from the Child Protection Center have reached (594) cases during the same period.
15. Moreover, an online correspondence system with the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments has been introduced in which letters and reports on children's cases are received and sent to Sharia courts, Batelco Home and the Child Protection Center. Appropriate programs and smart phone applications have been used to disseminate awareness and offer lectures, seminars and training courses, such as (Microsoft Teams - Zoom) for all awareness lectures at the Child Protection Center and all the (15) day homes and clubs.

Section Two: Services provided by the Authority of Information and e-Government

1. The process of digital transformation in the labor and employment sector is centered on two axes, namely, the government employee, and job seekers. The Government has provided (17) electronic services for government employees, for example, employment application for the civil service, viewing the employment file, and issuing salary or service certificates. As for job seekers, (7) electronic services have been provided, consisting of registering job seekers, updating their files, submitting an employment application, searching for job vacancies, registering in a training program for job seekers, and providing unemployment insurance for job seekers. The number of beneficiaries of the services available online for the labor and employment sector reached approximately (255,000) individuals.
2. Regarding the services related to employment rights, approximately (9) services were transformed electronically, namely: Pension services, services for the insured, national workforce services, wages and settlements services, employer services, payment and billing services, labor complaints services, follow-up the status of complaints and suggestions service, and finally, workplace injury registration service and health care.

3. Regarding women, the Information and e-Government Authority indicated that, in cooperation with various authorities in the Kingdom, it provided electronic services that serve women in many sectors, such as housing services, work, employment, education, community solidarity, and other sectors. The number of women who benefited from the electronic services is approximately (351,284) Bahraini women and (195,884) non-Bahraini women.
4. In connection with community solidarity, the number of beneficiaries of the electronic services has reached nearly (320,000) individuals. The services that have been digitally transformed were diversified to cover social solidarity and financial support, persons with disabilities, employment rights, and services for NGOs.
5. The registration service for the categories affected by Covid-19 and entitled to request assistance was launched, as well as the services for submitting a new application to sponsor widows and orphans, online general donation for all insolvents and defaulters or donation to individual cases. Individuals can also submit an online request for social assistance and learn about the financial support provided by the Government.
6. During the years (2020-2021), and in order to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy their rights and that their access to the services available to them is facilitated during the pandemic, the services card for persons with disabilities was provided, with the possibility of applying online for rehabilitation.
7. Regarding expatriate workers, the Authority reported that (14) visa-related electronic services have been provided. Therefore, it is possible to apply for a no-objection certificate to visit the Kingdom, verify its validity, and follow up on the application online. Moreover, one may apply for a visa, follow up, cancel or transfer it online, as well as other visa-related services. The number of beneficiaries of these services reached almost (700,000) individuals.

Requirement Seven
Digital Transformation in the Nationality, Passport, Residency, Traffic and
Customs Affairs Sectors

Section One: Services provided by the Information and e-Government Authority

1. The concerned Authority has provided online services for passport and identity card issuance, issuing statements and certificates, birth and death certificates, and editing addresses. A government notification service has been introduced on smart devices for any action taken by an individual in one of the ministries and government bodies for follow up. Obtaining a certificate of good conduct has become effortless online, in addition to reporting and filing traffic accidents, viewing accident reports, and communicating with insurance companies online.
2. According to the information provided to the NIHR by the Authority, it is noted that the health and safety sector and the justice and security sector were among the sectors that benefited the most from their electronic services, where the number of beneficiaries for each sector reached approximately (1.5 million individuals).

Requirement Eight

NIHR's Position on the Efforts Made in the Field of Digital Transformation in the Government Services Sector and its Impact on the Human Rights Situation

1. Subsequent to reviewing the replies received from the majority of ministries and official bodies that were addressed as regards access to information on the efforts made by them to ensure digital transformation and enhance the enjoyment of various relevant rights and freedoms during Covid-19 pandemic and the consequences that led to undermining a number of basic human rights and freedoms. It is evident that the Kingdom of Bahrain has taken upon itself the responsibility to preserve the health and safety of everyone without exception or discrimination between a citizen and a resident, by adopting a package of decisions, precautionary measures, and well-thought-out preventive measures to minimize the damages resulting from the pandemic.
2. The Kingdom has employed social distancing instead of resorting to total closure, as happened in many countries of the world. This was achieved by turning to digital transformation of the provision of its services online. The electronic services ensured the continuity of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of their prescribed rights. Preparedness measures were elevated to confront the Covid-19 since its spread through launching of a wide range of decisions, precautionary measures, and carefully planned preventive measures, which contributed greatly to reducing the negative impacts caused by this virus.
3. The NIHR also noted that not all of the efforts made to address Covid-19 - especially those related to digital transformation of services provided by the government - were done on the spur the of the moment, but rather most of them were based on previously implemented electronic services that were developed further, as the situation required, and adopted during this pandemic.
4. This certainly indicates that the current and previous government agendas focus on moving forward towards enhancing sustainability elements and keeping pace with the changes in the aspects of education, health, housing, the judicial and justice sector, effective social care, regulating labor market, as well as other sectors to enable individuals enjoy the highest attainable standards, within the available resources of the State, of all their basic rights and freedoms.

Chapter Three

Major Issues that have a Direct Impact on the Human Rights Situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Preface and Partitioning:

1. It is recognized that the human rights situation, like other situations, are affected by conditions and changes in society, whether those changes are of a positive nature that promote the human rights situation in the country, or of a negative nature making those rights vulnerable to being violated. These circumstances and changes may be the result of security, political or economic factors that struck the community in its entirety, or a result of violations and transgressions affecting its capabilities and achievements.
2. This Chapter will address a number of issues that have a direct impact on the human rights situation. These issues were chosen due to the fact that the rights associated with them got a large number of complaints received by the NIHR, whether from persons whose freedom is restricted or from ordinary cases. In addition, they were drawn from the aid cases provided by the NIHR or from the daily monitoring of cases carried out by the NIHR during this year.
3. Five rights were selected and divided into five topics, namely the right of ordinary people and those whose freedom is restricted to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (the right to health); the right to communicate with the outside world; the right to physical and moral integrity; the right to an adequate standard of living (the right to work); and finally, the right to recognition of legal personality (the right to a nationality).
4. Then, for each topic, the national and international bases relevant to every one of the five human rights will be highlighted in a first section. Next, a selected synopsis for a number of complaints received by the NIHR, the legal aid it provided, a number of cases that were monitored, and the procedures that were carried out by the NIHR in this regard, will be presented in a second section.
5. Noting that of the rest of the rights, which the NIHR has received complaints about, provided aid to the complainants, or monitored such through the daily monitoring system, can be found in Chapter Four of this report.

First Topic

The Right to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (the Right to Health)

Preface:

1. The right to health is one of the most fundamental human rights. The enjoyment of individuals of this right is not only confined to access to health care and the absence of disease or disability, but also is closely related to the realization of other human rights, including the right to food, housing, work, education, human dignity, life, non-discrimination, equality, prohibition of torture, privacy, and the right to organize. These rights and freedoms, as well as other rights, are inseparable from the right to health, which altogether lead to the enjoyment of the highest level of health.
2. The World Health Organization has defined health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. States should guarantee both freedoms and rights; freedoms include the right to control one's health and body, and to be free from interference, for example, free from torture and non-consensual medical treatment and experimentation. Rights include the right to use a system of health services, and access to suitable health care facilities, as well as for States to take adequate measures regarding the social and economic determinants of health such as food, water, sanitation, safe and healthy working conditions, housing, and poverty.¹¹
3. Accordingly, this topic is addressed in two requirements, where the first requirement is intended to cover the international and national grounds related to the right to health, while the second requirement will highlight the NIHR's efforts in protecting the right to health.

General Comment No. (14) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Economic and Social Council, published on the website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR): <https://www.ohchr.org/AR/Issues/Health/Pages/AboutRightHealthandHR.aspx>

Requirement One
International and National Basis Relevant to the Right to the Enjoyment of
the Highest Attainable Standard of Health
(the Right to Health)

Section One: Ordinary people

1. The right to health is a fundamental right, which the state must take action to ensure that all its citizens enjoy the highest possible standards of it, as violation of the right to health affects the enjoyment of all other related rights, in addition to undermining the most important right, which is the right to life.
2. As regards international human rights instruments, the First Paragraph of Article No (25) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 confirms this as it states that, **“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services...”**
3. In addition, the First Paragraph of Article No (12) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded under Law No. (10) of 2007, states that, **“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.”**
4. Paragraph (2-d) of Article No (12) of the same Covenant, clarifies that the measures that the States parties to the present Covenant must take to ensure the full exercise of this right, must include: **“The creation of conditions which would assure to all medical service and medical attention in the event of sickness.”**
5. On the national level, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain guarantees the right of everyone to live in a good environment that secures a healthy and safe life for him. Paragraph (a) of Article No (8) of the Constitution affirms this right and states that, **“Every citizen is entitled to health care. The State cares for public health and the State ensure the means of prevention and treatment by establishing a variety of hospitals and healthcare institutions.”**

Section Two: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. The right to health care is an integral part of the duty of the authority in ensuring full respect for the inherent dignity of human beings. This obligation is enshrined in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners in principles (22) through (26) thereof; as it is firm that the principle of medical attention and the opportunity to receive medical care are among the rights guaranteed to every person, regardless of their legal status. Therefore, every detained or imprisoned person must have the opportunity to undergo an appropriate medical examination after being detained, while ensuring the provision of medical care and proper treatment, specialized and free treatment, whenever the need arises.
2. In the same context, Paragraph (3) of Article No (22) of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, which were adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in 1955, indicated that every prisoner has the right to seek the services of a qualified dental officer.
3. Viewed regardless of the legal status of a person, the right is guaranteed under Paragraph (1) of Article No (12) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which states that, **“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.”** In addition, Paragraph (2-d) of Article No (12) clarified the measures to be taken by States parties to the present Covenant to ensure the full exercise of this right include those necessary to **“The creation of conditions which would assure to all medical service and medical attention in the event of sickness.”** Paragraph (a) of Article No (8) of the Constitution affirms this right and considers that **“Every citizen is entitled to health care....”**.

Requirement Two

NIHR's Efforts in Protecting the Right to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (the Right to Health)

Section One: Received complaints

The NIHR played a major role in receiving complaints related to human rights of all types, examining them and referring what it deems necessary to the competent authorities, with effective follow-up. The NIHR received (22) complaints related to the individual's right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health (the right to health), of which (3) complaints were received from ordinary persons, whereas (19) complaints were received from inmates in reform and rehabilitation centers or pre-trial detention centers.

The complaints received by the NIHR, and the actions taken therein can be summarized as follows:

First: Ordinary people

1. The NIHR received a complaint from a mother of two children suffering from autism spectrum disorder (ADM). The complaint centered on the failure of the Ministry of Health to offer the required facilitation for people with special needs to obtain their regular medications from the pharmacy of Salmaniya Medical Complex. In addition, the waiting time is very long without any consideration to the special conditions of such patients, as they are treated in the same way as the rest of the patients in the waiting lines. Accordingly, the NIHR sent a letter to the Ministry of Health to consider promptly finding a mechanism to provide some doable facilitation (in general) for people with special needs. With regard to the specific complaint, the NIHR inquired if the Ministry can examine the option of allowing the complainant to obtain the medications for her two daughters through the pharmacy of the health center in her area of residence, or if the medications could be delivered to her home address. The Ministry of Health communicated with the complainant and arranged for the delivery of medicines for her two daughters via the prescription delivery service of Salmaniya Medical Complex and as appropriate with her circumstances.
2. In a related context, the NIHR received a complaint from a person named (A.A.S.) that the medicines for his illness were not available at the Infectious Diseases Department at Salmaniya Medical Complex, which prompted him to communicate with the NIHR on the matter. Upon receiving the complaint, the NIHR communicated directly with the Ministry of Health to ascertain the validity of the claim. The Ministry's response

confirmed the accuracy of the claim in its entirety, and that there is a deficiency in the provision of certain medicines, and promised to provide the medicine to the patient within two weeks from the date of the complaint. The NIHR also followed up with the complainant about his health condition, until he received his medication.

3. The NIHR also received a complaint from a person named (J.A.A.) who has been suffering from eye pain accompanied by a loss of vision. He followed up on his condition in a private clinic and was told that he has internal bleeding in the eye. In his complaint, he requested assistance in providing free medical treatment and surgery, as he cannot afford paying for it in the private medical sector, adding that he did not get a favorable outcome when he visited the Salmaniya Medical Complex. Accordingly, the NIHR immediately followed up on the matter, as found out that he was treated abroad.

Second: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. The NIHR received a complaint from the relatives of one of the inmates at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center named (M.A.A.), that the inmate did not receive medical treatment and health care for his chronic disease. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Center, where he was given the needed medication for his illness and referred to a chronic disease doctor to follow up on his health regularly.
2. The NIHR also received a complaint from the mother of one of the inmates at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center named (S.H.J.) that the inmate has experienced a fainting and convulsions spell, after which he was referred to the clinic of the Reform and Rehabilitation Center to receive the necessary medical treatment and health care. The examining doctor recommended transferring him to the Salmaniya Medical Complex for further examinations. However, the inmate's mother reported in the complaint that there was a delay in transferring the inmate for the required medical tests. Accordingly, the NIHR made direct communication with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. Their response indicated that a specialist examined the inmate and that he will follow up on his health condition, and that the inmate is regularly attending his doctor's appointments.
3. In addition, the NIHR received two complaints from the families of the inmates (B.M.A.) and (A.M.H.), that they were both infected with Covid-19 and the families wish to check on their health status and the actions taken in this regard. Consequently, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Center and it found out that the two inmates were transferred to the field

hospital in order to receive the necessary medical treatment and health care.

4. In addition, the NIHR received (3) complaints from the families of inmates (H.I.D.), (M.A.A.), and (H.A.A.), that they have not received the medications prescribed by specialists at the Salmaniya Medical Complex, where they are receiving medical care for the diseases they suffer from. Immediately, the NIHR made direct contact with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, followed up on the health status of the three inmates, and made sure that they have fully received the required medical treatment and health care.
5. In a related matter, the NIHR received (3) complaints from the families of the inmates (A.A.I.), (A.F.A.), and (H.J.H) that they have not received treatment and health care for their toothache. Immediately, the NIHR communicated with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center and found that two inmates were referred to the dental clinic to check up on their health status; the NIHR is following up the matter to make sure that the third inmate is being referred for treatment.
6. In the same context, the NIHR received a complaint from the father of inmate (R.A.M.), that the inmate suffers from a heart disease and has repeatedly fainted as a result, explaining that the inmate's appointments with the specialist are spaced over a long period of time. Accordingly, the NIHR immediately contacted the administration of the Center to check on the health status of the inmate. The Center replied that the inmate came to the internal clinic and an electrocardiogram was done for him and the result turned out good, and an appointment was booked for a head (brain) examination with the specialist.
7. The NIHR received a complaint from the sister of inmate (A.A.A.) that the inmate suffers from a torn ligament in the legs and stomach gland, and that he has appointments booked for him at the Salmaniya Medical Complex, but he was not transferred to attend the appointments. The NIHR immediately contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to look into the complaint. The Center's response indicated that the inmate's health condition is being constantly monitored, and that he is transferred to receive treatment on the scheduled appointments.
8. The NIHR also received a complaint from the lawyer of inmate (J.H.F.), that the inmate has several chronic diseases and did not receive the necessary treatment and health care. Accordingly, the NIHR made direct contact with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center.

As a result, the inmate was transferred to the Center's internal clinic, and was referred to a chronic diseases doctor to follow up on his condition regularly.

9. The NIHR received a complaint from the mother of inmate (H.A.J), that the inmate was suffering from stomach pain accompanied by vomiting, and requested assistance to have her son examined by a specialist. Accordingly, the NIHR immediately contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. The Center's response indicated that the inmate's health condition is being monitored in the Internal Medicine Department at Salmaniya Medical Complex, and that his health condition is stable.
10. In the same context, the NIHR received a complaint from the sister of inmate (J.F.M.), that her brother did not receive the vaccinations for hepatitis. Accordingly, the NIHR immediately communicated with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, where its response reported that an appointment for the inmate with a chronic disease doctor has been booked and the necessary measures with the Health Affairs Department of the Ministry of Interior were taken to vaccinate him against his illness.
11. In a related matter, the NIHR received a complaint from the mother of the inmate (M.F.A.), that her son did not receive treatment and health care for his neurological and urinary tract diseases. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center check on the health status of the inmate. The Center's response indicated that the inmate's health status is stable and is being followed up by specialists on a regular schedule.
12. The NIHR has also received (3) complaints from the families of inmates (F.A.A.), (Gh.R.A.), and (A.A.S.), that they need to be seen by a specialist to receive medical treatment and health care for their illnesses. The NIHR contacted the concerned authority and made sure they had received the necessary medical care.

Section Two: Provided legal aid

The NIHR provided (105) legal aid services related to the individual's right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health (the right to health), of which (8) legal aid services were provided to ordinary people and (97) legal aid services were provided to inmates in correction and rehabilitation centers or remand centers (pre-trial detention centers).

The legal assistance provided by the NIHR and the actions taken therein, can be summarized as follows:

First: Ordinary people

1. The NIHR provided legal assistance to a resident of the Kingdom of Bahrain (M.M.A.) on his request to get help to book an appointment to be vaccinated against Covid-19. The NIHR informed him of the procedures to be followed, and helped him obtain an appointment.
2. The NIHR also provided (2) legal aid services to (M.A.A.) and (A.J.D.), they requested the NIHR to intervene with the Ministry of Health on maintaining the previous treatment plan for sickle cell disease patients (Sickler). The NIHR explained to them that specialists draw up treatment plans in accordance with the applicable protocols.
3. In the same matter, the NIHR provided legal assistance to (Z.A.M.) regarding her request to refer her husband to a psychiatric hospital. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the concerned, and informed her of the procedures to be followed. In addition, the NIHR followed up the matter with the concerned authorities until her husband was referred to psychiatry, and the legal aid case was closed because the intended result was achieved.
4. In addition, the NIHR provided (3) legal aid services to (N.J.A.), (A.A.A.), and (B.Kh.M.) concerning being discriminated against them due to their refusal to receive the vaccine against Covid-19, in terms of their inability to benefit from governmental services for which access to the headquarters of various authorities requires presenting the vaccination certificate. They also indicated the absence of a clear mechanism for obtaining a vaccine exemption certificate for health reasons, or the absence of a mechanism that would enable individuals who have received the vaccine abroad to enter the places that require presenting the vaccination certificate. The NIHR addressed the Supreme Council of Health, and requested finding alternatives to the services that require in-person attendance to receive government services, in addition to educating shop owners about the decisions related to vaccination requirements to enter these places, and other measure.
5. The Supreme Council of Health clarified in its response that those who did not receive the vaccine could use all government services according to COVID-19 Alert Level Traffic Light System that was announced, and the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Corona virus follows up and

evaluates all the cases. If a person has allergic reactions, another type of approved and available vaccines will be given that have different components and do not cause an allergic to the person. If this is not applicable, the case is evaluated and the required vaccine exemption is granted. In addition, the National Taskforce gives tourists entering the Kingdom of Bahrain through all ports of entry a card stating that they have obtained the vaccine, which is used to enter all places available to the vaccinated.

6. The NIHR provided legal assistance to (F.W.A.), that a patient with special needs and infected with Covid-19, who is in the inherited blood disorders building at Salmaniya Medical Complex (which was converted into a quarantine center) did not have access to full medical care. The patient's mother made several calls, but did not receive a response from the concerned parties in the Ministry of Health. After following up the case, the NIHR made sure that the health of the patient is stable and that he has access to periodic medical care.
7. The NIHR also provided legal assistance to (F.M.A.) regarding a request to obtain approval on importing medicines for her son from outside the Kingdom of Bahrain, as he has special needs. The NIHR provided her with legal advice and informed her of the procedures to be followed in this regard. In addition, the NIHR communicated with The National Regulatory Authority for Health Professions and Services, which is the body concerned with the conditions and controls for importing and distributing drugs in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
8. On a different note, the NIHR provided (2) legal aid services to (H.A.A.) and (S.A.M.), in which they requested examining the manner in which the medical staff of the Salmaniya Medical Complex deal with them, and improving their health conditions. The NIHR provided them with legal advice and informed them of the procedures to be followed, namely, to submit their complaints to the Complaints Receiving Division at the Ministry of Health, and inform the NIHR of the updates. The concerned authority considered their requests and acted appropriately in their regard.

Second: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. The NIHR provided (97) legal aid services to the inmates of rehabilitation and reform centers and pre-trial detention centers, whether the inmates submitted the requests themselves or by their families. The contents varied between requesting assistance in referring them to specialists, or in following up their health status with doctors and booking their periodic appointments in various medical specialties, including: dentistry,

ophthalmology, internal medicine, heart, or regarding obtaining dispensing orders to dispense supplies or healthy meals for inmates suffering from chronic diseases, as well as other areas. The NIHR has studied all of the requests and taken the necessary action in their regard. It immediately communicated with correction and rehabilitation centers and pre-trial detention centers to check on the health conditions of the inmates and detainees, and found out that appropriate solutions were made.

2. In connection with the right to health, especially after the outbreak of the Corona virus (Covid-19), the NIHR provided legal assistance to the family of one of the inmates in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, in which they requested to check on their son's health condition and make sure that he was not infected with Covid-19. The NIHR immediately made direct contact with the administration of the Center to check up on the health status of the inmate, and it turned out that he had been transferred to the field hospital to receive the necessary treatment and health care.

Section Three: Monitoring the human rights situation (fact finding)

1. The NIHR is responsible for monitoring cases of human rights violations, investigating a specific incident or allegation of human rights violations, and conducting announced and unannounced field visits to monitor the human rights situation in correctional institutions, places of detention, labor gatherings, health and educational centers, or any other public place suspected of being a site of human rights violations. Furthermore, it is responsible for making suggestions pertaining to the initiatives aimed at putting an end to these violations, and when necessary, expressing its opinion on the position and reactions of those parties.
2. The NIHR has monitored (26) cases connected with the individual's right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable level of health (the right to health), of which (11) cases were for ordinary people and (15) cases related to inmates in reform and rehabilitation centers or remand centers.

The monitoring cases and the actions taken therein can be summarized as follows:

First: Ordinary people

1. The NIHR monitored news about a medical negligence claim made by a Covid-19 infected patient named (S.F.J.) in the Salmaniya Medical Complex. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the patient's family to inquire about his health condition and the measures taken in this regard. It also followed up the statement made by the Ministry of Health regarding the

case, and it became evident that the patient was admitted to intensive care from the moment he entered the Salmaniya Medical Complex.

2. The NIHR also monitored a personal appeal made on social media that (E.M.E.) which had a traffic accident in one of the Gulf countries, which led to him being immobile (movement disability), and that he requests that the State cover his treatment expenses outside the Kingdom of Bahrain. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted him, and it assisted to follow up with the High Committee for Overseas Treatment of the Supreme Council of Health, which, in its turn, followed up the issue with the person concerned, in accordance with the applicable controls and regulations.
3. One of the cases monitored by the NIHR focused on the death of the citizen (A.A.A.) because he was injured while exercising in a club in the Kingdom, during the health center in his area was closed and a private hospital refused to provide him with the necessary health care. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the concerned persons in the Ministry of Health to provide it with data and statistics in this regard, but the NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report. Noting that the NIHR viewed the directives issued by His Highness the Prime Minister and the Crown Prince regarding the around-the-clock (24/7) operation of a number of health centers including the health care center subject to this monitoring case.
4. One of the cases monitored by the NIHR was about the paralysis of a child after receiving the appropriate treatment was delayed. The child was transferred to the United Kingdom for hospitalization at the State's expense, but a decision was issued to stop his treatment and return him home. The NIHR immediately followed up, with the concerned staff in the Ministry Health and sent a letter in this regard. The Ministry's reply clarified that the child's treatment was not stopped, but rather the child was transferred to complete his treatment in Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz Humanitarian City in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the consent of the father of the child. The Overseas Treatment Department at the Ministry of Health made the necessary arrangements to start the patient's treatment.
5. In a related context, the National Institution for Human Rights monitored news on social media that a Bahraini citizen entered a hospital abroad after exhausting the available treatment methods in the Kingdom, and was unable to complete the remaining stage of his treatment, due to weak financial ability. His family appealed the public to help them defray the costs of his treatment. The National Institution for Human Rights contacted the patient's family to obtain details of his health condition, follow up on

the matter, and ensure that the official authorities in the Kingdom follow up on his condition.

6. In the same context, the NIHR has monitored a number of cases through social media on the unreasonable delays in arrival of the national ambulance service to critical cases infected with Covid-19. Among those cases, are the cases of two women infected with Covid-19 and suffering from lack of oxygen as well as other diseases who were refused admission to the Salmaniya Medical Complex when they arrived by private transportation. In addition, there was news about a citizen infected with the Covid-19 who died because the Salmaniya Medical Complex was not able to provide him with a bed for two days. Another monitoring case was about the delay of the national ambulance in returning an elderly woman after completing her dialysis session. The NIHR followed up with the competent authorities, where the necessary measures were taken to provide treatment for both women.
7. In addition, the NIHR monitored the case of a female citizen who was discriminated against and prevented from entering a store located outside the mall because she is not vaccinated against Covid-19. The COVID-19 Alert Level Traffic Light was yellow at the time, which allows the opening of many activities and sectors for non-vaccinated people, including stores located outside commercial complexes.
8. Moreover, the NIHR monitored through social media a complaint related to denying entry to shops for individuals who have received two shots of vaccine in the Gulf countries. One of the persons showed proof of receiving two doses of vaccination in the State of Kuwait when trying to enter a restaurant, yet he was denied entry. He indicated that he could not benefit from BeAware application, which cast a shadow over his guaranteed rights, including entering shops, markets and other facilities.
9. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Supreme Council of Health regarding the above two cases. In its reply, the Supreme Council explained that some private sector entities do not abide by the conditions and mechanism of the COVID-19 Alert Level Traffic Light, including for example allowing those who are not vaccinated to enter when the Alert Level is green. Complaints about these cases are received through official channels, and the Supreme Council communicates with these entities to clarify the instructions, but the decision remains with the private sector if they wish to step up measures to ensure the safety of visitors. In addition, the National Taskforce gives tourists entering the Kingdom of Bahrain through all ports of entry a card stating that they have obtained the

vaccine, which is used to enter all places available to those vaccinated. This card is certified and approved by the Ministry of Health and is equivalent to the vaccination certificate in the (BeAware) application. Moreover, the applications of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries are approved in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and its users can prove that they have received the vaccine and enter the places available to the vaccinated only without the need for any other application or certification.

Second: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. The NIHR monitored news about the inmate (Y.A.E.) who suffered from a health problem that made him unable to walk pleading with the concerned authorities for his release on medical grounds. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the inmate's family for details of his health condition, and it turned out that the inmate receives regular treatment and health care for "the displacement of crystals in the inner ear (vertigo)", which causes dizziness, nausea, vomiting, loss of balance or instability, and inability to control eye movements. The NIHR addressed the concerned authorities to consider the possibility of his release for health reasons, but the NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.
2. The NIHR also monitored news about the health status of one of the inmates named (A.A.S.) in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center stating that the results of the inmate's recent tests showed a decrease in blood sugar level, a decrease in white blood cells and calcium. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to look into the matter. In its reply, the Center indicated that the inmate had medical checkup at the clinic and received the appropriate treatment.
3. One of the monitoring cases focused on the transfer of the inmate (Y.A.F.) in a deteriorating health condition from the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to one of hospitals in the Kingdom. The NIHR immediately made direct contact with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to look into the matter. The Center's response explained that the inmate is referred to the medical clinic regularly and receives the appropriate treatment.
4. On a related level, the NIHR monitored news about inmate (MAH.) going on strike for three days in protest over the quality and quantity of food provided at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. The NIHR made direct contact with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to look into the matter. The Center's response explained that the

inmate is being referred to the medical clinic regularly and is receiving the appropriate treatment.

5. In addition, the NIHR monitored news about inmate (M.J.Q.) who went on strike protesting over the delay in obtaining treatment and health care for his toothache, as well as suffering low blood sugar. The NIHR immediately contacted the concerned officials in the Center to look into the matter. It found out that the inmate was taken to the dental clinic in the Center's infirmary on the same day, as he requested placing dental crowns over his teeth in addition to cleaning them. The inmate was referred to the teeth-cleaning specialist, and then the dental crown was placed. Afterwards, he was referred to the general physician as he claimed having stomach pain and was given the necessary treatment. The specialist doctor examined the inmate to consider changing the meals provided to him as required by his health condition upon the inmate's request.
6. The case of inmate (H.A.M.) who is suffering from severe headache, pain in his body, and who did not receive treatment and health care, was monitored by the NIHR. Accordingly, the NIHR made direct communication with the administration of the Center and inquired about the matter. The Center's response explained that the inmate is referred to the medical clinic on an ongoing basis, and receives the appropriate treatment.
7. The NIHR also monitored news about inmate (H.A.S.) who is suffering from several health problems, including sinusitis, ulcers in the tongue, and eye pain, and that he did not receive treatment and health care. The NIHR made direct communication with the Center's administration and inquired about the matter. The Center's response explained that the inmate was referred to the specialist doctor and received the appropriate treatment.
8. By virtue of its legal position and its oversight responsibilities, the NIHR monitored the case of inmate (H.M.H.), who suffers from pain in his body and his condition necessitated his transfer to the clinic. Force had to be used by police officers to enter the building in which the inmate lives in order to transfer him to the clinic, as this coincided with the inmates' sit-in that happened in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, specifically in buildings (12) and (13). When the inmate's health condition stabilized, he was returned to his cell.
9. The NIHR monitored a case on social media (Twitter) regarding inmate (M.J.A.) who suffered from health problems in the stomach before being arrested, and his relatives' appeal to refer him to a specialist as well as to facilitate bringing in his prescribed medicines to the Center. To obtain

details on the inmate's case to be able to communicate with the concerned authorities, the NIHR posted a tweet urging the inmate's family to communicate with it as soon as possible, but the NIHR did not receive a call from the inmate's family during the timeframe of this report.

10. The NIHR also monitored an email from a lawyer regarding the health status of three inmates named (H.A.H), (Y.J.A.), and (A.J.A.), focusing on their right to treatment and health care for the various diseases they suffer from, such as sickle cell anemia, chest and stomach pain, neck pain and headache. The NIHR immediately contacted the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to find out their health conditions, and it turned out that the inmates were referred to specialists and have regular follow-up appointments at Salmaniya Medical Complex.
11. On a related level, the NIHR monitored the circulating news about inmate (A.N.S.), as the news included an audio clip for the inmate saying that he suffers from Crohn's disease and his treatment was stopped a month ago and he is not allowed doctor's visits and his health is deteriorating. Immediately, the NIHR made direct contact with the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to establish the health status of the inmate and its developments, as it found out that the inmate was referred to the specialist and received treatment and health care.
12. In the same context, the NIHR monitored news on social media regarding the deterioration of the health condition of inmate (M.A.A.), and that the inmate stopped communicating with his family for more than a week, and that his family is concerned for his safety, especially that he has sickle cell anemia (Sickler). Immediately, the NIHR contacted the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to find out the health status of the inmate, and it found out that he is in good health.
13. The NIHR also monitored news published in one of the official newspapers about an inmate, over the age of forty, who was found to be infected by the Corona virus in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, following a noticeable rise in his temperature. The inmate was subjected to a medical examination and transferred to the field hospital for treatment. The news also added that those inmates in contact with the inmate infected by the Corona virus were tested and the results came negative. In addition, the General Directorate of Civil Defence has disinfected all the facilities of the building and clinic.
14. In a related context, the NIHR monitored the announcement of the Ministry of Interior that it has discovered that two employees of the Services Department at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center had been infected

with the Corona virus during periodic examinations. The prescribed health procedures were applied, and those in contact were tested and subjected to precautionary isolation.

15. In connection with the right to health, the NIHR monitored news on the death of inmate (H.A.B.) because of complications from infection with the Corona virus. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the concerned staff in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, and it was found that the Royal Medical Services referred the inmate to the Salmaniya Medical Complex after ensuring that his health condition was stable according to the established treatment protocol. He was placed in ward (62) in the Salmaniya Medical Complex, which is designated for those infected with the Corona virus. The results of the chest x-rays that were conducted for the inmate showed that he has developed pneumonia because of Covid-19 complications and was placed on a respirator operating at the highest level, but he passed away later due to complications, after a period of stabilized health condition.

Requirement Three

Recommendations Pertaining to the Right to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (the Right to Health)

In view of the above, the NIHR recommends the following:

1. Call upon the competent authorities to step up health care services for persons with disabilities, follow up on their affairs, give them additional facilities, and work towards developing radical solutions that guarantee their enjoyment of the right to health. This can be achieved, for example, by assigning specific offices for the persons with disabilities to receive their medications, exempting them from waiting queues in hospitals, or by creating a sustainable and continuous process through which their medication can be delivered to their residence.
2. Urge the competent authority to develop a monitoring system for drug stock and consumption rates, to avoid drug shortages or unavailability in various pharmacies and short expiry dates. In addition to ensuring that the medicines are compatible with the needs of patients, especially those with chronic diseases and people with disabilities, while making sure that the modalities for obtaining them are easy and convenient.
3. Call for establishing a mini-hospital in reform and rehabilitation centers, to be affiliated with the competent authority concerned with public hospitals and primary healthcare centers affairs, for transferring ailing inmates speedily, especially for urgent cases. In addition, provide the mini-hospital with specialized medical staff in various fields, including, for example, the rehabilitation and treatment of drug addicts, internal diseases, minor surgeries and dental clinics, in addition to providing a comprehensive pharmacy to avoid shortage or delay of medicines obtained from Salmaniya Medical Complex.

Second Topic

The Right to Communicate with the Outside World

Preface:

1. The right to communicate with the outside world is one of the most imperative minimum rights that must be recognized for persons whose freedom is restricted. This right contributes directly to supporting the mental health condition of the inmate and imparting reassurance and stability, which undoubtedly reflects on him/her and enhances his/her positive behavior. This can be achieved by granting the inmate the right to communicate with his/her family, friends, or those who are entitled to facilitate his/her daily life. The right to communicate with the outside world is an important element of social cohesion as well.

2. Given the importance of this right and its key role in the rehabilitation of inmates, this topic will be addressed in two requirements. The first requirement will be devoted to talking about international and national grounds related to the right to communicate with the outside world, while the second requirement will highlight the NIHR's efforts in protecting the right to communicate with the outside world.

Requirement One

International and National Basis Pertaining to the Right to Communicate with the Outside World

1. The right to communicate with the outside world, especially for the inmate, is on the one hand, an essential part of the social rehabilitation of the inmate and, on the other hand, it is an important element to returning to his/her community. The essence of this right is not to deny the accused or the inmate from contacting whomever he/she deems fit for help in managing his/her own interests, including allowing family visits and issuing power of attorneys in accordance with the provisions of the Correctional and Rehabilitation Institutions Law and its executive regulations, in implementation of the international human rights standards that affirm the right of those deprived of their liberties to humane treatment based on their inherent dignity.
2. The right to communicate with the outside world is also a basic guarantee that protects those deprived of their liberties from the exposure to violations such as torture and ill-treatment, as confirmed by several relevant international instruments, as well as the provisions of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the relevant national legislation.
3. Regarding international human rights instruments, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded under Law No. (56) of 2006, affirmed, in Clauses (3-a/b) of Article No. 14, this right by saying that, **“In the determination of any criminal charge against him, everyone shall be entitled to the following minimum guarantees, in full equality: (a) To be informed promptly and in detail in a language which he understands of the nature and cause of the charge against him. (b) to have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence and to communicate with counsel of his own choosing.”**
4. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance affirmed in Paragraph (2-d) of Article No. 17 that, **“Without prejudice to other international obligations of the State Party with regard to the deprivation of liberty, each State Party shall, in its legislation: (d) Guarantee that any person deprived of liberty shall be authorized to communicate with and be visited by his or her family, counsel or any other person of his or her choice, subject only to the conditions established by law, or, if he or she is a foreigner, to**

communicate with his or her consular authorities, in accordance with applicable international law.”

5. The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners guarantees the right to communicate with the outside world, in Rule No (37) stating that, **“Prisoners shall be allowed under necessary supervision to communicate with their family and reputable friends at regular intervals, both by correspondence and by receiving visits.”** Rule No (38) states that, **“(1) Prisoners who are foreign nationals shall be allowed reasonable facilities to communicate with the diplomatic and consular representatives of the State to which they belong. (2) Prisoners who are nationals of States without diplomatic or consular representation in the country and refugees or stateless persons shall be allowed similar facilities to communicate with the diplomatic representative of the State which takes charge of their interests or any national or international authority whose task it is to protect such persons.”**
6. The same obligation was also consolidated in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules) in Rule (58/1), which stipulates that, **“Prisoners shall be allowed, under necessary supervision, to communicate with their family and friends at regular intervals: (a) By corresponding in writing and using, where available, telecommunication, electronic, digital and other means; and (b) By receiving visits.”**
7. The same right is also addressed in the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment in Principle No. (19), which stipulates that, **“A detained or imprisoned person shall have the right to be visited by and to correspond with, in particular, members of his family and shall be given adequate opportunity to communicate with the outside world, subject to reasonable conditions and restrictions as specified by law or lawful regulations.”**
8. In fact, recognizing the right of those whose freedom is restricted to communicate with the outside world leads to taking procedures and measures that ensure their enjoyment of such right in a manner that does not undermine its essence and does not dispossess its value and purpose. It is also recognized that the competent authority is entitled to set regulatory controls, provided that they are not abused, are in line with legal frameworks and international standards adopted in this regard, and that such right is not subject to any restrictions or controls except to the extent

necessary to attain the interests of justice and corresponding to the legal status of the detainee pursuant to Article No (31) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

9. It is worth mentioning that the Code of Criminal Procedure promulgated by Legislative Decree No (46) of 2002 regarding criminal procedures, as amended, affirmed this right in Paragraph (2) of Article No. (61) thereof, by stating that, **“Every person who is arrested shall be informed of the reasons for his/her arrest and shall have the right to contact any of his relatives to inform them of what has happened and to seek the aid of a lawyer.”**
10. Law No. (18) of 2014 on Correctional and Rehabilitation Institutions affirmed this right in Article No. (15) Thereof, by stating that, **“if a detained or imprisoned person is held or transferred from one place of detention or imprisonment to another, he/she shall be entitled to communicate with his/her family to notify them of the transfer and of the place where he is kept in custody. If a detained or imprisoned person is a foreigner he/she shall be entitled to communicate with the embassy of the State of which he/she is a national or his/her diplomatic or consular representative, as determined by the executive regulations.”**

Requirement Two

NIHR's Efforts in Protecting the Right to Communicate with the Outside World

Section One: Received complaints

The NIHR has received (30) complaints pertaining to the right of persons whose freedom is restricted to communicate with the outside world. These can be summarized, as well as the actions taken in their regard, as follows:

1. The NIHR has received (22) complaints from the families of inmates that they were infected with the emerging coronavirus (Covid-19), and due to that, the inmates have not communicated with their families for more than a week. The families requested the help of the NIHR in communicating with the concerned authorities to ensure that the inmates enjoy the right to communicate with the outside world. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Center to inquire about the complaints. The Center replied that some of the inmates were infected with Covid-19 and were transferred to the field hospital to receive the necessary treatment and health care, while the other inmates were not infected. As a result, communications will be scheduled for the infected inmates and those in contact with those who have been infected according to the precautionary measures in place in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. The NIHR has followed up on the matter with the families of the inmates up until the administration of the Center took all necessary measures regarding this issue.
2. The NIHR has received a complaint from the mother of inmate (K.J.M.) that the inmate had stopped communicating with his family twice in a row without any reason. Upon receiving the complaint, the NIHR communicated directly with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. The Center, in its reply, explained that there were technical problems that led to the interruption of communication with the inmate's family, and as soon as the problem was fixed, the inmate was granted another phone call.
3. In addition, the NIHR received (3) complaints from the families of inmates (Q.M.K.), (Z.M.A.), and (F.A.A.), that the communication of the inmates with their families has been interrupted for no reason whatsoever. The NIHR contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. The Center's reply explained that the interruption in communication was attributed to the illegal sit-in that was carried out by some inmates in buildings (12-13-14) and the refusal of the inmates to

enter into their rooms until their demands were met. The sit-in disrupted all the interests and rights of the other inmates, including the right to communicate with the outside world. In this same regard, the NIHR submitted a list that includes all the cases that have been received by the NIHR regarding the interruption of communication to the administration of the Center to make available means of communication to them as soon as possible. Consequently, the administration of the Center offered those inmates wishing to communicate with their families to do so.

4. In the same context, the NIHR has received a complaint from the wife of inmate (A.A.Y.) that the inmate's communication has been interrupted for five days without any reason. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to look into the matter, and it was found that the inmate has communicated with his parents.
5. The NIHR has also received a complaint from the wife of inmate (A.A.Y.) that the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center did not grant approval to visit her husband by (8) eight people. After communicating with the Center, it was clarified that determining the number of visitors for each inmate is subject to organizational and administrative procedures of the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center.
6. On a related level, the NIHR has received a complaint from the mother of inmate (A.H.A.) that the inmate's communication was interrupted for eleven days with no reason whatsoever. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to look into the matter. The response explained that the inmate has communicated with his family.
7. In addition, the NIHR has received a complaint from the sister of inmate (M.S.A.) that the inmate's communication was interrupted for eleven days with no reason. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to ensure that the inmate enjoys the right to communicate with the outside world. The Center explained in its reply that the complaint is not correct, as according to the lists of the administration of the Center, the inmate makes phone calls periodically and he did not stop communicating during the mentioned period.

Section Two: Provided legal aid

The NIHR provided (26) legal aid services pertaining to the right to communicate with the outside world, of which one legal aid service was for ordinary people and (25) legal aid services were for people whose freedom is restricted.

The legal aid provided, and the action taken thereto, can be summarized as follows:

First: Ordinary people

The NIHR has provided legal assistance to an appeal made by a woman about being detained in a private hospital, prevented from communicating with her family, and not allowing them to visit her, explaining that she was given strong medications that made her unconscious, and sedated all the time. She also alleged that nurses and doctors mistreated her throughout her stay in the hospital. The NIHR immediately addressed the National Health Regulatory Authority for Health Professions and Services regarding the above. The Authority's reply reported that the concerned person was contacted and the aforementioned allegation was investigated and the matter is closed.

Second: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. The NIHR has provided legal assistance to the relatives of inmate (A.G.H.) regarding his inability to communicate with his wife abroad. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. The Center's response explained that the administration met with the inmate regarding this matter and found out that the inmate, when asked to provide the phone numbers he wanted to communicate with while serving his sentence, did not register his wife's number. Accordingly, he was provided with a contact form to include his wife's phone number in the system to enable him to communicate with her.
2. The NIHR has also provided (2) legal aid services to the families of inmates (F.N.H.) and (H.Y.A.), who have explained that the inmates' communication with their families have been interrupted for no reason. Accordingly, the NIHR communicated directly with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. The Center's response clarified that a number of inmates in buildings (12-13-14) carried out an illegal sit-in and refused to enter into their rooms, and some of the inmates refused to communicate with their families until their demands were met. This sit-in disrupted all the interests and rights of other inmates, including the right to communicate with the outside world. In turn, the NIHR has submitted lists containing the names of the inmates whose families communicated with it to help in arranging calls after communication was interrupted. The

administration of the Center offered those inmates wishing to communicate with their families to do so.

3. On a related level, the NIHR has provided two legal aid services to the families of inmates (M.S.A.) and (H.A.A.) on requesting assistance in reopening visitations at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw, since the Kingdom of Bahrain has moved to the green alert level of spread of Covid-19. Accordingly, the NIHR made direct communication with the administration of the Center, and its response explained that visitation arrangements for the families with the inmates would be set as soon as possible while taking preventive measures.
4. In the same regard, the NIHR has provided two legal aid services to the families of the inmates (H.M.A.) and (ANA), regarding the interruption of the inmates' communication with their families due to their transfer to solitary confinement. Accordingly, the NIHR followed up with the families of the inmates to communicate with their sons, and hence, the case was dismissed because the violation ended.
5. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance to the father of inmate (H.A.A.) about a possible breakdown in the internal communication system of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center that led to the inmate's inability to communicate with his relatives. The NIHR immediately conducted an inspection visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to check the status of the communication system in place. During the visit, the delegation of the NIHR met with a number of the Center's officials, who explained that due to the exceptional circumstances owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, only (10) phone booths out of (40) were activated. They added that any incidental break or malfunctioning of these phone booths is repaired in a timely manner immediately. The delegation of the NIHR also visited the phone booths to test the communication process to ensure its readiness and robustness.
6. In addition, the NIHR has provided two legal aid services to the families of inmates (A.A.Y.) and (J.M.H.), regarding the interruption of the inmates' communication with their families due to the expiration of their calling cards and losing their purchase cards, thus, they are unable to buy phone credit to communicate with their families. The NIHR immediately made direct contact with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center on the matter, and the Center's response explained that the Administration would take the necessary action to replace the calling cards.
7. The NIHR has also provided (9) legal aid services to the families of a number of inmates, regarding their request to look into the reason for the

interruption of inmates' communication with their families. The NIHR followed up the issue, and it found out that the inmates communicated with their families, and accordingly, the case was dismissed since the outcome was achieved.

8. On a related level, the NIHR has provided (3) legal aid services to the families of inmates (M.M.A.), (M.J.M.) and (M.A.M.) regarding the interruption of inmates' communication due to their infection with Covid-19, as well as another similar case regarding inmate (H.H.J.) being in quarantine. The NIHR immediately made direct communication with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to check on their condition. After following up the matter, the NIHR made sure that the inmates communicated with their families and received routine health care and that their health status was stable. The cases were dismissed since the outcome was achieved.
9. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to the family of inmate (J.M.H.) regarding the interruption of their son's communication with his family because of the misconduct of a number of inmates; thus, administrative penalties were implemented against all inmates in the building. The NIHR made direct communication with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, and after follow-up, the NIHR made sure that the inmate communicated with his relatives, and accordingly the case was dismissed since the outcome was achieved.
10. In the same context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to the families of inmate (A.M.Sh.) regarding the inmate's failure to communicate with his family for (17) days for no reason. The NIHR immediately made direct communication with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to find out the situation of the inmate. The Center's response indicated that the allegations made by the inmate's relatives are incorrect, as after reviewing the inmate's communications log, it was found that he makes all his periodic calls normally, and the inmate has the freedom to choose the people he wants to communicate with.

Section Three: Monitoring the human rights situation (fact finding)

The NIHR has monitored (3) cases related to the right of persons whose freedom is restricted to communicate with the outside world. The monitoring cases and the actions taken therein can be summarized as follows:

1. The NIHR monitored news via e-mail from a civil society organization as regards the interruption of communication of inmate (Z.J.A.) with his family for (6) months for no apparent reason. By virtue of its legal position and its

oversight responsibilities, the NIHR immediately conducted a field visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to determine the situation of the inmate. The NIHR met with the inmate in a private room outside the cell, and the right to privacy was realized during the interview, with no presence of the representatives of the administration of the Center and no handcuffs.

2. In this regard, the NIHR notes that it had received a similar complaint from the inmate's family earlier, and at that time, the NIHR had contacted the concerned officials at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, and viewed a number of video recordings showing the inmate performing some activities in the Center like the rest of the inmates. It was confirmed then that the inmate was fine, but he has been refraining from using his right to communicate with his relatives over the phone after being transferred to another building.
3. In this respect, the NIHR emphasizes that communicating with the outside world is a fundamental right guaranteed to inmates; the choice to enjoy this right is left to the inmate, and the inmate cannot be forced to communicate with his relatives in the event of his refusal.
4. On a related level, the NIHR has monitored news about the transfer of inmate (A.A.M.) to solitary confinement and the interruption of his communication with his family. Accordingly, the NIHR made direct contact with those concerned in the administration of the Center. It was found that the inmate was transferred to solitary confinement for two days as a disciplinary punishment for failure to follow the Center's internal procedures and regulations, which are stipulated in the Correctional and Rehabilitation Institutions Law and the associated executive regulations.
5. One of the monitoring cases focused on the transfer of inmate (H.R.B.) to solitary confinement and the interruption of communication with his family. Accordingly, the NIHR communicated directly with the concerned officials in the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, where its response explained that the inmate is not in solitary confinement, but rather he is in the health isolation building because he has visited the outpatient clinics, consistent with the precautionary procedures in force.

Requirement Three

NIHR's Recommendations Related to the Right to Communicate with the Outside World

In view of the foregoing, the NIHR recommends the following:

1. Take the necessary measures to avoid interruption of communication of persons placed in social care homes or private hospitals with their families or lawyers.
2. Reconsider promptly the suspension of in-person family visits to correction and rehabilitation centers by the competent authorities especially that the infection rates with the Corona virus are declining. In addition, call for increasing the number of video calls allowed to inmates or detainees, in particular those infected with the virus or in contact with them, as well as the quarantined and isolated inmates in designated buildings.
3. Take the necessary measures to ensure that the inmates and detainees in correction and rehabilitation centers are granted the right to communicate immediately with any member of their family, as deemed appropriate, to inform them of what happened, and to enable them seek the assistance of a lawyer, whether in felonies or misdemeanors, while giving the lawyer sufficient time when meeting the inmate or the detainee.

Third Topic

The Right to Physical and Mental Integrity

Preface:

1. The right to physical and mental integrity is one of the most fundamental and noble human rights. It is a right that the majority of constitutions and legislations in various countries have always respected and provided for. It requires not to transgress the human body or attack its physical or moral entity, in any circumstances and under any justification whatsoever, even if it aims in essence the interest of the latter.
2. The first paragraph of Article No. 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment defines the term **“torture”** as **“any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.”**
3. Accordingly, this topic will be addressed through two requirements; the first will be devoted to cover international and national grounds pertaining to the right to physical and mental integrity, and the second requirement will highlight the efforts of the NIHR in protecting the right to physical and mental integrity.

Requirement One

International and National Basis Relevant to the Right to Physical and Mental Integrity

1. The right to physical and mental integrity is one of the basic pillars of human survival because it is closely related to the right to life, as it embodies physical or mental harm to the individual in a way that causes severe pain or suffering, such as being subjected to torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in a manner that hinders the exercise of his/her other rights and freedoms.
2. At the international human rights instruments level, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded pursuant to Law No. (56) of 2006, affirmed in Article No. (7) thereto that, **“No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment...”**
3. Paragraph (1) of Article No. (1) of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment has the same meaning, stating that, **“For the purposes of this Convention, the term “torture” means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, ...”**
4. The Arab Charter on Human Rights did not overlook this, as Paragraph No. (1) of Article (8) thereof states that, **“No one shall be subjected to physical or psychological torture or to cruel, degrading, humiliating or inhuman treatment.”**
5. The national legislation safeguards this right, as Article No. (19-d) of the Constitution stipulates that **“No person shall be subjected to physical or mental torture, or inducement, or degrading treatment, ..., Any statement or confession proved to have been made under torture, inducement, or such treatment, or the threat thereof, shall be null and void”**. On the other hand, Article No. (20-c) of the Constitution affirms that, **“An accused person is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a legal trial in which he is assured of the necessary guarantees to exercise the right of defence at all stages of the investigation and trial ...”**.

6. The Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, as amended, also contained provisions that provide the legal cover to protect the right to physical and mental integrity. The legislator has added further protection, manifested in the issuance of Law No. (52) of 2012 amending some provisions of the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, where Article (208) stipulates that, **“Any public official or person entrusted with a public official who intentionally inflicts severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, on a person he detains or is under his control for such purposes as obtaining from him or from a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, shall be punished with imprisonment. Any public official or person entrusted with a public service who threatens a person he detains or is under his control with any of the acts prescribed in the First Paragraph of this Article, or if such acts are committed by a third person by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official, the penalty shall be life imprisonment when torture leads to the death of the victim. The provisions contained in this Article shall not be applicable to pain or suffering arising from, or is a result of, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions. The statute of limitations for crimes of torture provided for in this Article shall not apply.”**
7. Article (232) of the Penal Code stipulates that, **“Any person who intentionally inflicts severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, on a person he detains or is under his control for the purpose of obtaining from him or from a third person information or a confession, or punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, shall be punished with imprisonment. Any person who threatens another person he detains or is under his control with any of the acts set forth in the First Paragraph of this Article, or if such acts are committed by a third person by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of such person, shall be imprisoned. The penalty shall be life imprisonment when torture leads to the death of the victim. The statute of limitations for crimes of torture provided for in this Article shall not apply.”**

Requirement Two

NIHR's Efforts in Protecting the Right to Physical and Mental Integrity

Section One: Received complaints

The NIHR has received (20) complaints related to protecting the right to physical and mental integrity, of which (6) complaints were from ordinary people and (14) complaints were received from inmates in Correction and rehabilitation centers or pre-trial detention centers.

The most important complaints received by the NIHR, and the actions taken therein can be summarized as follows:

First: Ordinary people

1. The NIHR has received a complaint from a person named (A.Y.H.), about his wife (N.A.A.) and his son (F.A.Y.) being mistreated by members of the security forces because they suspected that his son is a fugitive inmate who has escaped from a hospital in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The son was stopped in front of their house and he and his mother were beaten, inflicting fractures in her arm, which prompted the father to contact the NIHR to investigate the matter. Immediately after receiving the complaint, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution, which reported that the Public Prosecution has launched its investigations, listened to the complainants' statements, interrogated the accused and ordered the case to be referred to the court, which has handed down a decision at first instance finding the defendant guilty as charged.
2. In a related context, the NIHR received a complaint from a woman named (K.G.H.), that a member of the security forces subjected her to ill-treatment while investigating her. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the complainant, informed her of the procedures to be followed, and directed her to file a complaint with the Ombudsman. The latter is the authority concerned with receiving complaints submitted to it against any of the military and civilian employees of the Ministry of Interior in the event any of them commits an offence on the occasion of, during, or for exercising their competencies.
3. In addition, the NIHR has received a complaint from a woman named (Z.A.G.), on being subjected to ill-treatment (threatening) by an employee at the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs. His actions were connected to her repeated travel to one of the neighboring countries, despite the fact that there is no travel ban to that

country. Accordingly, the NIHR sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior requesting it to look into the matter.

4. The NIHR has also received a complaint from a person with disability named (H.A.A.) that a doctor at Salmaniya Medical Complex subjected him to verbal abuse (yelling at him) while receiving treatment and health care for his Sickle cell disease (Sickler). Accordingly, the NIHR sent a letter to the Ministry of Health requesting it to look into the complaint. The Ministry, in its reply, indicated that it has formed an investigation committee to examine the complaint received by the NIHR, and that the committee concluded that the aforementioned claim was incorrect.
5. In the same regard, the NIHR has received a complaint from a woman named (L.M.H) that an officer of the General Directorate of Traffic Services subjected her to ill-treatment (verbal insult and coercing her into giving up the complaint). This happened while she was following up on the measures taken regarding the traffic accident she had earlier to complete the necessary legal procedures. This prompted her to contact the NIHR to look into the matter. Accordingly, the NIHR sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior to inquire about the details of the issue, but it did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.
6. The NIHR has also received a complaint from a person named (A.Y.S.) that members of the security forces subjected him to ill-treatment (severe beating) in one of the areas of the Capital Governorate without giving reasons. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the concerned person, informed him of the procedures to be followed, and directed him to file a complaint with the police station and to go to the Ombudsman. The latter is the authority concerned with receiving complaints submitted to it against any of the military and civilian employees of the Ministry of Interior in the event any of them commits an offence on the occasion of, during, or for exercising their competencies.

Second: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. The NIHR received a complaint from the family of one of the inmates of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center (M.H.A.), that (7) members of the security forces has subjected him to ill-treatment (severe beating) because one of the inmates violated some of the instructions issued regarding the periodic inspection of the inmates. Accordingly, the NIHR made direct contact with the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to inquire about the details of the matter. The Center's response explained that the aforementioned inmate objected to and rejected the inspection orders, and created chaos by self-harming himself and deliberately hitting his head

against the door. This forced the duty officer to use reasonable force by police officers for the inmate's safety and to prevent him from harming himself, bearing in mind that a case was formed against all the participating inmates, including the aforementioned inmate; a CD was attached that includes the security footage of the incident.

2. The NIHR has also received a complaint from the mother of one of the inmates at the pre-trial detention center in Dry Dock - Young Convicts Section – named (S.J.A.), that (5) members of the security forces mistreated the inmate (by blows to the face) with no reason whatsoever. As soon as the NIHR received the complaint, it directly communicated with the concerned authority to check out its veracity. The reply explained that a number of inmates were informed of their transfer to other rooms based on their new classification done regularly, and that they should prepare their personal belongings and the possessions given to them to begin the transfer procedure. During the transfer procedures, some of the inmates refused the order, and the aforementioned inmate threatened a member of the security forces. The inmate was advised and guided as much as possible and the consequences of violating the instructions issued in this regard were explained to him, yet, he disrupted the transfer procedure, resisted the security men, and attempted to assault them, which resulted in minor injuries to the security men and the aforementioned inmate. This resulted in submitting a report on the incident to the security center, and the inmate was referred to the Center's clinic to receive treatment and health care. In the same regard, the NIHR contacted the concerned officials in the Special Investigation Unit regarding the matter. The Unit replied that it has opened an investigation into the matter and listened to the testimony of the complainants who were checked by the Unit's forensic doctor, and the necessary investigation procedures are being completed, up until the end date of the timeframe of this report.
3. In addition, the NIHR has received a complaint from the father of inmate (M.S.A.), that a member of the security men affiliated with the General Directorate of Criminal Investigations and Forensic Evidence has mistreated his son (severe beating) while conducting an investigation with him. The father of the inmate filed a complaint with the concerned authorities, but he did not get a result, which prompted him to contact the NIHR to look into the matter. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution in this regard. The Unit's reply explained that it has initiated investigation procedures into the complaint, listened to the statement of the aforementioned complainant, and attached his medical reports. It has also requested investigations by the judicial

police regarding the incident, and the complaint is still under investigation up until the end date of the timeframe of this report.

4. In addition, the NIHR also received a complaint from the sister of inmate (A.H.W), that some members of the security forces have subjected the inmate to ill-treatment (severe beating) while being taken to the Courts building to attend a court session, for no reason whatsoever. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution in this regard. The Unit's reply explained that it has initiated investigation procedures into the complaint, listened to the statement of the aforementioned complainant, and attached his medical reports. It has also requested investigations by the judicial police regarding the incident, as well as interrogating members of the security forces who dealt with the complainant. The complaint is still under investigation up until the end date of the timeframe of this report.
5. In the same context, the NIHR has received a complaint from the mother of inmate (A.M.A.), that the inmate was subjected to ill-treatment (severe beating) while members of the security forces were breaking up one of the sit-ins by the inmates in Building (13). Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit at the Public Prosecution to look into the matter. The Unit's reply explained that a member of the Special Investigation Unit visited the complainant in his cell to hear his statement, but the inmate refused to do so. Consequently, the Unit requested the security footage of the incident - if any - and the investigation of the judicial police into the matter. The complaint is still under investigation up until the end date of the timeframe of this report.
6. In the same context, the NIHR has received a complaint from the mother of inmate (T.A.S.) at the Pre-trial Detention Center - Young Convicted Section, that a member of the security forces has subjected her son to ill-treatment (severe beating), for no reason. As soon as the complaint was received, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to look into the complaint. The Unit's reply explained that it has initiated investigation procedures into the complaint, listened to the statement of the aforementioned complainant, ordered the inmate to be seen by the forensic doctor, attached his medical reports, and has also requested investigations by the judicial police regarding the incident. The complaint is still under investigation up until the end date of the timeframe of this report.
7. In addition, the NIHR has received a complaint from the sister of inmate (J.A.H.), that security men subjected the inmate to ill-treatment

(deprivation of breakfast). Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to look into the matter. The Unit's reply explained that the complaint was dismissed after it was proven through investigations that the allegation of the aforementioned was false, based on the testimony of the latter in the investigations, in which he stated that his complaint was about not being able to go to the outdoor courtyards and return to the status quo ante. In addition, it was based on the conclusions of the investigation of the judicial police that he was not subjected to torture or ill-treatment in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. As a result, the NIHR dismissed and closed the complaint.

8. The NIHR has also received a complaint from the mother of inmate (A.A.M.), that she was subjected to ill-treatment (saying inappropriate and offensive words) at the Pre-trial Detention Center in the Dry Dock area while she was on her way to give her son a sum of money. This led to a clash between some members of the security forces and the said inmate, which developed into beating the inmate. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to find out the details of the matter and the measures taken in this regard.
9. In the same context, the NIHR has received a complaint from the mother of inmate (Kh.A.H), that a number of members of the security forces ill-treated her son (beating and using pepper spray) for no reason. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter. However, the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
10. In a related context, the NIHR has received a complaint from the lawyer of one of the detainees named (M.A.Y.) in the Pre-trial Detention Center in the Dry Dock area (MAI), that a member of the security forces ill-treated the detainee (physical and verbal abuse, blows to the face and kicks) because he refused to clean the ward. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to look into the matter.
11. The NIHR has also received a complaint from the brother of inmate (M.A.Sh.), that a member of the security forces ill-treated the inmate (beating the eyes). Immediately, the NIHR sent a letter to the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to clarify the details of the matter and the measures taken in this regard. The Unit's reply explained that it has initiated investigation procedures of the complaint by interrogating the complainant, who stated that he was severely beaten by inmate (M.A.A.) and denied being subjected to torture or ill-treatment by

the police. Investigations by the judicial police of the incident in question revealed that a report of assault on the aforementioned complainant has been filed at the police station. The investigations concluded that police personnel have not subjected the inmate to any assault or mistreatment, and accordingly the Unit dismissed the complaint and filed the papers.

12. In the same regard, the NIHR has received a complaint from the mother of inmate (A.M.M.), that she has received news on social media that her son, the inmate, had been mistreated (beaten) for no apparent reason. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to examine the veracity of the complaint. However, the NIHR did not receive a reply from the Unit during the timeframe of this report.
13. In addition, the NIHR has received a complaint from inmate (W.M.B.) who is in the Accommodation and Deportation Center for expatriate men in the southern region, in which he reported that a number of security men subjected him to ill-treatment. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the complainant, informed him of the procedures to be followed, and directed him to file a complaint with the Ombudsman. The latter is the authority concerned with receiving complaints submitted to it against any of the military and civilian employees of the Ministry of Interior in the event any of them commits an offence on the occasion of, during, or for exercising their competencies.
14. The NIHR has also received a complaint from the family of inmate (M.A.A.), that a number of security men assaulted him and that he was transferred to solitary confinement. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to look into the matter; however, the NIHR did not receive a reply from the Unit during the timeframe of this report.

Section Two: Provided legal aid

The NIHR provided (13) legal aid services pertaining to the right to physical and mental integrity, of which (10) legal aid services were for ordinary people and (3) legal aid services were provided for inmates in correction and rehabilitation centers or pre-trial detention centers.

The most important legal aids provided by the NIHR, and the action taken thereto, can be summarized as follows:

First: Ordinary people

1. The NIHR has provided legal aid to Mrs. (S.A.H.) who explained that a number of doctors and nurses working in a private hospital subjected her and other inpatients to ill-treatment (preventing them to contact their families and giving them medications that make them unable to move). The NIHR addressed The National Regulatory Authority for Health Professions and Services to consider the allegations. In its reply, the Authority stated it would contact the aforementioned patient and initiate investigation procedures with her and the hospital in question.
2. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance to Mr. (F.A.A.), where he explained that his brother has assaulted his family and that he filed a report at the police station, but to no avail, which prompted him to contact the NIHR to look into the matter and refer the report to the Public Prosecution. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the person concerned, informed him of the procedures to be followed and directed him to file a complaint with the Public Prosecution.
3. In addition, the NIHR has provided (6) legal aids to a number of people (F.A.M.), (L.H.), (A.A.H.), (G.F.Y.), (M.H.H.), and (N.M.A.), where they requested the assistance of the NIHR in protecting them from domestic violence. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to those concerned, informed them of the procedures to be followed, directed them to submit reports to the competent police stations, and then resort to the NIHR to follow up on the outcome of the complaint submitted by them to the competent authorities.
4. On a related level, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (M.A.Q), where he indicated that the ex-husband of his wife assaulted him, and, as a result, he filed a report to the police station that referred the report to the Public Prosecution. He explained that despite the continuous follow-ups, the criminal case brought against the aggressor has not been initiated, which prompted him to contact the NIHR to look into the matter. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the concerned, informed him of the procedures to be followed and directed him to the Public Prosecution, as it has jurisdiction over lodging criminal proceedings, initiation of the criminal case or filing the criminal case definitively, or for an unspecified period to be reinstated if further evidence becomes available.
5. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (B.M.A.) about being repeatedly assaulted and bullied by unidentified persons. He submitted a report to the police station, but to no avail, which prompted him to contact the NIHR to look into the matter and intervene by referring

the complaint to the Public Prosecution. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the concerned, informed him of the procedures to be followed and directed him to file a complaint with the Public Prosecution.

Second: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. The NIHR has provided legal assistance to the mother of inmate (Y.E.A.), who reported that a member of the security forces ill-treated her aforementioned son (intimidation). The NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to ascertain the validity of the claim. In its reply, the Unit explained that it took all necessary investigation procedures of the allegation and ended with saving the papers after it was proven that the allegation that the aforementioned had been subjected to ill-treatment were false.
2. In the same regard, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to the brother of inmate (A.E.A.), who reported that a number of inmates had severely beaten his brother in 2019, which led him to slip into a coma. He explained that he had filed a complaint with the Administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to consider the matter, but to no avail. The NIHR communicated directly with the administration of the Center to look into the matter. The Center's reply explained that the inmate has routine checkups at the medical clinic and that he receives the appropriate treatment.
3. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to the mother of inmate (N.S.A.), reporting that her son was assaulted by the inmates housed with him in the same building, and that he had asked the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to transfer him to another building, but to no avail. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the Center's administration to look into the matter, as it was found that the inmate had been transferred to another building.

Section Three: Monitoring the human rights situation (fact finding)

The NIHR has monitored (7) cases related to the right to physical and mental integrity of inmates in correction and rehabilitation centers or pre-trial detention centers.

The most important monitoring cases and the actions taken therein can be summarized as follows:

1. The NIHR has monitored news about a number of inmates in Building No. (12) being attacked by some members of the security forces because of their protest against abuse and ill-treatment. By virtue of its legal position and its oversight and human rights responsibilities, the NIHR

communicated directly with the concerned staff at the Reform and Rehabilitation Center. In its reply, the Center explained that administration has reclassified five inmates in preparation for transferring them to the designated buildings as stipulated by the internal regulations applicable for all inmates. However, because of the inmates' refusal to abide by the instructions, and their refusal to carry out the transfer order, the concerned staff dealt with them in accordance with the provisions of Law No. (18) of 2014 on promulgating the Correction and Rehabilitation Institutions Law and its supplementary executive regulations.

2. On a related level, the NIHR has monitored news about inmate (Z.JA.) who was attacked by one of the inmates housed in the same building. Accordingly, a delegation from the NIHR visited the said inmate; during the visit, it was found that the inmate needed to be continuously provided with treatment for his eyes and ears. The Ministry of Interior was addressed to look into the inmate's health condition. In its reply, the Ministry explained that the inmate refused to get a medical examination, and the refusal statement prepared by the doctor on duty at the clinic was attached, indicating the inmate's refusal to attend the clinic and his refusal to sign the statement.
3. The NIHR has also monitored news on social media about inmate (A.A.) being discriminated against and beaten during breaking up the sit-in by members of the security forces. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to look into the monitoring case, however, the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
4. One of the monitoring cases centered on an inmate with disabilities named (J.M.Sh.) being assaulted by a member of the security forces, for no apparent reason. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to look into the validity of the case being monitored. However, the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
5. In addition, the NIHR has monitored, via a phone call from the father of an inmate in the Pre-trial Detention Center, a case where members of the security forces have subjected a number of inmates detained in Building (10) to beating and ill-treatment on a daily basis. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the Special Investigation Unit of the Public Prosecution to look into the monitored case and inform the NIHR of the measures taken in this regard; however, the NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

6. In the same context, the NIHR has monitored news about inmate (J.M.M.) going on a hunger strike because of being ill-treated by a member of the security forces. Accordingly, the NIHR immediately communicated with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to consider the matter. In its reply, the Center explained that the inmate enjoys all the rights prescribed by the Law of Correction and Rehabilitation Institutions and its executive regulations, and that he receives appropriate medical care.
7. On the same note, the NIHR has monitored a case via a phone call from a person on social media, on behalf of inmate (M.A.M.), that the inmate is being subjected to ill-treatment by some members of the security forces at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. Accordingly, the NIHR communicated with the administration of the Center, met with the inmate, and examined the validity of the received information, which was proven false.

Requirement Three
NIHR's Recommendations Related to the Right to Physical and Mental Integrity

In view of the foregoing, the NIHR recommends the following:

1. Put law enforcement officers through comprehensive and extensive training programs using curricula that incorporate all the components of human rights, provided that the training modules include, effective interrogation methods and proper techniques of obtaining information without resorting to coercive means such as torture or other forms of ill-treatment. In addition, exclude those law enforcement officers found to have mistreated detainees or convicted persons from service.
2. Explore the feasibility of establishing a specialized office in all the centers affiliated with the Ministry of Interior, to be in charge of receiving complaints from inmates who claim that they have been subjected to ill-treatment, provided that such offices include personnel specialized in investigation and forensic medicine.

Fourth Topic

The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (the Right to Work)

Preface:

1. The right to work is one of the most important human rights of all kinds, which needs the components enabling individuals to exercise it. An individual cannot enjoy an adequate standard of living without the availability of the fundamentals, the most important of which is the right to work, as it is a right dictated by personal dignity and the public good based on sound economic principles and the fundamentals of social justice in the relationship of employers and workers.
2. The right to decent work has two dimensions, individual and collective. The individual dimension is displayed by the enjoyment of each individual to freely decide to accept or choose any work he is satisfied with, without being forced in any way whatsoever to exercise or engage in any employment otherwise, according to just and favorable work conditions, over and above the enjoyment of working conditions that ensure his occupational safety. As for the collective dimension of the right to work, it is illustrated in the right of workers to establish and join organizations of their own choosing, as well as the right of labor unions to exercise their activities freely and independently, regulated by law.
3. Accordingly, this topic will be addressed through two requirements; the first requirement will cover international and national grounds related to the right to work, while the second requirement will highlight the efforts of the NIHR in the field of protecting the right to work.

Requirement One

International and National Basis Relevant to the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (the Right to Work)

1. The right to work is at the forefront of the rights to which international instruments and national legislation have provided legal cover as it is crucial for the lives of individuals and guaranteeing their enjoyment of a decent life and upholding their human dignity. The right to work includes the opportunity to earn a living by work, which is freely chosen or accepted. The state, in accordance with contractual obligations, is required to provide this right progressively, in addition to taking the appropriate measures to create an enabling environment for promoting access to employment, not to mention its obligation to take positive action to eliminate discrimination in all aspects of work.
2. Concerning international human rights instruments, Paragraph No. (1) of Article No. (23) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 affirms the value of the right to work, stating that, **“Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”**
3. The first paragraph of Article No. (6) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded pursuant to Law No. (10) of 2007, states that, **“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.”**
4. The Arab Charter on Human Rights has not overlooked to lay emphasis on this right, as Paragraph No. (1) of Article No. (34) thereof stipulates, **“The Right to Work is a natural right for every citizen...”**
5. The right to work means the right to adequate remuneration, which is a mainstay in the enjoyment of dignified living conditions for individuals, as wage derives its importance through ensuring the right to work being one of the fundamental human rights. Individuals cannot enjoy a decent standard of living without the existence of the components, the most important of which is paid work. It is a right dictated by personal dignity and the public good.
6. Paragraph (a) of Article No. (7) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded

under Law No. (10) of 2007, confirmed that, “**The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favorable conditions of work which ensure, in particular: (a) Remuneration which provides all workers, as a minimum, with: (i) Fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction of any kind,...; (ii) A decent living for themselves and their families in accordance with the provisions of the present Covenant ...;**”

7. On the national legislation level, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain is in harmony with these instruments, as Article (13-a) thereto stipulates that, “**...Every citizen has the right to work...**”. In addition, Labor Law No. (36) of 2012, as amended, provides legal cover for workers by stipulating provisions related to improving working conditions, creating promising opportunities for investment, and prohibiting wage discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, religion, language, and others, as well as prescribing the cases in which the employee is entitled to annual leave, maternity leave, sick leave and labor disputes.

Requirement Two

NIHR's Efforts in Protecting the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (the Right to Work)

Section One: Received complaints

The NIHR has received (3) complaints related to the individual's right to enjoy an adequate standard of living (the right to work), which are summarized as follows:

1. The NIHR has received a complaint from (H.A.S.) on the failure of the General Directorate of Criminal Investigations and Forensic Evidence to provide him with good conduct certificate required to complete his employment procedures in a government agency with no reason, despite his continuous follow up with the General Directorate and being informed that the application status is in process. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter and check the possibility of granting him a certificate of good conduct if there is no legal impediment to issue it. However, the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
2. In the same context, the NIHR has received a complaint from (Y.A.A.) that he was not granted a certificate of good conduct required to complete his employment procedures in a government agency with no reason, despite his continuous follow up with the General Directorate and being informed that the application status is in process. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter and check the possibility of granting him a certificate of good conduct if there is no legal impediment to issue it. The General Directorate's reply explained that a security restriction is imposed on the aforementioned that prevents the issuance of the certificate.
3. In addition, the NIHR has received a complaint from an Arab resident named (W.E.A.) that she applied to work for the Ministry of Education, and passed all recruitment procedures to fill the position of a "teacher". She had completed the procedures for medical examination and obtaining a good conduct certificate and is currently waiting for her appointment in one of the schools near her area of residence based on the notification from the Human Resources Department in the Ministry. In addition, she has already submitted her resignation from her job in the private sector to join the public sector as required pursuant to the Private educational and training institutions Law, and according to the advice of Human Resources staff, and her residence permit has already been transferred to the Ministry of Education. However, her employment in the Ministry was not completed

after she was informed that there is no budget now. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Education to look into the matter, and the Ministry's reply explained that the complainant did not complete the recruitment procedures and apologized for not accepting her application.

Section Two: Provided legal aid

The NIHR provided (25) legal aid services pertaining to the individual's right to enjoy an adequate standard of living (the right to work), which can be summarized, as well as the action taken thereto, as follows:

1. The NIHR has provided (5) legal aids related to the right to work, all of which centered around requesting assistance in obtaining jobs commensurate with their specializations. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice in (4) assistance cases, informed the concerned persons of the procedures to be followed and directed them to follow up with the relevant authorities. In addition, the NIHR sent a letter to the Civil Service Bureau and the Ministry of Health in one legal aid case; however, it did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
2. The NIHR has also provided (7) legal aids related to workers' outstanding claims, of which (4) aid cases were filed for lack of competence, with legal advice provided to those concerned, informing them of the procedures to be followed and directing them to file a complaint with the authorities with inherent jurisdiction. One legal aid case submitted by (S.N.N.) was filed because the outcome was realized by reaching an amicable solution with the employer according to the recent developments reported to the NIHR by the concerned person.
3. In the same context, the NIHR has addressed the relevant authorities regarding two legal aid cases from the perspective of its human rights responsibility, which are as follows:
 - a) Legal assistance request received from Mr. (A.A.J.) that he had held the position of head of the human resources and administrative services department in one of the ministries. In 2011, during his annual leave abroad, he was struck by the termination of his services in the ministry. In addition, he explained that he was informed that he would be reinstated along with the dismissed employees, for whom a decision was issued by the Council of Ministers to reinstate them to their previous jobs. After communicating with the concerned ministry, he was informed that he had been superannuated (retired), without being granted a pension, giving him the amount of insurance contributions.

Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Civil Service Bureau to consider his case from a humanitarian standpoint. The Bureau, in its reply, explained that during 2011, the concerned person had quit work and traveled to a foreign country; however, based on the circular issued by the Deputy Prime Minister, Vice-President of the Civil Service Council, to return all those who were dismissed from work during the Covid-19 pandemic, the concerned ministry addressed the aforementioned to return to work, but he requested a 3-month grace period to complete his, and his family's, return procedures. Subsequently, the Civil Service Bureau was addressed regarding this matter and it approved his request. Nevertheless, the aforementioned did not return to work and submitted another request to grant him another six months grace period to complete some procedures related to him and his family in the country in which he resides before returning to the Kingdom of Bahrain. Since the three months grace period previously granted to the aforementioned has expired and he has not submitted another request stating his desire to hold on to his job until the date of his petition, the Bureau has decided to close and dismiss the matter, due to the loss of his right to claim the job after the expiry of the deadline, as well as the soundness of the procedures taken by the government agency to terminate his service by implicit resignation as of the date of his quitting in 2011.

- b) The other legal assistance centered around the request submitted by Mr. (H.A.F.) that he was a diligent employee in a telecommunications company for 30 years as a communications specialist. He submitted his resignation but he was not granted the end-of-service award (gratuity) similar to the rest of the employees who left the company. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the company's board of directors and inquired about the matter. The company's reply explained that the employee has received all his entitlements acknowledging receipt, and that the company has absolved itself from any other labor dues or claims of the said employee, and that the claim made by the aforementioned is incorrect.
4. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance related to the arbitrary dismissal of the Arab national resident (M.A.) that he was defrauded and unfairly dismissed by the owner of a private company. He claimed that the latter rented out his name and resume without his knowledge to another contracting company and received money in return for that, and arbitrarily

dismissed him two weeks after the signing the employment contract. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the concerned, informed him of the procedures to be followed and directed him to follow up with the ministry competent to examine and decide on workers' complaints, for not completing the legal procedures prescribed in this connection.

5. In the same regard, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to a person, who has submitted it to the NIHR on behalf of himself and his colleagues who were arbitrarily dismissed from work by one of the government agencies. In his request, he indicated that they appealed to state officials, and accordingly, were returned to their previous jobs, and they received monthly bonuses; but they objected to not including the years of unfair dismissal in the years of service. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the concerned, informed him of the procedures to be followed and directed him to the relevant authorities.
6. Moreover, the NIHR has provided (4) legal aids related to obtaining security clearance from the Ministry of Interior for the purpose of completing employment procedures, as follows:
 - a) A legal aid request received from Mrs. (Z.M.A.) reported that she did not obtain a certificate of good conduct for completing the procedures for her employment in a government agency without mentioning the reason for that even though she has been following up continuously. Accordingly, the NIHR tried to contact her more than once to obtain the documents supporting her case to address the competent body; however, the NIHR did not receive a reply from her during the timeframe of this report.
 - b) In the same context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mrs. (R.A.H), who reported that she had not obtained a certificate of good conduct for completing the procedures for her employment in a government agency for no reason, as she was informed of the existence of a ban from the National Intelligence Service. By virtue of its humanitarian responsibility, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior and the National Intelligence Service to look into the matter, but the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
 - c) The NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (S.A.A.), who requested assistance in finding out the reason for the existence of a security restriction in his record sent to the Ministry of Interior, to enable him complete the procedures for his employment in a government ministry. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry

of Interior and the Ministry of Education to look into the matter, but did not receive a reply from both ministries during the timeframe of this report.

- d) In another context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (S.R.L), who requested to look into the conditions that foreign employees are exposed to in a private company, where they are forced to work for 12 continuous hours a day and are not allowed to take weekends off or vacations. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to look into the matter.
7. In the same regard, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mrs. (A.H.A.), who stated that, due to the Corona virus pandemic, a number of the activities she practices under the commercial registration of her store have been suspended. She added that the Consumer Protection Directorate at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism has pressured her to return the deposit paid to her by a customer. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism in this regard. The Ministry's reply explained that, "the commercial registration belongs to an event management store (flowers), and that the Ministry acts in accordance with the Civil Code and the Consumer Protection Law, and that there are several cases brought against the aforementioned, of which one case is presently before the Public Prosecution, so they are unable to comment on it."
8. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance to Mr. (K.M.S.) regarding his request to reconsider the medical committees' report to obtain fair compensation as a result of a work injury and, as a result, disability. In light of this, the NIHR provided legal advice to the aforementioned, informing him of the procedures to be followed and directing him to the relevant competent bodies.
9. In the same context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mrs. (L.S.S) centered on her request to change her job and transfer her sponsorship to another employer, after being forced to work in that job and to share the same accommodation with her male colleagues. In light of this, the NIHR provided her with legal advice, informed her of the procedures to be followed, and directed her to the relevant concerned authorities.
10. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (Z.A.A.) who requested to know the reasons that led to the cancellation of his work visa by the employer. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the

aforementioned, informing him of the procedures to be followed and directing him to the relevant competent authorities.

11. In a related context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (A.A.A.) requesting that his employment rights be restored, explaining that he worked as an employee in a government agency where he was subjected to injustice. He submitted a complaint to the Grievances Department where he worked, and filed a lawsuit in the administrative courts, but it was dismissed. Accordingly, the NIHR provided legal advice to the aforementioned, and informed him that a complaint that is still being considered before judicial or administrative investigation bodies or before the judiciary, or a final judgment has been issued in the case, cannot be considered by the NIHR, unless the matter is related to fair trial guarantees.

Section Three: Monitoring the human rights situation (fact finding)

The NIHR has monitored (3) cases pertaining to the individual's right to enjoy an adequate standard of living (the right to work), which are summarized as follows:

1. The NIHR has monitored news in an email about a private medical clinic that forces the nurses to work for 9 or 10 continuous hours without a one-hour break or overtime pay for the additional working hours, breaching the terms of the employment contract concluded with them specifying 8 working hours per day. The nurses indicated that they had submitted a complaint to the clinic's management, but no action was taken in this regard. The NIHR provided legal advice to the concerned nurses, informed them of the procedures to be followed in this regard, directed them to the relevant competent authorities, and followed up on the matter with them.
2. The NIHR has also monitored (2) cases via WhatsApp application from a person on employers making their employees work at noon in open places, violating Resolution No.(3) of 2013 on Banning Work During Noon Time in open places for the months of July and August. In implementing the role of the NIHR in the context of its work in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms; and in order to proceed with the objectives of the NIHR's initiative to report abuse of workers in violation of the abovementioned Resolution, the NIHR communicated with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development regarding the matter, which confirmed that it had taken the necessary measures against the violators.

Requirement Three

NIHR's Recommendations pertaining to the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (the Right to Work)

In view of the foregoing, the NIHR recommends the following:

1. Take the necessary measures to ensure the rapid replacement of foreign workers by national workers, especially in specialized fields that have an abundance of qualified nationals, while creating further job and training opportunities necessary to ensure that all citizens are employed in jobs commensurate with their, educational qualifications.
2. Reconsider the requirements of employment procedures and resolve the difficulties facing job seekers, especially by reconsidering the types of jobs that, by their nature, require the submission of a security clearance (certificate of good conduct) and those that do not.
3. Consider a mechanism that ensures the speedy processing of requests submitted by individuals pertaining to obtaining security clearance (certificate of good conduct). Ensure including a feature in the mechanism to notify the applicant of the outcome of his/her request, whether by approval to grant the certificate or refusal, and to inform him/her of the reasons for rejection based on the principle of transparency.
4. Make the necessary amendments to Resolution No. (3) of 2013 on Banning Work During Noon Time in open places for the months of July and August, based on the NIHR's proposal sent to the concerned ministry, on extending the ban period to become three months in each Gregorian year and five daytime hours, starting at eleven in the morning and ending at four in the afternoon.
5. Sensitize employers and employees on the content of Resolution No. (3) of 2013 on Banning Work During Noon Time in open places for the months of July and August, and the conditions to be met, mainly since the Resolution concerns working outdoors under direct sunlight, and not indoors or in shaded places.
6. Examine the economic effects and consequences on business owners resulting from the implementation of Resolution No. (3) of 2013 on Banning Work during Noon Time in open places for the months of July and August, and conduct a study on the mechanism for compensating them for damages, as the case may be.

Fifth Topic

The Right to Recognition of Legal Personality (the Right to a Nationality)

Preface:

1. The right to a nationality is at the forefront of political rights in terms of consequence. Nationality is a legal and political bond between an individual and a state, whereby the individual is loyal to the state to which he belongs by citizenship, and in return, the state must protect the individual from any prejudice. This legal status is derived from the law and is related to the sovereignty of the state. Anyone who does not hold the nationality of the country in which he resides is a foreigner, and is not entitled to exercise some rights nor bear the duties that usually fall on the shoulders of the citizen or the holder of citizenship.
2. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has pointed out the significance of the right to a nationality, by stating that: **“Everyone has the right to a nationality. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality. States must put in place safeguards to prevent statelessness by granting its nationality to a person born in its territory or born outside its territory if the nationality of one of his parents was that of that State, who would otherwise be stateless. States shall also prevent cases of statelessness upon loss or deprivation of nationality”**¹²
3. Accordingly, this topic will be addressed through two requirements, where the first requirement will cover the international and national grounds related to the right to nationality, and the second requirement will highlight the NIHR’s efforts in the field of protecting the right to nationality.

¹² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights website: <https://www.ohchr.org/AR/Issues/RuleOfLaw/Pages/RightNationality.aspx>

Requirement One

International and National Bases Pertaining to the Right to Recognition of Legal Personality (the Right to a Nationality)

1. The right to nationality is one of the most important elements of legal personality that every human being must enjoy. This right is manifested in the existence of a political and legal bond between the individual and the state that obliges him to be loyal to the state. It also requires the state to protect the individual and grant him the benefits and rights resulting from this bond. Statelessness has adverse consequences, rendering fundamental rights of individuals vulnerable to violation, and discrimination and abuse become an existential and inherent danger for stateless individuals.
2. At the national legislation level, the Bahraini Nationality Law of 1963, as amended, regulates the provisions relating to the acquisition of nationality, whether it is acquired by birth or by naturalization, and sets forth the cases in which nationality is lost whether by change in nationality or by deprivation (denationalization). It also prescribes the cases in which there is dual nationality or statelessness.
3. At the international instruments level, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded pursuant to Law No. (56) of 2006, affirms in Article No. (16) that, **“Everyone shall have the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.”** In addition, Article No. (24-3) of the same Covenant asserts that, **“Every child has the right to acquire a nationality.”**
4. In the same context, the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded by virtue of Decree-Law No. (16) of 1991, asserts in Paragraph (1) of Article No. (7) thereof, that, **“The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality ...”**. In addition, Paragraph (2) of the same Article requires that, **“States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.”**
5. On the other hand, Article No. (9) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to which the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain joined under Decree-Law No. (5) of 2002,

stipulates that: **“(1) States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband. (2) States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.”** although the Kingdom of Bahrain upholds its reservation on this Article.

Requirement Two

NIHR's Efforts in the Field of Protecting the Right to Recognition of Legal Personality (the Right to a Nationality)

Section One: Received complaints

The NIHR has received (2) complaints related to the right to recognition of legal personality (the right to a nationality), which are summarized as follows:

1. The NIHR has received a complaint from the citizen (S.S.H.) about the failure of the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs to renew his passport after four years of continuous follow up with the Directorate. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter and to examine whether it would be possible to renew his passport, except where prohibited by law. The Ministry's reply explained that the complainant should go to the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs to complete the passport renewal procedures.
2. The NIHR has also received a complaint from a female citizen named (A.A.M.) that she is residing outside the Kingdom of Bahrain to accompany her son while receiving medical treatment and health care. She complained that the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs has not renewed her passport and that of her son (A.J.A.) although five months have passed since she has submitted the renewal application. This prompted her to communicate with the NIHR on the matter. Upon receiving the complaint, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry's reply indicated that the concerned authority at the Ministry of Interior has renewed the passports of the complainant and her son and that they were handed over to them.

Section Two: Provided legal aid

The NIHR provided (22) legal aids pertaining to the right to recognition of legal personality (the right to a nationality), of which (20) aids were provided to ordinary persons and (2) aids provided to an inmate in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center.

The legal assistance cases, as well as the action taken thereto, can be summarized as follows:

First: Ordinary persons

1. The NIHR has provided one legal aid service related to the right to nationality to Mrs. (H.A.A.) and her brothers, in which they requested the NIHR to intervene in granting them Bahraini citizenship being stateless

(Bidoon). By virtue of the humanitarian responsibility of the NIHR, the matter was submitted to the Supreme Council for Women for consideration and exploring the possibility of including their names among the lists of eligible individuals to the concerned authorities. The Council has replied that it will look into the issue.

2. In the same regard, the NIHR has provided (2) legal aids to Mr. (K.F.Kh.) on behalf of his daughter and Mr. (Kh.H.T.) on his own behalf, in which they requested assisting them to acquire Bahraini citizenship. Accordingly, the NIHR informed them of the procedures to be followed in this regard.
3. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance to Mrs. (Kh.T.E.) regarding the failure of the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs to renew her passport after ten years have passed since she lost her passport. The NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to ascertain the matter. The reply from the Ministry of the Interior explained that the application for renewal of the passport of the aforementioned was stopped due to her misuse of the previous passport. The NIHR has also provided legal advice to the concerned, and informed her of the procedures to be followed in this regard and the right to access administrative courts.
4. In the same context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (A.A.Kh.) who resides outside the Kingdom to complete his university education. The requested legal aid focused on failure of the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs to renew his passport after eight years have passed since the expiration date and handing the passport over to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in the host country. This prompted him to contact the NIHR to look into the matter. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the Ministry of Interior to examine whether it would be possible to renew his passport, except where prohibited by law. The reply of the Ministry explained that the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs is in the process of taking the necessary measures to renew the passport of the aforementioned.
5. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mrs. (R.N.A.), as she requested the NIHR to intervene in granting her stateless children the Bahraini citizenship. With a view to ensuring the adoption and support of the right of Bahraini women, above all those married to foreigners, to pass on their citizenship to their children, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter and examine the possibility of her children

obtaining Bahraini citizenship. However, the NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.

6. In the same regard, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mrs. (K.H.R.), who requested the NIHR to help her in obtaining Bahraini nationality being the daughter of a Bahraini women. By virtue of its humanitarian responsibility, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter. However, the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
7. In the same context, the NIHR has provided (3) legal aids related to the right to a nationality for three women named (A.L.S.), (E.A.H.), and (Z.H.Sh.) who requested the assistance of the NIHR to obtain Bahraini nationality by reason of being married to Bahraini citizens. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter; however, the NIHR did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.
8. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance to Mr. (H.A.M.) who stated that the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs did not grant his granddaughter (Z.A.A.) The Bahraini nationality because her parents reside outside the Kingdom of Bahrain. He indicated that despite the ruling by the administrative courts compelling the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs to issue a passport, the ruling was not implemented. This prompted him to communicate with the NIHR, which addressed the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter; however, the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
9. In the same context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mrs. (R.J.A.), who explained that she is a Bahraini citizen residing in one of the neighboring countries with her husband who holds the nationality of that country, and that she had to hand over her passport to the officials in that country because she has violated the residency conditions. Once the violation was settled, she proceeded to receive her passport; however, and after much procrastination, the officials in that country informed her that her passport had been lost. As a result, she requested the assistance of the NIHR in obtaining a replacement for her lost passport or a travel document to return to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The NIHR contacted the above mentioned several times to get details such as the full name and personal number, but she did not reply during the timeframe of this report.
10. Given that nationality is linked to the enjoyment of the right to health, the NIHR has provided two legal aids to Mrs. (F.A.A.) on behalf of her children, and Ms. (F.Sh.Gh.), in which they requested to obtain a temporary

personal number to be able to receive the vaccination against Covid-19. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Information and e-Government Authority; however, it did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.

11. In the same context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (A.A.M.) on behalf of his foreign wife, in which he requested the assistance of the NIHR in obtaining a temporary personal number for his foreign wife in order to get the vaccination against Covid-19. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Information and e-Government Authority in this regard. The Authority's reply explained that the conditions for obtaining a personal number for a foreign wife require having a residence permit or a spouse-sponsored visa with a valid passport, which was not available in this case, and the aforementioned was informed to amend the legal status of his wife in the Kingdom.
12. In another similar case, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (M.W.N.) on behalf of his daughter (Y.M.O.), in which he requested to obtain a temporary personal number for her to be able to get the necessary vaccinations for the children. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Information and e-Government Authority in this regard. The Authority's reply explained that the child was issued a temporary personal number, and she could receive the necessary vaccinations.
13. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mrs. (R.S.J.) on behalf of her daughter (Z.A.A.), where she explained that her daughter is of unknown parentage. Previously, she had brought a paternity case to court, and, as a result, the daughter was granted a birth certificate and issued an Identification (ID) card in 2001. When the ID card expired, the Information and e-Government Authority refused to renew it, and told her – as she claimed - that the refusal was because her daughter does not have a passport. The NIHR addressed the Information and e-Government Authority in this regard; however, it did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.
14. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance to Mr. (H.F.H.) on behalf of his two daughters, as he explained that he is a Bahraini citizen convicted of life imprisonment and currently residing in one of the neighboring countries. He requested that his two daughters, born in that country, acquire Bahraini nationality. Accordingly, the NIHR informed him of the procedures to be followed in this regard.
15. In another similar case, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to Mr. (A.A.M.) on behalf of his daughter (Z.A.A.), where he explained that he

was convicted in a criminal case and his nationality was revoked, and he requested assisting him in granting his daughter Bahraini nationality, as she was born in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter; however, it did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.

16. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance to Mrs. (A.A.F.) on behalf of her son (Q.H.A.), as she explained that he was born outside Bahrain to a father whose nationality was withdrawn and a Bahraini mother, and requested that her son acquire Bahraini nationality. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to consider the matter; however, it did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.

Second: Persons whose freedom is restricted

1. In view of the interdependence of Bahraini nationality and passports, and keen to protect the rights of the inmates, the NIHR has provided legal aid to the family of inmate (S.M.S.) requesting assistance to complete the procedures for renewing the inmate's passport. The NIHR made direct communication with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center to look into the matter; however, it did not receive a reply during the timeframe of this report.
2. The NIHR has provided legal assistance to the sister of inmate (S.M.S.), in which she requested intervention and assistance to complete the procedures for renewing his passport. She explained that the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center had photographed him to obtain a personal photo to be sent to the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs several months ago, and so far, his passport has not been renewed. Accordingly, the NIHR communicated directly with the competent authority represented by the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry's reply explained that it has communicated with the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs, and it reported that the personal photo was not clear and that the inmate will be photographed again and the passport renewal procedures will be completed.

Section Three: Monitoring the human rights situation (fact finding)

The NIHR has monitored (2) cases pertaining to the right to recognition of legal personality (the right to a nationality), which are summarized as follows:

1. The NIHR has monitored news on social media that (A.Y.A.) did not acquire the Bahraini citizenship by birth since she was born because her father is in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. Consequently, the

government educational institutions refused to register her because she does not have a Bahraini citizenship. Immediately, the NIHR contacted the Ministry of Interior to look into the matter and enable her to acquire Bahraini citizenship by descent. However, the NIHR did not receive a reply within the timeframe of this report.

2. The NIHR has also monitored news on social media about the two girls (F.A.K.) and (Z.A.K.) who did not acquire Bahraini nationality because they were born after the ruling revoking their father's citizenship. Referring to the provisions of the Bahraini Citizenship Act of 1963 and its amendments, specifically, the first paragraph of Article No. (4), ruling that anyone is deemed to be Bahraini if "he was born in Bahrain or abroad and his father was a Bahraini at the time of birth," no violations of the provisions of the regulating Law were found. However, in view of the human rights and humanitarian responsibility that the NIHR undertakes, it closely follows up on possible legislative or administrative measures to prevent the phenomenon of statelessness among children in general, as they are among the worthier groups in society, and to achieve their best interests.

Requirement Three
NIHR's Recommendations pertaining to the Right to Recognition of Legal Personality (the Right to a Nationality)

In view of the foregoing, the NIHR recommends the following:

1. Include provisions in the Bahraini Citizenship Act in force to grant Bahraini women the right to confer Bahraini nationality on their children, subject to legal controls and in line with the relevant international human rights instruments, and the commitments of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain before the Human Rights Council at the Universal Periodic Review, in a manner that takes into account national interest in this regard.
2. Fast track the enforcement mechanism of judicial decisions issued by the competent courts, which establishes the obligation of the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs to issue and renew passports.
3. Reconsider the issue of mandatory in-person presence to receive a passport once it is issued or renewed, and allow those who have a special, notarized or certified power of attorney to receive this document under this special power of attorney, especially in cases where there is no security restriction on the passport holder.

Chapter Four

Efforts and Activities of the National Institution for Human Rights in the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Preface and Partitioning:

1. The role of national human rights institutions rises through their constitutional or legislative mandate in the field of “promotion and protection of human rights.” This role was clearly manifested in the “Paris Principles” relating to the status of national institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights as a constitution for their work and an active and constructive element in promoting and the protecting of human rights in the state system.
2. The role of these institutions in “protecting” human rights is clear, in that it is the main pillar corresponding to the role of national institutions in promoting these rights. It includes their monitoring process of everything that might prejudice the right of individuals to enjoy the rights and public freedoms assigned to them, as the monitoring process is a necessary means to ensure the degree and extent of the State's respect for its legal or international obligations relating to human rights, and such protection requires that national institutions conduct field visits to places where human rights violations are likely to occur.
3. As for “promotion” through spreading a culture of human rights by various available means, including holding conferences, training courses, workshops, and lectures to the public, or specific target groups, in addition to training in the field of human rights and publishing and printing educational brochures related to the work of national institutions. As the lack of knowledge of human rights principles among all segments of society is cause for violation because the promotion of human rights concepts and consolidation of awareness of them contributes to providing protection for all those rights.
4. Accordingly, this chapter will discuss the role played by the NIHR in the field of protecting and promoting human rights in two main topics: the first of which is devoted to explaining its efforts in the field of human rights protection, while the second will be devoted to reviewing its efforts in the field of promoting those rights.

First Topic

Efforts Exerted by the NIHR in the Field of Protecting Human Rights¹³

Preface:

1. The provisions of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), as amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016, affirm the role of the NIHR in the field of human rights protection, through receiving complaints related to human rights, and conducting field visits to monitor the human rights situation.
2. Where Article No. (12) of the same law stipulates in paragraph (e) that the NIHR has the competence **“to monitor violation of human rights, conduct the necessary investigation, draw the attention of the competent authorities and provide them with proposals on initiatives to put an end to such violations, and where necessary, to express an opinion on the reactions and positions of the competent authorities.”** Paragraph (f) of the same Article states its authority **“to receive, examine and research complaints related to human rights and refer them, if necessary, to the relevant authorities with effective follow-up, or enlightening those concerned with most- follow procedures and help them to implement them, or assist in the settlement with the relevant authorities.”**
3. About field visits as one of the monitoring methods granted to the NIHR, paragraph (g) of Article No. (12) stipulates its mandate **“To perform announced and unannounced field visits, to monitor human rights situation in correction institutions, detention centers, labor calls gathering, health and education centers, or any other public place in which it is suspected that human rights violations are taking place.”** These competencies fall in their entirety in the framework of the role played by the NIHR in the field of human rights protection.
4. This text confirms the need to expand the competencies in the field of human rights protection in a manner consistent with international decisions in this regard, and that the required protection must not be limited to receiving complaints only, but extends to carrying out a process of tracking

¹³ In this topic, a number of complaints received by the NIHR, the legal assistance it provided, and monitoring cases related to a number of other rights, which were not covered by the third chapter of this report, will be addressed.

and monitoring the state of the human rights situation. The monitoring process is necessary to ascertain the degree and extent of the state's respect for its legal or international obligations related to human rights.

5. The complaints received by the NIHR, the assistance it provided, and monitoring cases related to several other human rights not covered by Chapter Three of this report will be addressed in this section.

Requirement One Complaints Received

1. Within the framework of the NIHR's keenness to reach the maximum levels of protection and promotion in the human rights field, mechanisms for communicating with citizens and residents have been developed through the call center and complaints receiving service. In line with the precautionary conditions and measures taken by the Kingdom of Bahrain to combat the Corona virus (Covid-19), and in compliance with the instructions and directives of official authorities, and in the interest of the health and safety of all, the NIHR received complaints through its electronic services via the mobile application ([NIHRBAHRAIN](#)), its website (www.nihr.org.bh), or via e-mail ([complaint@nihr.org .bh](mailto:complaint@nihr.org.bh)), or via the toll-free hotline (80001144), in addition to receiving complaints through in-person attendance at the NIHR's headquarters, while following all precautionary measures and instructions issued by the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Corona virus (Covid-19).

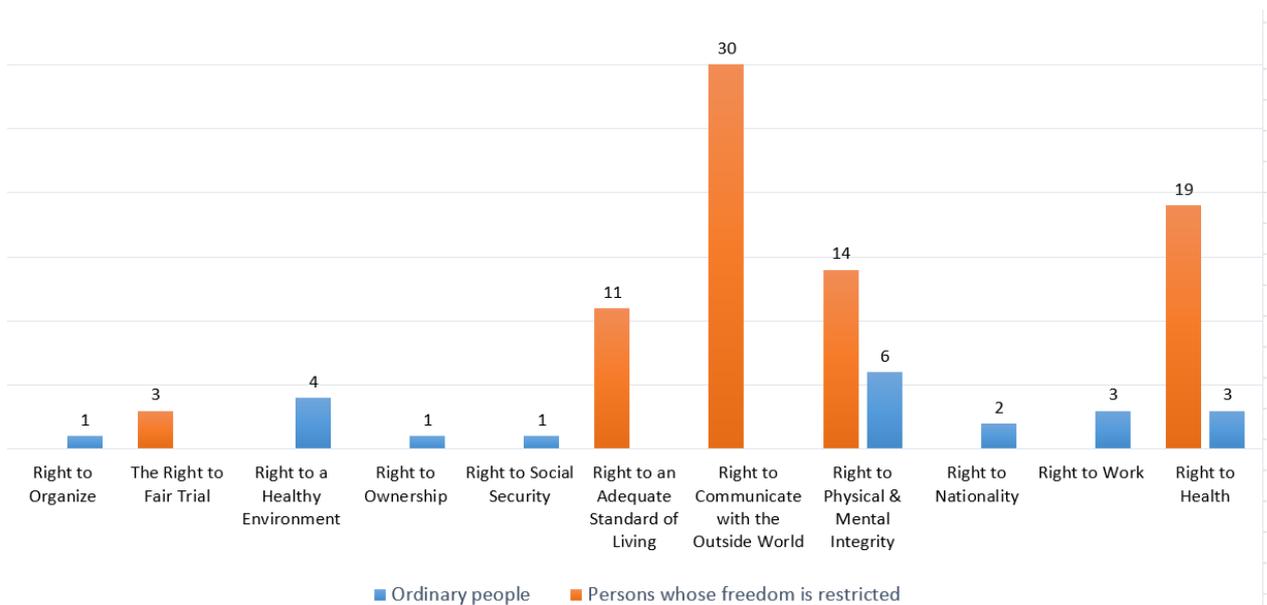
2. Based on its broad mandate in the field of human rights protection, the NIHR dealt with (98) complaints during the year 2021, which are as follows:

Right	Total	Ordinary people	Persons whose freedom is restricted
The right to Health ¹⁴	22	3	19
The Right to Work ¹⁴	3	3	
The Right to Nationality ¹⁴	2	2	
The Right to Physical and Mental Integrity ¹⁴	20	6	14
The Right to Communicate with the outside World ¹⁴	30		30
The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living	11		11

¹⁴ These five rights were discussed in detail in the third chapter of this report, "Main issues that have a direct impact on the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain".

The Right to Social Security	1	1	
The Right to Ownership	1	1	
The Right to a Healthy Environment	4	4	
The Right to a Fair Trial	3		3
The Right to Organize	1	1	
Total Complaints	98	21	77

Number of Complaints Received by the NIHR regarding Different Human Rights in 2021



3. The most important complaints received by the NIHR were (11) related to the living conditions of the inmates in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center - submitted by their families - focusing on their complaints about reducing the meals in the Center to a small portion that does not satisfy their daily needs, as well as distributing food at irregular times. The NIHR immediately communicated with the competent authority represented by the Ministry of the Interior, and efforts were exerted to resolve the issue.
4. The NIHR also received a complaint related to the right to organize, submitted by a person, stating that he was prevented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development from running for the board of directors of a

non-governmental organization, even though he is not affiliated with any political association dissolved by the force of law. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the concerned ministry to find out the reasons behind this ban; however, the NIHR did not receive any reply by the time this report was issued.

5. With regard to the right to enjoy fair trial guarantees, the NIHR has received three complaints from inmates at the Correction and Rehabilitation Centre, one concerning the penalty of one of them, which was commuted shortly after he submitted his complaint. The other was presented to the competent court, and the NIHR attended the trial sessions of the third complainant to confirm his attendance, as it was found that he was absent in the scheduled session, but attended the other session, and that the case was reserved for judgment.
6. The NIHR has received a complaint regarding the right to ownership from a citizen who owns an operating card for a taxi and wishes to trade it through direct sales to a buyer in accordance with the provisions of Resolution No. (11) of 2015 issuing the Regulation of Licensing of Public Transport Activities. He explained that the concerned authority represented by the Ministry of Transport and Communications refused the direct sale procedure, and obliged all owners of operational cards who wish to trade their cards to sell through auction, in addition to the procedure applied in the event of the death of the owner of the operational card, which is to withdraw the license and confiscate the card from the heirs, without granting them the right to sell it, or they apply for a license to practice the profession. Rather, they are obliged to hand over the card to the General Directorate of Traffic, which he considered a violation of the right to property, especially since the buyer incurs huge amounts of money in purchasing the operational card. Upon receiving the complaint, the NIHR studied it and prepared the appropriate response to the concerned party.
7. On another note, the NIHR has received a complaint related to the right to social security from a citizen who suffers from a visual impairment in one of her eyes, requesting to obtain the amount allocated for disability support. The NIHR provided her with legal assistance, and informed her of the procedures to be followed, as she had not exhausted the legally established methods of submitting a direct request to the competent authorities to study and evaluate the case.
8. On a related level, the NIHR has received (4) complaints related to the right to a healthy environment, submitted by several citizens affected by

the spread of yellow mist, which resulted in yellow spots that exposed their private properties to damage. The NIHR communicated directly with the competent authority represented in the Supreme Council for Environment. In its reply, the Council explained that a field visit was conducted to the affected sites, where samples were collected and sent to international laboratories to find out the components of this spray (aerosol) and its causes. It added that it would provide the NIHR with the results; however, the NIHR did not receive a response within the timeframe of this report.

Requirement Two Legal Aid Provided by the NIHR

1. Pursuant to the provisions of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the NIHR, as amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016, the NIHR takes a role in providing legal assistance to individuals or any party, whether be it filing a complaint where the NIHR is not competent to consider, or upon requesting legal aid first, by providing insight into the procedures to be followed and assistance in taking them before resorting to the NIHR. It is important that the legal aid seeker exhaust all administrative or legal remedies and grievances, as the case warrants, file a report to the competent authorities, or resort to another authority with inherent jurisdiction in view of the request.
2. In this regard, the (NIHR) provided (532) cases of legal aid during the year 2021, which are as follows:

The Right	Total	Ordinary People	Persons Whose Freedom is Restricted
The Right to Health ¹⁵	105	8	97
The Right to Work ¹⁵	25	25	
The Right to Nationality ¹⁵	22	20	2
The Right to Physical and Mental Safety ¹⁵	13	10	3
The Right to Communicate with the outside World ¹⁵	26	1	25
The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living	27	21	6
The Right to Social Security	5	5	
The Right to Fair Trial Guarantees	10	4	6
The Right to Organize	1	1	

¹⁵These five rights were discussed in detail in the third chapter of this report, "Main issues that have a direct impact on the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain".

The Right to Freedom and Personal Security	9	4	5
The Right to Enjoy All Rights and Freedoms (Civil and Political Rights)	208	30	178
The Right to Enjoy All Rights and Freedoms (Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)	48	24	24
The Right to Education	9	6	3
The Right to non-discrimination in the Enjoyment of Rights and Freedoms (Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights)	16	16	
The Right of Movement	7	6	1
The Right to Appeal	1	1	
General Total of Aid Cases	532	182	350

3. The most important legal aid provided by the NIHR related to the right to an adequate standard of living for Mr. (A.A.A.), who stated that he is the father of four children; one of them has special needs, and lives with his family in a rented apartment. He asked for assistance in expediting the fulfillment of his housing application, which dates back more than 16 years. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Housing, which responded that the relevant department of the Ministry communicated with the concerned person, who expressed his desire to own an apartment, and accordingly he will be granted a certificate of eligibility for one apartment in Salman City.

4. In another context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance related to the right to enjoy the various rights and freedoms related to economic, social, and cultural rights to an inmate Mr. (A.M.H) in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, who requested the assistance of the NIHR in providing a television set in the building in which he's booked. Accordingly, the NIHR communicated with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, which replied that several rooms do not have TV sets because they were sent to maintenance after some inmates destroyed them, and that a set will be provided to the mentioned inmate upon completion of its maintenance.

5. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance related to the right to social security to a Mrs. (A.A.J), who wanted help from the NIHR in obtaining a cost-of-living allowance and meat subsidy, as she is the head of a family with two children and does not have a monthly income. The NIHR addressed the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to investigate the matter but did not receive a reply by the time this report was issued.
6. The NIHR has also provided legal aid related to the right to education, to a convict on a list of convicts whose sentences were commuted to integrate them into society. He expressed his desire to complete his university studies at the University of Bahrain after he was no longer legally bound, and the concerned authority at the Ministry of Interior granted him a no-objection certificate allowing him to complete his studies. This is consistent with the purposes of commutation of sentence, which is reintegrating convicts whose sentences have been reduced in society as an active member. Accordingly, the NIHR addressed the University of Bahrain to consider the matter, and the response came that his case will be studied and education provided to him, in line with the rules and regulations of the University.
7. Along that, the NIHR has provided legal aid in (16) cases to a group of individuals who claimed they were discriminated against because they refused to receive the vaccine against Covid-19, in that they were denied public sector services, which require a vaccination certificate. They also pointed out that the mechanism for obtaining a certificate of exemption from the vaccine for health reasons is not clear, plus the absence of a mechanism that allows individuals who received the vaccine outside the Kingdom of Bahrain to enter into private places that require a vaccination. The NIHR addressed the Supreme Council of Health, asking to find alternatives to the services that require in-person presence, in addition to educating shop owners on the decisions related to allowing, or not allowing, the vaccinated and the non-vaccinated from entering the shops, as well as other relevant procedures.
8. The Supreme Council of Health clarified in its response that those who did not receive the vaccine could use all government services according to COVID-19 Alert Level Traffic Light System that was announced, and that National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Corona virus follows up and evaluates all the cases. If a person has allergic reactions, another type of approved and available vaccines will be given that have different components and do not cause an allergic reaction to the person. If this is

not applicable, the case is evaluated and the required vaccine exemption is granted. In addition, the National Taskforce gives tourists entering the Kingdom of Bahrain through all ports of entry a card stating that they have obtained the vaccine, which is used to enter all places available to the vaccinated.

9. In another context, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to inmate (M.A.A.) who requested assistance in reconsidering the judgment issued against him. The NIHR provided him with legal advice and explained the conditions for the request to reconsider the judgments issued in accordance with the provisions of the regulating legislation.
10. The NIHR has also provided legal assistance related to the right to organize to Mr. (A.A.A.), who explained the case of a group of workers being discriminated against because they exercise union activities. Immediately, the NIHR addressed the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to look into the matter. The Ministry in its reply explained that it did not receive any complaint about any person being discriminated against and that the Ministry held several negotiating meetings with the management of the company and the union, in the presence of representatives of the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions. It also sought to bring together the parties to settle labor disputes and many of the workers' disputes have been settled, and efforts to settle the rest are ongoing.
11. Within the same framework, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to an employee whose passport was withheld by the employer after the expiry of her contract. The NIHR provided her with legal advice, informed her of the procedures to be followed, and directed her to file a report at the police station; the NIHR followed up with her until she was able to receive her passport.
12. The NIHR has also provided legal aid to (114) convicts pertaining to considering the commutation of their remaining sentences. The NIHR addressed the Ministry of Interior to consider the possibility of commuting the penalty pursuant to the stipulated conditions and regulations. The Ministry's reply explained that the conditions apply to some of the convicts, while others did not meet some of the formal or substantive conditions stipulated in the regulating law.
13. In addition, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to a convict who was on a list of convicts whose sentences have been commuted, as he requested assistance in obtaining a permit to travel abroad to receive the

necessary medical treatment. Accordingly, the NIHR informed him of the procedures to be followed in this regard by submitting a direct request to the Ministry of Interior to obtain permission and authorization to travel abroad.

14. On a related level, the NIHR has provided legal assistance to a woman (C.T.M.), who requested the assistance of the NIHR in pushing forward the complaints she has submitted at the police station against some person and transferring them from to the Public Prosecution after being held in reserve. The NIHR provided legal advice and directed her to submit her grievance to the Public Persecution directly.

Requirement Three Monitoring of Human Rights Situation

1. The NIHR is mandated to monitoring cases of human rights violations, conducting the necessary investigation, and carrying out announced and unannounced field visits to monitor the human rights situation in correctional institutions, places of detention, labor gatherings, health and educational homes, or any other public place suspected of being a site of human rights violations, and submitting proposals related to initiatives aimed at putting an end to these cases, and when necessary, expressing an opinion on the position and reactions of those parties.
2. During the year 2021, the NIHR has monitored (76) cases reported in the media and social media, which varied as follows:

The Right	Total	Ordinary Persons	Persons whose Freedom is Restricted
The Right to Health ¹⁶	26	11	15
The Right to work ¹⁶	3	3	
The Right to Nationality ¹⁶	2	2	
The Right to Physical and Mental Safety ¹⁶	7		7
The Right to communicate with the Outside World ¹⁶	3		3
The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living	9	9	
The Right to Fair Trial Guarantees	1		1
The Right to Freedom and Personal Security	2	1	1
The Right to Enjoy All Rights and Freedoms (Civil and Political Rights)	6	2	4

¹⁶These five rights were discussed in detail in the third chapter of this report, "Main issues that have a direct impact on the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain".

The Right to Enjoy All Rights and Freedoms (Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)	14	7	7
The Right to Education	2	2	
The Right to a Healthy Environment	1	1	
Total Cases Monitored	76	38	38

3. It is possible to address the most important cases monitored by the institution, where the NIHR monitored some allegations regarding the confiscation of holdings and personal items of a number of inmates in the correction and rehabilitation center within the framework of the inspection process. Where the NIHR immediately contacted and inquired of the concerned persons at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, where it was found that the confiscation was carried out in accordance with the provisions of Law No. (18) of 2014 regarding the Correction and Rehabilitation Institution, and the accompanying executive regulations, allowing for some items to be seized if possession of which poses a danger to inmates, especially if they are reused for other purposes.

4. The NIHR has issued a statement stressing the importance of providing a healthy and safe environment for inmates, as it is one of the most important rights referred to in national legislation and relevant international instruments. It requires periodic oversight and inspection, to ensure the safety of all inmates and not to acquire anything that might harm them. In this regard, the NIHR has pointed out the right of all inmates to keep their personal belongings provided that they are compatible with the Center's internal system and do not contain any prohibited items. It has also called on inmates to abide by the provisions of the law and the executive regulations, and the applicable internal system, so that they can take advantage of some of the privileges that are provided to inmates by the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, for which the behavior of the inmate is a prerequisite for his candidacy, including alternative penalties.

5. The NIHR has also monitored, on a social networking site, news about an inmate, (A.J. H.), abstaining from eating and refusing to continue medical examination. A delegation from the NIHR made a field visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw area, to investigate the health and legal status of the inmate. It was found out that, in its efforts to take preventive measures and social distancing, the administration of the Center redistributed the inmates to the buildings with a mechanism that

ensures health protection under precautionary conditions, and in a manner, that does not violate the internal system in force at the Reform and Rehabilitation Center. The inmate was interviewed without handcuffs, and in complete privacy outside the cell, to hear his testimony, with the aim of extending assistance. The inmate stated that his requests are limited to his desire to transfer to another building that includes one of his relatives. The doctor on duty was also spoken to, who explained that the inmate's health condition in general is reassuring and stable, and he is getting treatment and health care. The NIHR's delegation also found that the physical appearance of the inmate looked good.

6. In another context, the NIHR has monitored news in a local newspaper about a female citizen living in a dilapidated old house that dates back more than 70 years. The NIHR immediately referred the case to the Supreme Council for Women, and as a result, both the Ministry of Housing and the Supreme Council for Women contacted the concerned to study the issue in preparation for providing her with the necessary support.
7. In addition, the NIHR has monitored news about the Electricity and Water Authority cutting off the electricity supply to a family home due to overdue utility bills. It stated that the Covid-19 pandemic, the poor health condition of the concerned, and his urgent need for a surgery, all have led to his inability to pay his overdue amounts to the Authority. The NIHR addressed the Ministry of Electricity and Water Affairs to look into the matter and explore the possibility of reconnecting the electricity and reaching an amicable settlement between the two parties. It called on the Authority not to resort to cutting off the electricity supply to any house due to overdue payments, and seek to find a new mechanism that guarantees the rights of the Authority on the one hand, and on the other hand, the rights of individuals to an adequate standard of living. It added that cutting off electricity might directly cause great harm to individuals. The Ministry in its reply explained that the concerned have not provided it with a report on his condition and that he is being contacted to provide proof of his condition in preparation for settling the situation. It indicated that it did not cut off the electricity, but only notified the aforementioned. Accordingly, the NIHR contacted the concerned person and informed him of the Ministry's response, and found that he had received a call from the Ministry on the same subject, and the matter was settled.
8. As part of the NIHR's endeavor to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, it monitored, via a phone call from a female citizen, the case of a disabled person (Down syndrome); an orphan whose brothers

entrusted a foreigner of Asian nationality to care for, the latter complained that this disabled person is subjected to severe violence and neglect, the complaint was communicated to his brothers, but to no avail. The NIHR, being responsible, addressed the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to consider protection mechanisms that could be provided to him, but received no response by the time this report was published.

9. The NIHR has also monitored cases related to the right to education, which is a fundamental human right that is important to ensure the exercise of other rights, and the prescribed measures were taken in all of them, whether by communicating with the concerned authorities, or providing legal assistance and insight into the procedures to be followed. For example, the NIHR has monitored the case of a child who is not registered at school to complete her compulsory education, as she stopped at third grade because she is not proficient in Arabic language. The NIHR addressed the Ministry of Education to look into the matter, and the Ministry's response indicated that an appropriate solution has been found for the girl's case, as that she has been registered in a school, and the child's guardian has signed a pledge to abide by the provisions contained in Law No. (27) of 2005 regarding the Education Law.

Requirement Four

Field Visits to Monitor Human Rights Situation

Pursuant to the role entrusted to the NIHR contained in Paragraph (g) of Article No. (12) of Law No. (26) of 2014, which states that one of the institution's competencies is, **“To perform announced and unannounced field visits, to monitor human rights situation in correction institutions, detention centers, labor calls gathering, health and education centers, or any other public place in which it is suspected that human rights violations are taking place.”**. Moreover, in implementation of the inherent mandate of the NIHR's Committee on Visiting Detention Places and Facilities, the NIHR has played a major role in the field of human rights protection by carrying out declared and unannounced field visits to monitor the human rights situation.

1. Accordingly, in 2021, the NIHR has carried out (22) inspection visits to verify that human rights were observed in various situations and occasions and that violations of these rights are not occurring. It initially visited several centers affiliated with the Ministry of Interior, and isolation and quarantine centers affiliated with the Ministry of Health. In addition, it visited several sites concerned with the environment to monitor the environmental pollution problems in various governorates. Moreover, it visited the Expats Protection Center at the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons and the National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) Rehabilitation Home for Disabled Children.

List of Field Visits

No.	Visit	Date
1	The Expat Protection Center at the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons	11 January 2021
2	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw)	7 March 2021
3	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw) (based on monitoring status M-45-2020 - Health status of an inmate)	17 March 2021
4	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw)	8 April 2021
5	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw)	18 April 2021
6	Women's Deportation Center in Hidd	21 April 2021
7	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw)	11 June 2021

8	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw)	26 July 2021
9	The Quarantine and Isolation Center at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Center	11 August 2021
10	Pre-trial Detention Center and Youth Center in the Dry Dock Area (Ashura Season)	15 August 2021
11		18 August 2021
12	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw) (Ashura Season)	15 August 2021
13		17 August 2021
14		18 August 2021
15	National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) Rehabilitation Home for Disabled Children	12 September 2021
16	Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw) (based on a complaint - to check the internal communication system)	19 September 2021
17	Pre-trial Detention Center (Juvenile Center - Convicted Section)	21 October 2021
18	Tubli Bay (Environmental Pollution)	16 November 2021
19	Wadi Al-Bhair (Environmental Pollution)	30 November 2021
20	Pre-trial Detention Center (Juvenile Center - Convicted Section)	2 December 2021
21	Ma'ameer Area (Environmental Pollution)	22 December 2021
22	South Capital Police Station	23 December 2021

Section one: Visiting several centers affiliated with the Ministry of Interior

1. In realizing those competencies included in the provisions of the law, the NIHR played a major role in the field of human rights protection, as it visited several centers affiliated with the Ministry of Interior to closely examine the human rights situation and medical care provided to inmates to safeguard the health and safety of all.
2. To this end, the NIHR has made an unannounced field visit on March 7, 2021, to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw region, to follow up on the precautionary and preventive measures adopted by the Center, related to providing health services to all inmates.

3. During the visit, the delegation was briefed on the Covid-19 vaccination process for the inmates willing to get it, which is carried out in cooperation with the Department of Health Affairs, for everyone without any discrimination. It explained the process starting from bringing in the vaccine until its administration, including informing inmates of the types of vaccinations available, and raising their awareness of the importance of getting the vaccination, as it strengthens the body's immunity to avoid complications and severe illness, especially for those who suffer from chronic diseases.
4. The NIHR expresses its satisfaction with the vaccination procedures carried out by the Center, which covered all inmates and workers in the Center alike without discrimination. The vaccination process was carried out efficiently and according to the best international medical standards, which reflects the keenness of the Ministry of Interior to maintain and preserve the rights of inmates on an equal basis with their peers in the community.
5. On the other hand, the NIHR continuously follows up on all the precautionary and preventive measures adopted by the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation to provide health services to all inmates. In this regard, the NIHR extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Interior for its constructive cooperation and endeavor to protect the rights of inmates, to achieve the goals that were set to curb the spread of Covid-19, and to address it through the implementing precautionary measures to confront the pandemic, in a way that contributes to protecting health and safety.
6. On March 17, 2021, the NIHR made an unannounced field visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw to check the health status of an inmate, after monitoring news about his deteriorating health and not receiving treatment and health care.
7. The visiting delegation met privately with the inmate without restrictions, away from the officials of the Center or the police. It turned out that the circulating news was incorrect, as the inmate was in good health, and did not show signs of illness or fatigue. He refused to talk with the delegation and did not express any observations or requests.
8. In another context, on April 8, 2021, the NIHR made an unannounced field visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw region, to check the visitation mechanism and procedures to inmates who have received

the vaccination against Covid-19, which had been announced by the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation earlier.

9. The NIHR's delegation met with the Center's officials, and the precautionary and preventive measures necessary during visits of inmates' families were closely monitored to check on them and their health conditions. The delegation also met randomly with several inmates and their families, who expressed their contentment with the Center's initiative to organize these visits. They expressed their satisfaction with the health and preventive measures taken to limit the spread of the virus.
10. In a statement published after its visit, the NIHR confirmed that the claims raised about the health condition of the inmates in the reform and rehabilitation centers are unfounded. It added that, being an independent and impartial body, it is following up on all the procedures and measures taken by the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation to deal with any existing cases or contacts between inmates since the beginning of the pandemic in the Kingdom. The NIHR is aware of all the precautionary measures taken among the inmates, including: subjecting all new inmates to examination, isolation procedures, applying social distancing measures inside the centers, and stopping all visits except for visits to inmates who took the anti-virus vaccination, provided that their parents or those who would like to visit them had also taken the vaccination, in addition to conducting a laboratory test for the Corona virus before the visit.
11. The NIHR added in its statement that after the visiting delegation had inspected the Center on the ground, it was evident that precautionary measures are implemented in a precise and professional manner to protect the health and safety of inmates, individuals, and all visitors to the Center, within the framework of the national efforts to combat the Covid-19 pandemic. It was noted that there is a quarantine center with a specialized medical staff equipped with all the necessary medical equipment, a medical clinic operating around the clock, as well as continuous disinfection of all its facilities, and that health care for all inmates has continued and never stopped.
12. The NIHR called on inmates and their families or those who would like to visit them to get the Covid-19 vaccine, to enhance the chances of resuming visitation in the traditional way instead of video communications.
13. On 18 April 2021, the NIHR made an unannounced field visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw area to check on the

human rights and health status of inmates, after the Ministry of Interior stated that it had taken measures against a limited number of inmates who blocked corridors and refused to enter the wards, which led to disruption of services provided, including communications and health care for other inmates.

14. The visiting delegation entered the buildings that had witnessed the blockades, where it met with randomly selected inmates, as well as the Center's doctor to talk about the health status of inmates in general. It was confirmed that the human rights and health status of the inmates is generally reassuring and that what is being said about them being beaten and taken to an unknown place is incorrect, as all inmates were in the buildings, which was confirmed during the actual visit.
15. In a statement following the visit, the NIHR expressed its deep concern over the allegations aimed at creating a state of uncertainty among the inmates' families, stressing that dealing with inmates is carried out in accordance with the law, in a civilized professional behavior, with a high degree of self-restraint.
16. Within the same context, the NIHR strongly urged the inmates to cooperate with it with regard to any legitimate requests related to their rights, especially that their actions during the past three weeks had robbed the rest of the inmates of their right to enjoy health care and communicate with their families, as per the Center's regulations. It explained that some of the inmates might be put at risk because of these actions.
17. The NIHR also reaffirmed that inmates must continue to enjoy their prescribed rights and that they are not subjected to ill-treatment in accordance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. At the same time, it called on inmates to abide by the executive regulations of the Correction and Rehabilitation Institutions Law and not to harm or infringe on the rights and freedom of their colleague inmates.
18. To complement the efforts of the NIHR in supporting and protecting human rights, on 21 April 2021, the NIHR made an unannounced field visit to Al-Hidd Women's Deportation Center to ensure the availability of basic rights and to verify the validity of the allegations contained in the complaint submitted by an inmate of the Center regarding living conditions, including not providing Ramadan breakfast and suhoor meals.

19. To ensure that all female inmates in the Center enjoy the basic rights guaranteed in accordance with international standards and relevant national legislation, and to guarantee inmates' safety within the Covid-19 precautionary measures, the NIHR's delegation inspected the buildings and facilities equipped to serve the inmates, as well as the procedures followed for detention, medical examination and prevention until the deportation ruling is implemented.
20. The visiting delegation randomly picked and individually interviewed a number of female inmates; it turned out they did not have any complaints, and it was found that the claim of not providing Ramadan meals was incorrect, as the NIHR reviewed the complete list of meals that also included meals for non-Muslims as well. Some of the inmates had remarks, which the NIHR has forwarded to the concerned authorities.
21. On a related level, on 11 June 2021, the NIHR conducted a visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw area to find out the requests and needs of the inmates, after a group of inmates went on strike, following the death of inmate (H.B.) who contracted the Corona virus. The NIHR's delegation met a few inmates and listened to some of their comments, which will be communicated to the Center's officials directly.
22. During its visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, the NIHR reached a number of observations and recommendations that can be summarized as follows:
 - Urging the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw to sit immediately with the striking inmates in the buildings, and meet their legitimate requests in accordance with the applicable rules of procedure.
 - Urging the administration of the Center to coordinate with the concerned parties in the Ministry of Health, as a third party, to review and affirm effectiveness of the precautionary measures in place.
 - Urging the administration of the Center to train their doctors in the internal clinic, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, to be kept abreast of the developments regarding the Corona virus.
 - Urging the administration of the Center to conduct a periodic PCR test for all civil and military staff in the Center every week, provided that this periodic testing includes all inmates every two weeks, in preparation for

taking appropriate measures, to isolate those infected and those in contact, as recommended by the medical team.

23. On 26 July 2021, the NIHR conducted an unannounced field visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw following monitoring the case of inmate (I.G.H.) who went on a hunger strike in protest of his transfer to another building. The visiting delegation met the striking inmate freely outside the cell, without interference from the Center's administration, to hear his testimony and find out his requests and needs. The inmate told the delegation that he only wanted to be moved to another building where a relative of his is being held. The delegation provided him with advice and guidance to end his hunger strike.
24. The visiting delegation found that the Center's administration, in order to implement social distancing measures to combat the Corona virus, has decided to redistribute the inmates to the buildings in such a way that protects the health of the inmates, as required by the precautionary measures, without violating the in force regulations and law of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center.
25. Subsequently, the visiting delegation met with the doctor on duty, who stated that the health condition of the inmate was followed up continuously. He explained that medical examinations had been carried out for the inmate on the first and second day, and his health condition was found to be stable (blood sugar was 3.4), which is within the normal range. In addition, the inmate refrained from following up with the doctor on duty until the eighth day, which indicates that he had ended his strike.
26. After that, the NIHR's delegation met with the administration of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center, where they discussed the requests and comments made by the said inmate.
27. To ensure that all male and female inmates enjoy the freedom to practice religious rites without prejudice to the precautionary measures, a delegation from the NIHR made a few visits to **reform and rehabilitation centers, detention centers and pre-trial detention during the Ashura season 1443 AH (2021 AD)** to closely monitor the extent to which inmates and detainees enjoy practicing their religious rites during Ashura season:

First: Visits to the Pretrial Detention Center and the Youth Center in the Dry Dock area

- a. In order to prompt the oversight role stipulated in the NIHR establishing Law, and based on its plan to follow up on the application of standards related to the protection and promotion of human rights in places of detention in accordance with the powers granted to it. A delegation from the NIHR paid (2) visits to the Pre-trial Detention Center and the Center for Young Convicts in the Dry Dock area to ensure that detainees and inmates practice religious rites during the Ashura season.
- b. During the delegation's visit on 15 August 2021 to the pre-trial detainees' building, it met the concerned persons in the Center who stated that all internal instructions and systems are applied. Those are terms and controls related to the practice of religious rites and represent general instructions for the inmates, explaining that inmates are aware of those instructions and regulations, as they were briefed on them.
- c. In a related context, the NIHR's delegation toured the Center's facilities, where (4) wards were visited to ensure that inmates practice religious rites to the fullest. The delegation observed a number of inmates practicing religious rites freely as well as a reciter and listeners in every ward. The delegation found that the inmates practice their rites inside the cells completely freely.
- d. During the inspection tour, several inmates were met in the four wards, who reported that they practice their rites in complete freedom and that the administration of the Center allows them to practice their religious rites for the Ashura season from 8:30-9:30 pm, which is sufficient time for them. However, some of the detainees reported that some wards are allowed practice until 10 pm, and that this is up to the officer on duty.
- e. In addition, some of the inmates of ward (5) stated that they would like to change the time to access outdoor sunlight, while the inmates of ward (1) requested repairing the bathroom.
- f. After completing a visit to the Pre-trial Detention Center in the Dry Dock area on 15 August 2021, the delegation of the NIHR visited the Center for Young Convicts in the same premises, to ensure that inmates practice religious rites in the Ashura season. During the inspection tour, it was observed that inmates practice religious rites completely freely. Several of the inmates were met and asked if they had any comments regarding the practice of religious rites. They reported that the administration of the Center allows them to practice religious rites freely and meets all their needs. One inmate was asked about the time of practicing rites, and he answered that it is from 7:00-9:00 pm.

- g. During the meeting, one of the inmates complained about the delay in entering the “shilats” used for reading during the revival of religious rites, and they requested that the religious rites be practiced in the mosque, given its large area, which accommodates a larger number of inmates.
- h. To complement the NIHR’s efforts in monitoring, on 18 August 2021, it made another inspection visit to the Pre-trial Detention Center (pre-trial detainees’ building). Accordingly, the delegation was allowed to enter ward (10), which was not included in the first visit. The delegation witnessed the inmates practicing Ashura rites on the ground.
- i. During the inspection tour, the visiting delegation was told by the person responsible for ward (10), that those in charge of the Center provide them with great facilities to ensure the success of the Ashura season, and provide all facilities to them even under normal circumstances before the Ashura season begins.
- j. The person responsible for ward (10) also made some remarks about the conditions and needs of other inmates that are not related to the revival or practice of religious rites during the Ashura season. He indicated that the inmates needed to be allowed to bring in some clothes, because the clothes sold in the inmate's shop are of inferior quality that causes allergy.
- k. With regard to the right to communicate with the outside world, the person responsible for ward (10) stated that the time allotted to inmates to communicate with their families was insufficient and requested extending it.
- l. With regard to the time the inmates are allowed access to outdoors to be exposed to sunlight, the person responsible for the ward requested to consider changing the specified time, due to the extremely hot weather, which makes it not possible to go out during the afternoon. He also concluded his remarks by requesting the provision of prayer stones for the inmates.
- m. Afterward, the visiting delegation entered some of the wards, which were inspected in the previous visit, to check on the conditions of the inmates and their practice of religious rites. It was observed that the conditions are stable, and the rights are guaranteed.
- n. At the conclusion of the visits to the Pre-trial and Young Convicts Detention Center, the NIHR made several observations and recommendations that can be summarized as follows:

- The need to have unified organizational preparations for the Ashura season in advance, in terms of indicating the duration and places of practicing religious rites, in addition to having clear instructions for inmates posted in places such as corridors in a way that ensures that all are aware of them.
- The need to provide prayer rugs and prayer stones for inmates in all wards.

Second: Visits to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw region

- For the same purpose, the NIHR conducted (3) inspection visits to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw, on 15, 17, and 18 August 2021, in order to review the conditions of the inmates in the Center, and to ensure that their religious rites are practiced to the fullest during the Ashura season.
- The visiting delegation toured the Center, where it was allowed to visit buildings (7-8-11-12). It found that the ritual program begins after seven in the evening and continues until ten in the evening, starting from the first of Muharram until the tenth day of the same month. A timetable was also prepared for the program (it was hung in front of the prayer room door in most of the buildings) and included the names of the reciters who were chosen from among the inmates themselves, either from the same building or by coordination and prior request to invite a reciter from the inmates in other buildings.
- The program was also implemented inside the prayer room designated for ritual rites, and other rooms according to the number of those practicing the rites to allow for distancing between participants.
- During the inspection tour, the supporting facilities in each building were inspected such as the food preparation room (the kitchen) in which meals for inmates or dinner is prepared based on the resources available to the inmates and to what is available in the store (inmates' shop), by a team of inmates who wish to voluntarily participate in it.
- During the visit, it was noted that there was a working team, who has distinct organizational skills, comprising inmates to deal with issues related to organizing and running programs for practicing religious rites. It was also noted that wearing masks and distancing between participants to keep them safe was enforced. Instructions and phrases of special rites and elegiac manuscripts were hung on the doors and walls of the corridors

in each building, as well as inside the prayer room designated for rituals and other rooms where inmates gather.

- During the visit, it was observed that inmates have the freedom to choose whether to participate collectively or stay inside the room to follow through the channels available to them on the TV screens. In addition, on duty officials and specialists are present throughout the Ashura rites period to ensure that the program runs without any problems.
- It was also noted that there is effective coordination with the medical clinic specialists to be always present during the period of performing the rites. In addition, special precautionary measures were taken regarding the 25 inmates who have not yet received the Corona virus vaccination, as they have participated in the rites from their rooms to ensure that the health status of everyone is maintained.
- Finally, the delegation observed that there was great cooperation from officials, specialists, and inmates to ensure the successful conduct of the rites.
- In addition, the NIHR's delegation met with several inmates and listened to some of their comments, which will be delivered to the Center's officials directly, as follows:
 - An inmate from Building No. (11) submitted a petition to contact the store's supplier (the inmate's shop) to provide plentiful amounts of food to be able to prepare the hospitality that they lack. Note was taken and availability was confirmed during the second day of the visit, and the concerned stated that they will provide a dinner from the administration's budget in the last day of the program, in appreciation of the behavior of the inmates during the Ashura program.
 - Inmate (A.J) from Building No. (7) made a remark on medical care at the Center, explaining that he suffers from skin growths (warts) on his feet, and that he has been shown to the specialist doctor without the necessary treatment being given to him. The NIHR's visiting delegation verified his health condition, and it was found that he had already been shown to the specialist doctor, and that his case is being followed up, especially since some cases that require transferring to the hospital may need more time due to the current health conditions, and the required precautionary and preventive procedures.

- One of the inmates made a note about reconsidering medical appointments to expedite the follow-up and treatment procedures. On that matter, a member of the Council of Commissioners, Mr. Ahmed Al-Salloum, made it clear that he was ready to coordinate with the Association of Private Clinics Owners to provide free medical consultations, by sending specialized medical teams to examine the inmates either by video calls or by visiting the rehabilitation center.
- A remark was received from one of the buildings requesting to provide prayer stones with some religious books, noting that it was observed by the delegation that many books are available in some of the buildings that were visited.

28. On 19 September 2021, the NIHR made a visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw area to inspect and verify the validity of the complaints received by the NIHR from the families of a number of inmates regarding a defect in the internal communication system, such as interferences and interruptions.

29. The NIHR's visiting delegation found that there is a defect in phone booth No. (3) designated for communication, which leads to interference or sudden interruption of communication. Accordingly, the Center officials reported that the provider company has been notified to make the necessary repairs for this technical defect.

30. In a related context, the NIHR's delegation contacted the families of the inmates later, and inquired about the quality of communications during their conversation with the inmates through the internal phone of the Center, and whether the voice was clear, and if they could speak and hear the inmates. Everyone reported the clarity of the voice and the absence of any interruption or interference of communication.

31. As part of the continuous follow-up to the conditions of inmates in the Pre-trial Detention Center in the Dry Dock area, the NIHR visited the pre-trial detainees building and the young convicts building on 21 October 2021, to check out the requests and comments of detainees and convicts, and to ensure that they enjoy the rights guaranteed under national legislation and international human rights standards.

(A) Young Convicts Building: During the inspection visit, the visiting delegation toured the Center and met several convicts. The visit focused on the following:

- **Humane treatment standard and verification of the conditions of the premises**

1. It was confirmed that health services were provided (doctor's visit, quality of services, health care, providing medicine), and through the visit it was found that those inmates with infectious diseases are separated from the non-infected, as they are placed in wards designated for health isolation.
2. The clinic operates around the clock, seven days a week; a doctor is available around the clock and nurses are on duty.
3. The clinic is shared between the young convicts building and the pre-trial detention building, where there is a schedule for doctor's appointments for detainees and convicts, each separately. There is also a short stay ward. The clinic is equipped with the necessary medical equipment and accommodates a good number of convicts and detainees at the same time.
4. Regarding medical prescriptions, the nurse delivers the prescribed medicines to the inmate three times a day, (at breakfast, lunch, and dinner).
5. As for the dental clinic, it opens five days a week during official working hours; in urgent cases, the convict is transferred to the dental department of the Public Security Clinic.
6. A psychiatrist is present twice a week (Mondays and Wednesdays) to see the inmates whose names are registered in the appointment schedule prepared in advance for this purpose.
7. A specialist in chronic diseases is available twice a week and follows up on the condition of inmates suffering from chronic diseases, dispenses the necessary treatment, and prescribes healthy meals for inmates needing specific diets according to the disease they suffer from.
8. It was noted that coordination exists with Salmaniya Medical Complex, King Hamad University Hospital and Bahrain Defense Force Hospital to make sure the inmate's health condition is stable, in the case he is receiving a specific treatment, before being sentenced, to bring the necessary medical reports or prescribed treatment.

9. Medications are provided by the health affairs; if a medicine is not available, it is provided by a government hospital, and if not available, it is purchased from external pharmacies.
10. The inmate's family is allowed to bring in some medical supplies such as eyeglasses, medical lenses, and medical shoes, if there is a prescription from the specialist.
11. The ambulance is available around the clock. When the ambulance is dispatched for any emergency; an alternative ambulance is called in, which is expected to arrive within a maximum of 10 minutes. To facilitate the speed at which the ambulance can reach the hospital, it is coordinated with the concerned authorities in the Ministry.
12. If an inmate wishes to visit the doctor, his name is recorded in a list prepared for this purpose for non-urgent cases, and he is transferred to the clinic. The inmate can request an appointment for the clinic for the next day. As for urgent cases, they are dealt with as quickly as possible, and the inmate is immediately transferred to the clinic.
13. Occasionally, the doctor comes to the wards, meets the patients, and answers some of their inquiries, if any.
14. Refusal of an inmate to go to the doctor's appointment is documented in a special form and kept in the convict's file.
15. There is a medical examination clinic equipped with the necessary equipment such as thermometers, blood pressure measuring devices, as well as devices for measuring other vital signs.
16. As regards the legal use of force, the delegation made sure that the Center's staff is trained in the optimal legal use of force in emergencies (such as a problem related to riots). However, the NIHR's delegation recommends adding further qualitative training for staff on the treatment of young convicts. It was also noticed that female staff is present for monitoring and inspection of female inmates.
17. Regarding separating inmates according to their classification, it was found that inmates are segregated according to age groups and type of offense, but the NIHR's delegation noted that there is one case that needs reclassification.

18. Regarding inmates with special needs, the visiting delegation noted that the Center did not have any inmates falling under this category. However, it was observed that the security staff in the Center is not ready to deal with any inmates with special needs, as they need special training in this regard.
19. On the subject of humane treatment and respect between officials and inmates, the delegation confirmed that it existed. However, a number of inmates reported that some officials and members of the security staff, in certain incidents, exercise unjustified violence. Therefore, it is imperative to promote further education and training of security personnel on how to behave and treat young inmates.
20. As for overcrowding, the delegation noted that the number of convicts was appropriate in comparison to the size of the available spaces, and that there was no overcrowding.

- **Safety Standard:**

1. The delegation checked the condition of the premises, availability of security for inmates, and the hours of exposure to outdoor sunlight. A number of the inmates met by the delegation demanded an increase in the hours of outdoor sunlight as the time given to them currently is not enough.
2. Regarding the extent to which officials know their duties and how to deal with inmates, whether they have received the necessary training or not, and whether there were surveillance cameras or not. The delegation was informed of the details of the above, and it was found that there are surveillance cameras in all facilities, in addition to special training programs to employees, which were suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and are being resumed.
3. During the visit, the delegation made sure that the inmates were aware of all the instructions and regulations, as well as the penalties for breaching them. The delegation recommended that these instructions should be posted in all wards and corridors.

- **Standard for checking the existence of a complaints mechanism**

1. The delegation made sure that a mechanism to file complaints with the administration exists. However, some inmates requested assigning the task of examining complaints filed by inmates against employees to a neutral party other than the administration itself,

because it acts as both, the opponent and the judge at the same time, because it handles investigation and issues the final verdict. Accordingly, the delegation sees the importance of having a third party who owns the keys to the complaints boxes to open the box, get the complaints, and deliver them to the Ombudsman or the NIHR, as the case may warrant.

2. As for the existence of a mechanism for inmates to communicate with human rights bodies without obtaining prior permission from the administration, the delegation noted that there is a mechanism for direct communication. However, there are difficulties in accessing it by the inmates, and therefore, their families file complaints on their behalf. The visiting delegation calls for facilitating inmates' access to the mechanism of communication, of detainees with national bodies concerned with human rights, for example the NIHR, the Ombudsman, and the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission.

- **Adequate food and water indicator**

The delegation received some comments from inmates, regarding the quality, frequency and inadequacy of the food provided. However, the delegation confirmed that the meals are served on predetermined and fixed times. The visiting delegation calls on the administration of the Center to increase the quantity and variety of the food provided to inmates. As for allowing inmates to buy food from outside the Center, it was found that this is not possible, as it is in violation of the Center's established procedures.

- **Indicators for achieving the rehabilitation and education standard**

The visiting delegation found that there were no adequate rehabilitation plans or programs for inmates, in addition to exercising, reading, and writing. Accordingly, the visiting delegation recommends the need to introduce programs to rehabilitate the young convicts, such as educational lectures, handicrafts, plant production, psychological or social counseling sessions, library, and sports programs, in addition to encouraging inmates to study and get an education.

- **Indicator of legality of deposit and legal rights**

1. The availability of legal documents according to which the inmate was held in the Center was verified, as well as the extent to which procedures were followed to implement Law No. (18) of 2017 on Penalties and Alternative Measures as amended, the most important of which is monitoring of conduct and the extent of cooperation with the security staff and other inmates, and medical cases.
 2. In the same regard, the procedures for communicating with parents, relatives and lawyers were confirmed, as it was observed that the period of communication starts from eight in the morning until five in the evening, which is very appropriate.
 3. In addition, it was observed that there were special procedures provided by the administration of the Center to inmates who suffer from difficulty in communicating and those with special needs, as there was one inmate of this category, and he was dealt with in particular in accordance with the laws and regulations in place.
- The visit to the young convicts section concluded with several recommendations that can be summarized as follows:
 - Urge the Center's administration to restore the visitation system, as visits have begun at the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw area.
 - Urge the Center's administration to start qualitative training for security personnel on dealing with, and treatment of young convicts.
 - Examine the age of all inmates and make sure classifications are appropriate.
 - Prepare security personnel and training them on dealing with people with special needs, if necessary, while preparing and equipping the buildings to meet their needs.
 - Urge the Center's administration to increase the time allotted to access outdoor sun exposure in accordance with the applicable regulations.
 - Urge the Center's administration to post the applicable instructions and regulations in all the wards and corridors.
 - Have a third party, who owns the keys to the complaints boxes to open the boxes, extract the complaints, and hand them over to the

Ombudsman (General Secretariat of Complaints), or the NIHR, as the case may warrant.

- Refer complaints submitted by inmates against any of the officials of the Center or a member of the security staff to the Ombudsman promptly and notify the complainant of that.
- Urge the Center's administration to remove the obstacles facing inmates in communicating with human rights bodies without prior permission (NIHR, Ombudsman, Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission).
- Urge the Center's administration to activate rehabilitation programs for young convicted inmates (educational lectures, handicraft workshops, plant production, psychological or social counseling sessions, library, and sports programs.)
- Urge the Center's administration to coordinate with psychological counselors and others regarding educating inmates about the importance of continuing education and encouraging them to integrate into society and contribute to the development of the country after leaving the Center.

(B) Pre-trial Detainees Section: The visiting delegation toured the Center's facilities and met a few detainees. The visit focused on the following standards:

- **Humane treatment standard and verification of conditions of the premises**
 1. It was verified that health services were provided (visit with the doctor, quality of services, health care, provision of medicines). During the visit, it was found that new detainees are quarantined for a period of ten days with the necessary medical examinations performed, and subjected to prescribed precautionary measures; those with infectious diseases are separated from those who are not infected and placed in wards designated for health isolation.
 2. As to the legal use of force, the visiting delegation made sure that the Center's staff are trained in the optimal use of force in emergencies (such as a problem related to riots), and the presence of female staff for monitoring and inspection was noted.
 3. Regarding segregating inmates according to their classification, it was found that the principle of segregating inmates according to

age groups was implemented; however, it was noted that an 18-year-old detainee was held in the adults' building.

4. Regarding detainees with special needs, the delegation noted that there were no such cases in the Center. When the visiting delegation asked about the readiness to receive this category, it became clear that the security staff in the Center were not ready to deal with any detainees with special needs and that the buildings are also not equipped to receive this category.
5. During the visit, several detainees (chosen randomly) were asked if they were satisfied with the way officials dealt with them, and their answers reflected satisfaction with the situation, and that dealing with them was within acceptable limits.

- **Safety Standard**

1. During the visit, and when inspecting the cleanliness and readiness of the Center, it was noted that the buildings are very old and need renovation or replacement to ensure the safety of the detainees. Accordingly, the delegation recommends examining the condition of the buildings' structures and developing radical solutions to maintain them, if possible, or replace them. In addition, all safety requirements and conditions according to the applicable guidelines must be made available to prevent any accidents.
2. In the same context, the delegation inspected the conditions of the premises and the hours of outdoor exposure to sunlight that the detainees get. A number of inmates who were met demanded to increase the access to sun period, as the time given to them (an hour per day) is not enough.
3. In relation to the extent to which the security staff is well informed of their duties and how they deal with inmates, and whether they receive the necessary training or not, and if there are surveillance cameras, the delegation was informed about the details of these issues. It was found that there are surveillance cameras in all facilities and qualitative training programs for staff are conducted. These training programs were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic; however, the delegation recommends increasing and intensifying the training courses, especially the ones related to the rights of those deprived of their liberty (detainees).

4. During the visit, the delegation made sure that the inmates knew all their rights and obligations, instructions and regulations, and the penalties for violating them. It also found that those concerned in the Center explain those rights and obligations to the inmates from the first day. The delegation did not receive any complaint about this during the visit. Nevertheless, the delegation recommends that these instructions should be posted in all wards and corridors.

- **Standard for checking the existence of a complaints mechanism**

1. The delegation made sure that the administration has a complaint mechanism (a letter requesting meeting with an officer). However, some inmates requested assigning the task of examining complaints filed by inmates against employees to a neutral party other than the administration itself, because it acts as both, the opponent and the judge at the same time, because it handles investigation and issues the final verdict. Accordingly, the delegation sees the importance of having a third party who owns the keys to the complaints boxes to open the box, get the complaints, and deliver them to the Ombudsman or the NIHR, as the case may warrant.
2. As for the existence of a mechanism for inmates to communicate with human rights bodies without obtaining prior permission from the administration, the delegation noted that there is a mechanism for direct communication. However, there are difficulties in accessing it by the inmates, and therefore, their families file complaints on their behalf. The visiting delegation calls for facilitating inmates' access to the mechanism of communication of detainees with national bodies concerned with human rights, for example the NIHR, the Ombudsman, and the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission.

- **Adequate food and water indicator**

1. The delegation received some remarks from inmates regarding the quality, frequency and inadequacy of food provided. However, the delegation observed that the meals are served on predetermined and fixed times. The delegation calls on the Center's administration to increase the quantity and quality of food provided to detainees.
2. As for allowing detainees to buy food from outside, the delegation found that this is not possible because of the need to preserve

detainees' safety from any poisoning cases, especially considering the current conditions with the presence of the Corona virus pandemic

- **Indicators for achieving rehabilitation and education standard**

The visiting delegation found that there were no plans and programs to rehabilitate the detainees, and the administration did not provide various exercise and reading and writing programmes at the present time.

- **Indicator of legality of deposit and legal rights**

The visiting delegation verified the legality of the inmates' deposit and the availability of supporting documents. With regard to legal rights, the mechanism of inmates' communication with their families or lawyers was observed. It was found that communication times start from eight in the morning until twelve in the afternoon, which is an inappropriate time; this is because the specified time coincides with lawyers working in the courts, which may harm the interests of detainees. Accordingly, the visiting delegation calls for an extension of the time, as is the case with inmates in the young convicts building. It was also noted that there is no system in place for detainees with special needs who have difficulty communicating, but this is considered case by case.

- The visit to the pretrial detainees' section concluded with several recommendations that can be summarized as follows:
 - Urge the administration of the Center to restore the visitation system, as visitations have begun at the Correctional and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw area.
 - Urge the administration of the Center to coordinate with the concerned parties to open an office for detainees' affairs. Such office shall initiate procedures with inmates' agents and facilitate issuing power of attorney. In addition, urge the administration of the Center to create an electronic system for notifying lawyers of the decisions of courts and the Public Prosecution, in order to ensure that the detainee enjoys his guarantees during the investigation and trial stages.

- Call on the administration of the Center to study the status of the buildings structures and develop radical solutions to maintain them, if possible, or replace them.
- Urge the administration of the Center to increase the time allotted for access to outdoor sunlight in a manner that does not breach the applicable regulations.
- Urge the administration of the Center to post instructions and regulations in force on all wards and corridors.
- Ensure the availability of all safety requirements and conditions according to the applicable guidelines to prevent any accidental mishap, God forbids.
- Urge the administration of the Center to consider having a third party with keys to the complaints boxes to open the box, extract the complaints and deliver them to the Ombudsman or the (NIHR), as the case may require.
- Call on the administration of the Center to facilitate the mechanism of communication of detainees with the national bodies concerned with human rights, for example, the NIHR, Ombudsman, and the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission.
- Urge the administration of the Center to increase the amount of food provided to detainees.
- Urge the administration of the Center to intensify the training of those concerned, especially on issues related to the rights of those deprived of their liberty (the detainees).
- Urge the administration of the Center to check the classifications in force in the Center, and to ensure that the age of the inmates matches the classification.
- Urge the administration of the Center to develop rehabilitation programs for the detainees.
- Urge the administration of the Center to increase the period of communication of detainees with their families and attorneys, and to extend it until five o'clock in the evening, as is the case in the young convicts building.

32. In order to activate the NIHR's oversight role stated in its establishment law, and based on its plan to follow up on the application of standards related to the protection and promotion of human rights. The NIHR made another inspection visit on 2 December 2021, to the Pre-trial Detention Center in the Dry Dock area, specifically to the building of young convicts. The visit was initiated after receiving a complaint from one of the international organizations regarding a general strike in the abovementioned Center, specifically in Building (17) for young convicts, in which a large number of inmates participated asking for their demands to be met.

33. At the beginning of the visit, the delegation inquired about the number of inmates in the Center. The Center's official stated that the number of inmates reached (105), including (12) inmates who are imprisoned for investigation, explaining that the strike began on 17 November 2021 by (58) inmates, then the number increased to (62) striking inmates, and that the concerned authorities were notified, noting that the strike was called off on 25 November 2021.

34. During the visit, the NIHR's delegation chose a random number of the striking inmates and met them in the visitation building freely without interference from the Center's administration. The delegation witnessed cooperation from the administration. The comments of the inmates were as follows:

- Consider opening cell doors throughout the day or at least at specific hours;
- Consider increasing the duration of video calls;
- Resume personal visitations, as in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center (Jaw);
- Consider increasing the period allotted for access to outdoor sun, as the current specified period is not sufficient.
- Inmates in the Center confirmed that there is a problem with the water heaters, as some of them do not work regularly, which makes the water cold, especially in winter.
- Considering the maintenance of the water tank, as the water used is inferior quality due to the dirt in the tank;
- Allow wearing colored clothes instead of red prison uniforms.

- Consider allowing the use of a headset (mp3).
- Allow the revival of more religious rites in the mosque.
- Consider increasing the opening times of the inmates' shop, to be on a weekly basis instead of every two weeks, and address the small supply of sports shoes, clothes, perfumes, consumables such as milk and pastries;
- Consider devising a system for using the inmate shop's card, as is the case in the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw area;
- Consider allowing smoking in the wards of Building (17), as is the case in the wards of Building (16);
- Consider changing the inmates' covers and pillows on a continuous basis, as long periods pass without changing them, which helps the spread of diseases among inmates;
- Consider the outcome of the requests filed by inmates, to the Ombudsman since a long time has passed without obtaining a response;
- Enable inmates to communicate with their families on Fridays;
- Develop a mechanism to enable inmates to easily obtain an officer's letter, a letter to submit a request to commute the sentence, and a judge's letter.
- Develop plans for various sports activities and competitions for inmates, as there is no such thing at the present time, whether in football, carrom, chess, or volleyball;
- Consider allowing the inmates to have ropes or lines to hang their laundry inside the cells;
- At the conclusion of the visit, inmates were asked if they had any other requests. They reported that there were no other requests other than those mentioned above. They also noted that the treatment of the staff in the Center is good, and there is encouragement by the administration to continue their educational attainment and to attend classes.

35. In a related context, a delegation from the NIHR conducted an inspection visit to the police station south of the capital on 23 December 2021, to identify the procedures in force in the security centers and closely look at

the Center and the procedures followed in receiving and establishing complaints, and the speed of their referral to the Public Prosecution.



Picture 1 Visit to the police station south of the Capital

36. The report concluded with several recommendations, as follows:

- Consider the possibility of determining the type of complaints and communications that fall within the Center's jurisdiction, and those that do not fall within its competence, to facilitate procedures and to save time and effort.
- Develop a mechanism to determine promptly the issue of proper notification of the complaine, whether complaints or reports were filed against them, and update the database on a regular basis.
- Introduce legislative amendments to require the custodian to enable the convict to visitation during the times specified by the court, and to put in place appropriate penalties in case of violation. Noting that a draft law proposed adding a new Article No. (318-bis) to the Penal Code issued by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, prescribing that a penalty of imprisonment or a fine shall be imposed on those who refrain, without excuse, from enabling the person entitled to visitation of the child subject to custody. The House of Representatives approved it; it is currently being discussed in the Shura Council. The NIHR has submitted its opinion regarding this proposal to the Shura Council, indicating its full agreement with this amendment. The NIHR was also present at the meeting of the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and National Security Committee in the Shura Council recently when the proposal was discussed, and reiterated its previously submitted opinion.

Section Two: Isolation and Quarantine Centers

1. Activating the NIHR's supervisory role stipulated in its establishment law; and proceeding with its plan to monitor the application of standards related to the protection and promotion of human rights in testing, isolation and quarantine procedures in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The NIHR has conducted a field visit to the Quarantine and Isolation Center located in the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Center on 11 August 2021, to assess the health services provided.
2. During the visit, the delegation met with members of the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Corona virus and medical staff. In addition, the NIHR delegation talked to some individuals who received the vaccine, to verify firsthand the quality of health care standards provided to citizens and residents when vaccinated with one of the available vaccines against



Covid-19, approved by the World Health Organization.

3. The NIHR highly values the efforts of the National Medical Taskforce in confronting the pandemic, stressing that the Kingdom has continued its success in furthering its development process to maintain public health and safety, by taking a number of precautionary and preventive measures to curb the spread of the Corona virus. In doing so, the Kingdom has recognized human rights such as the right to health, which is a fundamental human right, and the right to privacy, and has been transparent and clear in conveying information.

Picture 2 Visit to Quarantine and Isolation Center in the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Center

4. The NIHR's visit to the Quarantine and Isolation Center at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Conference Center is, on the one side, an assertion of its primary role stipulated in its establishing law in terms of conducting announced and unannounced field visits to monitor human rights conditions in; correctional institutions, places of detention, labor gatherings, health and educational homes or any other location suspected to be a site of human rights violation. On the other side, it is to observe the reality of services and facilities provided to individuals in treatment and health care places to protect their health and the health of their families. On a third side, it is to monitor the extent to which the various human rights are available in such circumstances in accordance with international conventions and instruments.

Section Three: Care Centers for People with Disabilities

1. As part of the work of the NIHR in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to ensure that they obtain and enjoy all the rights related to their disability; and to ensure that they receive the services provided to them to the fullest, the NIHR has conducted a field visit to the National Bank of Bahrain Rehabilitation Home for Disabled Children on 12 September 2021 to monitor the quality of services provided to them being one of the most vulnerable groups in society.
2. During the visit, the NIHR's committee met with several of the home officials, and conducted interviews with the staff and residents to ascertain the extent of the home's commitment to all precautionary and preventive measures to combat the Corona virus and to what extent the home respects the human rights standards stipulated in international laws and legislation. The committee was briefed about the measures that have been taken to sustain the process of obtaining the vaccine against the Corona virus for all residents and employees of the home. In addition, it closely obtained a first-hand view of all the measures aimed at preserving the right to health in general and the other rights of children with disabilities, in particular.

3. Afterwards, the committee toured the facilities of the home, which included the classrooms, residents' rooms, kitchen, toilets, and the isolation room.
4. This visit comes within the framework of the monitoring role of the NIHR,



Picture 3 NBB Rehabilitation Home for Disabled Children

and to proceed with its plan to monitor the application of the standards related to the protection and promotion of human rights in general, and the rights of the most vulnerable groups, in particular, considering the Covid-19 pandemic, and submit reports and recommendations related to the situation of human rights which are prepared and sent to the concerned bodies.

5. The visit of the NIHR to the National Bank of Bahrain Rehabilitation Home for Disabled Children concluded with a recommendation that it is necessary to renovate and reconstruct the building, and increase its capacity to meet the needs of the largest possible number of children with disabilities. It should be noted that those concerned in the home indicated that in the near future, all residents and those subject to rehabilitation would be transferred to the Comprehensive Disability Complex in the A'ali area, which has a capacity that far exceeds the capacity of this home.

Section Four: Visiting the Expat Shelter and Protection Center

1. Based on the NIHR's plan to monitor the application of the standards related to protecting and promoting human rights of migrant workers in accordance with the powers granted to it, it has made an inspection visit on 11 January 2021 to the Expat Protection Center at the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons. The aim of the visit was to check on the ground the extent to which common human rights are

observed, such as the right to adequate housing, the right to health, and the right to liberty and personal security.

2. At the beginning of the delegation's meeting with the Center's officials, they mentioned that the Expat Protection Center is the first comprehensive center to provide preventive and counseling services for migrant workers, and it includes a shelter center for victims or persons likely to be subjected to trafficking. It was established in 2015 as a result of requests by the international community to combat trafficking in persons; noting that the Kingdom of Bahrain has had many successes in combating trafficking in persons over the past years.
3. The visiting delegation found out that the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons had created a new department, which is the Grievances and Protection Directorate, which is considered an operational tool for the Center, and has qualified staff. This Directorate comprises several divisions and undertakes many tasks, as follows:
 - a) Complaints: All drop-ins and cases are received by a specialized employee, who is entrusted with interviewing them and listening to a summary of the complaint in order to ensure that it is within the jurisdiction of the departments of the Center to refer them accordingly to the concerned department.
 - b) Referral and Protection System: The Referral and Protection System was launched in 2017, for the purposes of combating trafficking by identifying, monitoring and documenting the victim, and providing protection and assistance, leading to reintegration and returning the victim to his country, or any country of his choice, as the case may warrant.
 - c) Labor Case Coordination Division: This Division was launched in March 2020, and works in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments to provide judicial support to migrant workers if they choose to resort to the judiciary to settle the dispute between them and their employers. The center initiates legal action before the courts and handles the follow-up of all proceedings related to the case of both formal and substantive aspects.
 - d) The Grievances Division: It receives workers' grievances regarding the absence from work notifications submitted against them by employers (Grievance against the absence from work notification,

complaint against the record of violations, request to prove the interruption of the work relationship).

- e) Consular and Community Relations Division: This Division coordinates between embassies and consulates regarding expatriate workers affiliated with them in the Kingdom.
 - f) Shelter Division: This Division provides all preventive and guidance services in accordance with international standards, by accommodating victims or persons likely to be exposed to any exploitation or trafficking. The Division has been equipped according to the best international standards, including providing bedrooms and a living room, in addition to a laundry room, a gym, and a dining room (the center provides 3 meals a day), and a package for international communications for free. In addition, there is a cultural and scientific library containing books in different languages, as well as an integrated medical clinic supervised by a doctor and nurse working during the day and on call at any time outside the official working hours. The Center's officials reported that the capacity of the Shelter Division is (200) beds, and since its establishment it has received (250) females and (1) male.
4. Regarding the precautionary and preventive measures taken by the Center, the officials explained that they have provided an isolation room for those who show any symptoms, and that they are fully committed to all the instructions of the Ministry of Health and the Bahrain Medical Taskforce. The visiting delegation noticed the presence of hygiene supplies, including hand sanitizer, and masks.
 5. In the same context, the Center's officials reported that, to improve the services provided to shelter victims, a fund has been created to support them, affiliated with the Council of Ministers. It grants the victims, throughout their stay in the shelter, a monthly financial grant estimated at (250 dollars). This grant is paid when the victim remains in the shelter for more than a month awaiting the Public Prosecution to complete the legal procedures in the criminal case and dispose of it.
 6. In the second case in which the victim stays in the shelter for less than a month, the victim is granted an amount of \$3000 when deported outside the Kingdom of Bahrain. (Example: If the investigation lasts for less than a month, then the victim is only entitled to 3000 dollars, and if the stay is for a month or more, the victim will be given 250 dollars, in addition to 3000 dollars when deported.)

7. The Center's officials explained that, most of the time, the Public Prosecution office disposes of the case and ends it before a month has passed since the victim was put in the shelter, and therefore most of the victims were granted only \$3,000.
8. During the visit, the NIHR's delegation toured the rooms designated for accommodation, and observed that they contain supplies to protect against the Corona virus. It was also noted that the employees adhered to wearing masks and gloves, and that external windows had safety nets and the level of hygiene was high in the entire Center. It was also noted that there are security and safety personnel specialized in this field, as well as an entrance and exit for the cases received to guarantee their privacy.
9. During the inspection tour, the delegation met with two inmates and asked them general questions about the Center, the support they receive and all matters related to the functions of the Center, where the level of satisfaction was high. They explained that the Center provides them with all their needs and requirements.
10. After the conclusion of the visit to the Expat Protection Center, the NIHR made one recommendation that the Center needs to communicate with those concerned in the Ministry of Works and Municipalities Affairs to open a road from the public street to facilitate access to the Center.

Section Five: Visiting several environmental sites

1. To activate the NIHR's oversight role contained in its establishing law, and based on the institution's strategy and work plan for the years 2019-2021, whose objectives were based on four axes, including the environmental impact on human rights, the NIHR carried out (3) field visits to Tubli Bay, Wadi Al-Buhair, and Al-Ma'ameer, based on the information monitored



Picture 4 Visit to Tubli Bay

through social media about the existence of environmental pollution problems that threaten those areas and the surrounding areas.

2. These visits to environmental pollution sites confirm the spreading out of exercising the NIHR's competencies, and its continued verification that human rights are respected in various situations and occasions, and the absence of any violations of these rights, especially the right to a safe and sound environment.



Picture 5 Visit to Wadi Al-Buhair



3. After visiting the mentioned areas, the NIHR made the following recommendations:

- Urge the Supreme Council for the Environment to provide the NIHR with relevant references, researches, and resources to be the basis for preparing a specialized study about the environment and elimination of pollution.

- Maintain the ecological balance in Ras Sanad area to mitigate the adverse impacts resulting from the environmental disruptions.
- Preserve the mangrove trees and increase reforestation in this area.
- Maintain the cleanliness of Ras Sanad area and place waste containers in various places.
- Increase the amount of basic organic matter, which is the primary component for young animals.
- Accelerate the completion of the sewage plant.
- Communicate always with the Supreme Council for the Environment to identify the environmental risks in the Kingdom in general and in

[Picture 6 Visit to Al-Ma'ameer](#)

particular in Tubli Bay region to explore the proposed solutions in this regard.

- Arrange for a meeting between the NIHR, the Supreme Council for the Environment, the Environmental Health Department at the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning to contain the mosquito problem.
- Urge the concerned bodies to consider the possibility of installing devices to increase the circulation of the stagnant waters of the valley to prevent the breeding and spread of insects.
- Explore the position of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning on whether there are plans to develop Wadi al-Buhair as a tourist area.

Requirement Five

Attending Trial Sessions to Ensure Fair Trial Guarantees

1. The NIHR emphasizes that attending trial sessions comes for the purpose of reviewing and verifying the validity of judicial procedures and providing fair trial guarantees in the trial of the accused. The General Secretariat of the NIHR would like to thank the General Secretariat of the Supreme Judicial Council for their consistent and incessant cooperation in facilitating the procedures for the NIHR's attendance of court hearings.
2. In the NIHR's opinion, the proceedings of the competent court and its handling of the trial process - in the cases it has attended – took into account the basic principles of human rights and established legal controls, in addition to activating fair trial guarantees. The sessions were public, and the defense team was allowed to attend and question and interrogate witnesses, their requests and statements were also heard, in addition to allowing the accused to speak before the court.
3. The NIHR attended (9) court hearings, including (7) sessions of defendants charged in the case of wrongfully causing the death of two twins, and (2) sessions of defendants charged in the case of a criminal group, consisting of 19 accused persons, that engages in trafficking in persons.
4. The NIHR considers that the right to a fair trial is a standard of international human rights law, aimed at protecting people from diminishing the rights related to their legal status before the judiciary, and an essential pillar of the fair trial pillars stipulated in international instruments, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as Article No. (11/1) of it stipulates: “**...at which he (i.e. the opponent) has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.**” In addition, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in Article No. (14/1) thereof stipulates that, “**All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law...**”
5. This was followed by Paragraph (3/b) of the same Article of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stating that, “**to have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence...**” The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain also affirmed the right to defense

in Article No. (20/C) thereof by stipulating that, “**...in which he is assured of the necessary guarantees to exercise the right of defense...**”

6. The NIHR notes that the representative of the Public Prosecution during the trial sessions sits in a place at a higher level than the defense, near the judges, while sitting throughout the trial hearing. Whereas the accused and defense bar are represented while standing before the court. This, in the opinion of the NIHR might be considered a form of inequality between the parties, and reflects lack of neutrality between opponents.

Second Topic

NIHR's Efforts to Promote Human Rights

Preface:

1. The provisions of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the NIHR, as amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016, affirms its role in the field of promoting human rights, as Article No. (12) thereof prescribes a set of competencies for the NIHR in order to achieve its objectives in this field, through its participation in the development and implementation of a national plan to promote human rights at the national level, studying the applicable legislations and regulations related to human rights and recommending amendments that it deems appropriate, especially with regard to the consistency of such legislation with the Kingdom's international commitments to human rights, and recommending the issuance of new legislation relevant to human rights.
2. These provisions also entrust the NIHR with holding conferences, organizing seminars and educational and training courses in the field of human rights, conducting research and studies in this regard, participating in local and international forums, and in meetings of regional and international organizations, as well as issuing bulletins, publications, statements, and special reports and displaying them on its website.
3. In pursuance of those competencies included in the provisions of the law, the NIHR has played an active role in the field of promoting human rights by issuing a number of educational publications and publications related to human rights, holding a number of seminars and lectures, and concluding a number of memoranda of understanding with various civil society organizations and relevant regional bodies. It has also played an active role in the field of legislative review in cooperation with the House of Representatives and the Shura Council, and issued several statements in conjunction with international days or events, in addition to its regional and international participation in many seminars, workshops, training courses and conferences related to its work.

Requirement One

NIHR's Strategy and Plan of Action (2019-2021)

1. The NIHR has continued to implement its strategy and work plan for the years (2019-2021)¹⁷ based on the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with modern human rights principles and frameworks and best practices in this field. The NIHR's strategy and work plan for the years (2019-2021) mainly aims to make human rights concepts part of the national lifestyle, where four main themes were chosen for the next three years, namely: environmental impact on human rights, human rights and sustainable economic development, the right to equal treatment, and spreading awareness of human rights principles in civil society institutions and the business sector.
2. During the timeframe of its previous strategy and plan of action, the NIHR has been able to successfully achieve (92%) of its objectives, in a manner that satisfies the standards of performance indicators that it has set in this regard. However, given the exceptional circumstances that have occurred in the world as a result of the spread of the Corona virus, and the subsequent relevant precautionary measures taken by the concerned authorities in the Kingdom, which began with suspending studies in public and private schools and kindergartens, and included a main focus on avoiding gatherings and mixing with others or attending public councils, the NIHR, as done by other official bodies, postponed all meetings and activities as of March 2020.
3. Continuing to implement the strategy, as well as the NIHR's role in spreading a culture of human rights among the various segments of society in accordance with the relevant international standards, constituted a major challenge for the NIHR in light of the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, as it had to overcome difficulties to reach the largest possible segment of society, taking into account respecting and implementing all precautionary measures taken by the Kingdom in this regard. As a result, the NIHR launched a number of awareness projects and target-oriented

¹⁷ To view the Strategy in Arabic, visit the following link:

<https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/2022/Strategy%20and%20Action%20Plan%20NIHR%2022-AR.pdf> in English

<https://www.nihr.org.bh/MediaHandler/GenericHandler/2022/Strategy%20and%20Action%20Plan%20NIHR%2022-EN.pdf>

initiatives, and organized training programs, workshops and round tables remotely using electronic means, and modern technology.

Requirement Two

Parallel Reports Submitted to International and Regional Bodies Related to Human Rights

1. The provisions of the establishing law granted the NIHR the power to examine the compatibility of legislative and regulatory texts with regional and international treaties concerned with human rights issues, including the recommendation to join relevant regional and international conventions, submit parallel reports, contribute to the drafting and discussion of reports that the Kingdom undertakes to submit periodically and express observations thereon, in implementation of regional and international conventions on human rights, dissemination in the media, cooperating with national, regional and international organizations, and relevant institutions in other countries concerned with the promotion of human rights.
2. Within the timeframe of this report, two reports have been submitted; one of them was submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, while the other was submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The two reports explained the role of the NIHR in the promotion and protection of human rights under the international convention, without neglecting the progress made in implementing the provisions of those conventions at the national level.

Requirement Three

Cooperation with International and Regional Organizations

1. In implementation of the NIHR's mandate to enhance cooperation with national bodies, regional and international organizations, and the competent bodies concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights to support relations and jointly contribute to the institution of a peace system in achieving human rights principles on the ground.

2. Engineer Ali Ahmed Alderazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, met with H.E. Mr. Stuart Summers, Deputy Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Kingdom of Bahrain, and Mrs. Cheryl Eddis, Head of the Political Affairs, Media, and Public Relations Section at the British Embassy, on the end of her last term of service in Bahrain, and handing over her duties to Ms. Lauren Gommer. During the meeting, the importance of effective and



Picture 7 Meeting of NIHR's Chairperson with UK Deputy Ambassador and Mrs. Cheryl Eddis

continuous cooperation with the Embassy was emphasized, and the NIHR's efforts were reviewed considering the Covid-19 pandemic through field visits to isolation and quarantine centers, reform and rehabilitation centers and detention centers. The two parties also touched on a few issues related to the protection and promotion of human rights, especially in the field of training. They discussed strengthening cooperation and joint coordination to unify efforts in areas related to human rights.

3. The NIHR also held several meetings with Ms. Margaret Nardi, Chargé d’Affairs of the United States Embassy in the Kingdom of Bahrain, via video conferencing, within the framework of the permanent cooperation between the NIHR and the American Embassy in the Kingdom. In the meetings, the two parties touched on several topics of interest, the most prominent of these are the reports published by some organizations that



Picture 8 NIHR's meeting with Ms. Margaret Nardi, Chargé d’Affairs of the United States Embassy

do not reflect the reality of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the developments taking place regarding the protection and promotion of human rights through national mechanisms. The strengthening of cooperation and joint coordination to unify efforts in areas related to the protection and promotion of human rights was also discussed.

4. In the same context, the NIHR received Mr. Daniel Benyam, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Arabian Peninsula Affairs, and the two sides discussed ways to enhance cooperation, especially regarding technical cooperation in the areas of training and exchange of experiences, and the importance of continuing this cooperation and coordination to meet aspirations and joint goals.



Picture 9 NIHR's meeting with Mr. Daniel Benyam, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Arabian Peninsula Affairs

5. The NIHR also received several delegations from the House of Representatives and Senate employees in the United States of America, on official visits to the Kingdom of Bahrain, where the most prominent achievements of the NIHR since its establishment were reviewed, and its



Picture 10 NIHR receiving delegations from the US House of Representatives and Senate

advisory role in making recommendations on human rights to the relevant authorities was noted. The effective role played by the NIHR during the Covid-19 pandemic, through its vigorous follow-up to the precautionary measures taken by the Kingdom to combat the spread of the pandemic, and to ensure that these measures do not affect the human rights of citizens and residents alike, was also highlighted.

6. In the same context, the NIHR held a meeting with His Excellency Mr. Lawrence Westhoff, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, appointed to the Kingdom of Bahrain and residing in the State of Kuwait, through video conferencing. During the meeting, the NIHR's efforts to support, promote and protect human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain were discussed, especially considering the current conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic that the whole world is witnessing. In addition, the mechanism of the NIHR's call center for complaints was clarified and the training and educational programs provided by the NIHR to the various segments of society was explained.
7. The NIHR has also received His Excellency Mr. Anibal Gómez Toledo, Mexico's Ambassador accredited to the Kingdom of Bahrain and residing in Riyadh. The NIHR's work, functions, objectives and competencies set forth in its establishing Law were presented. In addition, the Ambassador was briefed about the role entrusted to the NIHR in dealing with human rights issues in the Kingdom and the coordination and cooperation methods between the two sides was highlighted.
8. To enhance the joint cooperation between the NIHR and the European Union, the NIHR received Mr. Yap Ora, Vice President of the Delegation of the European Union accredited to the Kingdom of Bahrain residing in Riyadh. During the meeting, the progress and development of bilateral relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the European Union in various fields was praised. An overview of the work and functions of the NIHR and its role in the implementation of the national action plan for human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain was also presented. A number of issues of common interest were discussed as well as the role of the NIHR through its constant communication with the relevant authorities to reach the most important facts and processes, in order to ensure the continued success of the realization of human rights in the Kingdom.



Picture11 The NIHR's meeting with Mr. Yap Ora, Vice President of the Delegation of the European Union

9. The NIHR has also received Mr. Angelos Linos, First Secretary of the European Union Delegation accredited to the Kingdom of Bahrain, residing in Riyadh. During the meeting, the NIHR's work methodology for the next phase was reviewed, and the importance of continuing cooperation and coordination between the two sides in areas related to human rights was also emphasized. A number of issues of common interest and the role of the NIHR in dealing with them were also tackled.
10. In addition, the NIHR received a delegation of members and senior officials of the European Parliament, during their visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain.



Picture 12 NIHR's meeting with Mr. Angelos Linos, First Secretary of the European Union Delegation

In the meeting, the depth of relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the European Union, and the development and growth it is witnessing in various fields, were highlighted. The role of the NIHR was reviewed in terms of dealing with the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain in accordance with the broad powers entrusted to the NIHR to strengthen and develop the human rights system in the Kingdom in line with international standards, and to establish the principles of respect for human rights and the preservation of human dignity.



Picture 13 NIHR's meeting with a delegation of members and senior officials of the European Parliament

11. The NIHR has also received Professor Qassim Sheikh, Dean of the College of Law, and Dr. Mustafa Al-Qadi, Director of Projects at the University of Huddersfield, UK. During the meeting, an overview of the NIHR, the role it plays in promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the training and educational programs it provides to promote a culture of human rights among all segments of society were discussed. Topics of common interest and ways of coordination and cooperation between the NIHR and the University of Huddersfield were discussed, especially in the field of training and education.

12. Within the same context, Engineer Ali Alderazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, received Mr. Kay Thamo Bokmann, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mrs. Paola Amadi, Ambassador of the Republic of Italy, and Mr. Emmanuel Mayer, First Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of France to the Kingdom of Bahrain. Cooperation and increased coordination during the next stage with regard to files of common interest and issues related to human rights to meet common aspirations and goals



Picture 14 Meeting of NIHR's Chairperson with Mr. Kay Thamo Bokmann, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mrs. Paola Amadi, Ambassador of the Republic of Italy, and Mr. Emmanuel Mayer, First Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of France

were discussed.

13. The NIHR has also received Dr. Nils Schmid, Member of the German Parliament (Bundestag) from the Social Democratic Party, who visited the Kingdom of Bahrain as part of a high-level German delegation to participate in the activities of the Manama Dialogue, in the presence of His Excellency Mr. Kay Thamo Bochmann, Ambassador of the friendly Federal Republic of Germany to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The meeting dealt with a number of issues related to the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain, where an overview of the efforts and the role played by the NIHR was presented.



Picture15 NIHR's meeting with Dr. Nils Schmid, Member of the German Parliament (Bundestag)

14. The NIHR has continued strengthening cooperation frameworks with regional and international bodies. In this context, Engineer Ali Alderazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, received H.E. Mrs. Esen Çakıl, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey accredited to the Kingdom of Bahrain. During the meeting, the distinguished relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the friendly Republic of Turkey and its witnessed development and growth at all levels were praised. The two parties expressed their aspiration to enhance bilateral cooperation to achieve goals of common interest and human rights issues.

15. In addition, the NIHR held a number of meetings with Professor Tatiana Moskalkova, Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of the Russian Federation, where they reviewed the distinguished bilateral



Picture 16 NIHR's Chairperson meeting with H.E. Mrs. Esen Çakıl, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey

relations between the two friendly countries and emphasized the continuation of strengthening these relations in various fields, especially in areas of human rights.

16. During the meetings, the role played by the NIHR in spreading, the promotion and protection of human rights was reviewed in accordance with its establishment Law No. (26) of 2014, amended by Decree-Law No. (20) of 2016. In addition, the NIHR's functions in providing advisory opinions, and making recommendations to relevant authorities for amending national legislation concerned with human rights, following up on the human rights situation in the Kingdom by receiving complaints, providing legal assistance and monitoring cases related to human rights through the media and various social media were explained. Furthermore, the announced and unannounced visits to correction and rehabilitation centers and detention centers, health and social care homes, and housing for expatriate workers were highlighted, considering the Covid-19 pandemic, and following up on the precautionary measures taken by the state to prevent its spread.
17. To activate cooperation and exchange of experiences in the field of relations with international human rights organizations, Engineer Ali Alderazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, met with Mr. Hassan Musa Shafi'i, Delegate Minister and Human Rights Adviser to the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the UN Geneva,



Picture 17 NIHR's Chairperson meeting with Mr. Hassan Musa Shafi'i, Delegate Minister and Human Rights Adviser to the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the UN Geneva

Delegate Minister and Human Rights Adviser to the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations in Geneva. During the meeting, the two sides discussed various topics of common interest, and enhancing aspects of cooperation between the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Geneva and the NIHR in the field of human rights and ways to strengthen and advance it.

18. To enhance cooperation, exchange experiences and develop capacities in the human rights field between the NIHR and several human rights institutions in the Republic of Estonia, the NIHR has received an Estonian



Picture 18 Visit of the Estonian delegation comprising several representatives from civil society institutions and government bodies

delegation comprising several representatives from civil society institutions and government bodies in the Republic of Estonia. The NIHR emphasized its keenness for openness and constructive cooperation with all local, regional, and international institutions and bodies, in everything that would promote and protect human rights. The two sides discussed mechanisms for benefiting from experiences in the human rights sector in general and combating the phenomenon of trafficking in persons, through bilateral cooperation and coordination to achieve common interests between the two friendly countries.

19. Furthermore, Engineer Ali Aldarazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, has received Mr. Mohammed Al-Zarqani, the Resident Coordinator for United Nations Activities in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The two sides discussed the mechanism of enhancing aspects of cooperation between the NIHR and



Picture 19 NIHR's Chairperson meeting with Mr. Mohammed Al-Zarqani, the Acting Resident Coordinator for UN Activities in the Kingdom of Bahrain

the United Nations system, and increasing the level of coordination during the next phase in technical projects and training programs related to human rights. The NIHR welcomed the permanent cooperation with the UN mechanisms and its affiliated agencies to serve its aspirations in achieving its goals and competencies in a professional manner.

20. Engineer Ali Aldarazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, has received Ambassador Abdullah bin Faisal Jabr Al-Dosari on his appointment as Head of the Diplomatic Mission to the Kingdom of Belgium. The two sides discussed a number of issues of common interest, and ways to increase cooperation in the field of human rights to achieve common national goals towards serving the country and the citizens.



Picture 20 Meeting of NIHR's Chairperson with Ambassador Abdullah bin Faisal Jabr Al-Dosari, Head of the Diplomatic Mission to the Kingdom of Belgium in Belgium

21. The NIHR also received Mrs. Laila Bakr, the Regional Director of Arab Countries at the United Nations Development Coordination Office. An overview of the NIHR's work, objectives and competencies set forth in the law of its establishment, and the role entrusted to it in dealing with human rights issues in the Kingdom of Bahrain was presented. The two sides discussed means of coordination and cooperation, especially regarding technical cooperation in the areas of training and exchange of experiences.



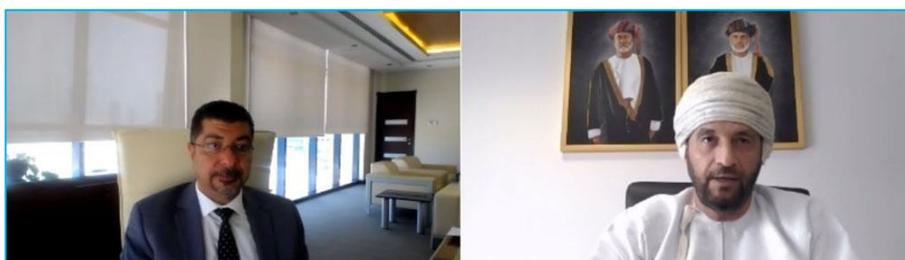
Picture 21 NIHR's meeting with Mrs. Laila Bakr, Regional Director of Arab Countries at the UN Development Coordination Office.

22. Enhancing efforts aimed at achieving common goals to protect and promote a culture of human rights, Engineer Ali Aldarazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, met with Ambassador Jassem Al-Mubarak, Chairman of the National Diwan for Human Rights in the sisterly State of Kuwait, through visual conferencing. The two sides discussed issues of common interest and ways to enhance aspects of Cooperation in the field of human rights between the NIHR and the National Diwan, especially in the areas of training, education and exchange of experiences.



Picture22 Meeting of NIHR's Chairperson with Ambassador Jassem Al-Mubarak, Chairman of the National Diwan for Human Rights in Kuwait

23. In the same regard, Engineer Ali Aldarazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, met with honorable Sheikh Abdullah bin Shuwain Al-Hosani, Chairman of the Omani Human Rights Committee in the sisterly Sultanate of Oman, through visual conferencing. The two sides discussed ways to enhance aspects of cooperation in the field of human rights between the NIHR and the Omani Committee, in a way that supports efforts to achieve common goals to protect and promote a culture of human rights.



Picture 23 NIHR's Chairperson meeting with honorable Sheikh Abdullah bin Shuwain Al-Hosani, Chairman of the Omani Human Rights Committee

24. The Chairman of the NIHR has also met with His Excellency Dr. Awwad bin Saleh Al-Awwad, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission in the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through visual conferencing. During the meeting, the two sides discussed issues of common interest and ways to enhance aspects of cooperation in the field of human rights between the institution and the Commission.



Picture 24 NIHR's Chairperson meeting with His Excellency Dr. Awwad bin Saleh Al-Awwad, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

25. On the same level, Engineer Ali Aldarazi, Chairperson of the NIHR, has received Dr. Muhammad Nazrul Islam, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The two sides reviewed a number of issues of common interest between the two countries, especially with regard to supporting and enhancing the enjoyment of expatriate workers of the rights guaranteed to them under the provisions of the Constitution and relevant international and regional agreements.



Picture 25 NIHR's Chairperson meeting with Dr. Muhammad Nazrul Islam, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

26. The NIHR has also received H.E. Mrs. Sarah Lo Areola, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Migrant Workers Affairs in the Republic of the Philippines, in the presence of H.E. Mr. Alfonso Vernade, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to the Kingdom of Bahrain, on the sidelines of her visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The two sides discussed the NIHR's efforts to support and enhance the enjoyment of



Picture 26 Meeting with H.E. Mrs. Sarah Lo Areola, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Migrant Workers Affairs in the Republic of the Philippines, in the presence of H.E. Mr. Alfonso Vernade, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines

expatriate workers of their human rights, and the communication and follow-up to ensure their access to the rights guaranteed to them pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution and the relevant international and regional agreements.

27. The NIHR has held a meeting with the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF), as the Forum initiated conducting Capacity Assessment Review with the NIHR. This review revolves around providing technical support and assistance to the NIHR and prompts its mechanisms and competencies contained in its establishing law, and how to deal with various parties and stakeholders, with the aim of promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

28. This Assessment, which is a continuation of the Capacity Assessment conducted in 2017, has been conducted via remote meetings with members of the Council of Commissioners, the Secretary General and a number of employees of the Secretariat. In addition, meeting stakeholders in a number of official bodies and civil society institutions with which the NIHR cooperates to implement its mandate and play its prescribed role have been met. Noting that it will be the first remote meeting the Forum holds with national institutions to review their Capacity Assessment.

29. The NIHR is a member of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) in this region of the world. It is one of the four regional groups in the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), along with the African and European Group and the Americas Group concerned with national human rights institutions.

Requirement Four

Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations and Human Rights Defenders

1. Within the framework of the NIHR's cooperation with civil society organizations to achieve the common goals of promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the NIHR held a remote meeting with Professor Badriya Al-Marzouq, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Bahraini Women's Union, to discuss aspects of cooperation between the two sides. Present, were several female members of the NIHR's Council of Commissioners and the Union. In the meeting, representatives of the NIHR congratulated the Chairperson and members of the Bahraini Women's Union on the occasion of International Women's Day, and praised the effective efforts made by Bahraini women to confront the exceptional circumstances the Country is going through due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting also discussed a number of issues related to laws and legislations that promote and protect women's rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain and national laws in line with international charters and covenants ratified by the Kingdom.



Picture 27 Remote meeting held with Professor Badriya Al-Marzouq, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Bahraini Women’s Union and the NIHR



Picture 28 First “virtual” Forum for Civil Society Institutions working in the field of human rights organized by the NIHR

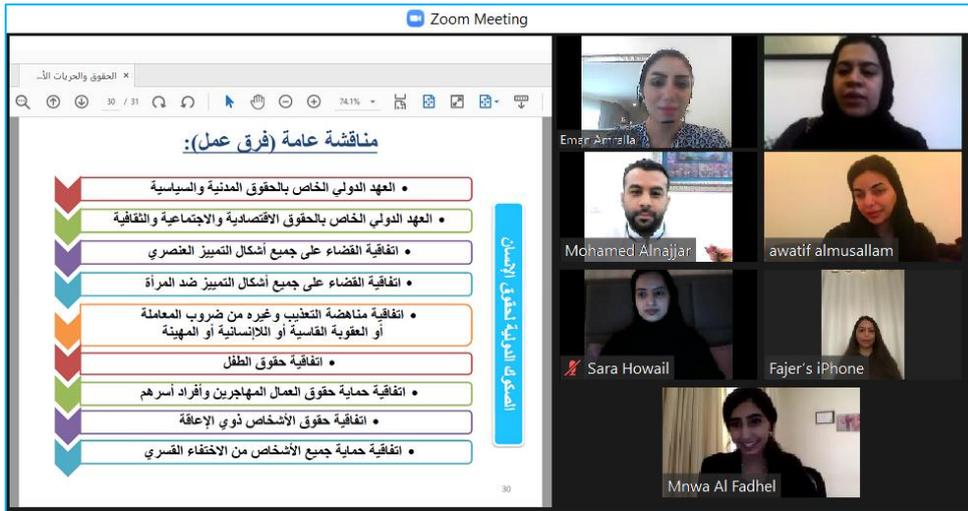
2. Emanating from the NIHR’s role in promoting and spreading the culture of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain and building bridges of cooperation with civil society institutions, the NIHR organized the First “virtual” Forum for Civil Society Institutions working in the field of human rights, through video conferencing technology. Representatives from a number of civil society institutions working in the field of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain participated in the Forum.
3. The Forum comprised three main topics that shed light on community partnership between civil society institutions, the competent official bodies, and the NIHR with the aim of developing ways to exercise all rights. The

first topic discussed identifying aspects of cooperation between the NIHR and civil society organizations, especially in the field of receiving complaints and providing legal assistance, building the capacities of workers in those institutions by organizing training courses, exchanging expertise and experience in the field of human rights, and holding regular joint meetings.

4. The second topic tackled the issue of strengthening means of communication between civil society organizations and official bodies, through the NIHR, to provide legal opinions and discuss issues related to human rights and provide the required information. The third and final topic dealt with identifying difficulties and challenges facing civil society institutions, including but not limited to the lack of headquarters for civil society organizations to carry out their work from, and the lack of financial resources and jurisdiction.
5. In conclusion, the Forum reached a number of outcomes and recommendations aimed at strengthening and activating the work of civil society institutions, and developing mechanisms to facilitate coordination and communication with various institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, most notably: amend Decree-Law No. (21) of 1989 Law 21 on Associations, Social and Cultural Clubs, Special Committees Working in the Field of Youth and Sports, and Private Foundations; continue holding meetings to enhance cooperation with the NIHR; train members of civil society institutions and involve them in the process of promoting and protecting human rights; establish a program to monitor and follow up on the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain; establish a joint committee between the NIHR and civil society organizations, to express its opinion on laws and legislation issued by the Shura and Representatives Councils; and define a mechanism for coordinating joint cooperation between the NIHR and civil society organizations in the field of receiving complaints and providing legal aid.
6. In the same context, the NIHR has received a number of university students, human rights defenders and individuals interested in conducting research in the field of human rights within the Research Fellowship Program on human rights. The NIHR has offered the participants with a set of training lectures and workshops presented by a number of specialists in law and human rights from the NIHR, through which they discussed the functions and mechanism of the NIHR's work, its role in the promotion and protection of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the services it provides to citizens and residents, and the legal framework for

its work, as well as the most significant achievements it has attained in the promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom.

7. It is worth noting that the NIHR has launched the Research Fellowship Program in 2019. The Program targets academics and human rights defenders, and works on developing critical thinking and analytical skills in



Picture 29 Zoom meeting for one of the activities conducted by the NIHR within the Research Fellowship Program on human rights

the human rights field, developing innovation and creativity skills to find the best ways to promote and protect human rights, and partnering with international organizations and universities working in the human rights field.

8. In the same regard, the NIHR has participated in a virtual seminar launched by the Public Prosecution on “Civil Society Contributions to Achieving the Best Interests of the Child and Alternative Punishments.” In its address, the NIHR stressed the importance it lends to protecting and enhancing human rights in general and the rights of the child in particular. The NIHR’s speech has also touched on the importance of organizing a number of events in the form of awareness lectures and community service projects, with the aim of promoting awareness among children and involving them in carrying out useful work that would benefit them and the society as a whole. The NIHR commended the tireless work of the judiciary and the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments in promoting and protecting human rights system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, especially with the entry into force of the most prominent and latest legislative systems in the field of restorative justice for children, as it is a law that

realizes and takes into account the best interests of the child at all stages of the criminal case.



Picture 30 Virtual seminar launched by the Public Prosecution on “Civil Society Contributions to Achieving the Best Interests of the Child and Alternative Punishments”

Requirement Five

Attendance and Representation in International, Regional and National Forums

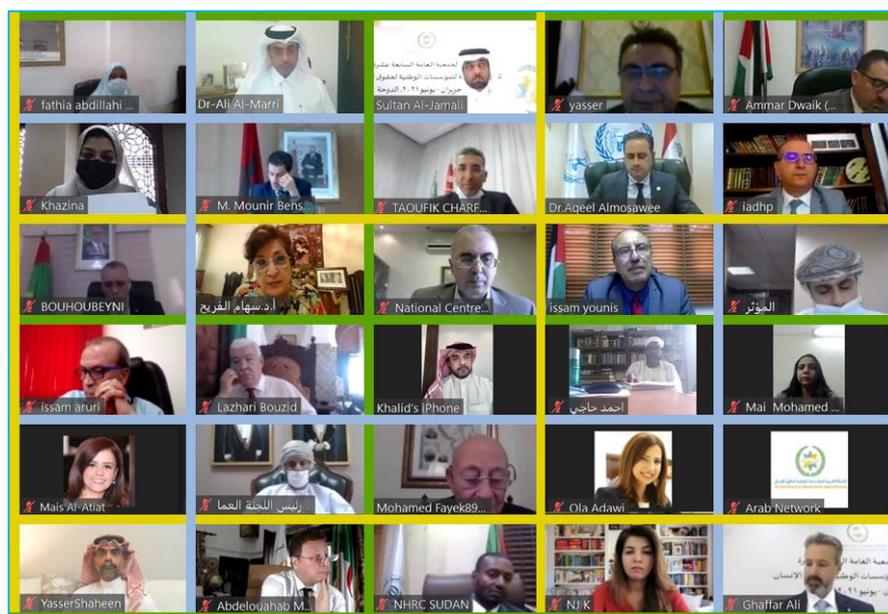
1. As a dedication to effective participation in human rights forums, especially in meetings of regional and international organizations concerned with human rights issues, the NIHR has participated in the emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the Arab Network for National Human Rights Institutions, on Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip and the daily violations of human rights, which was held remotely by the Network's General Administration, at the invitation of the Independent Commission for Human Rights In Palestine, which holds the presidency of the Arab Network in its current session. The national human rights institutions that are members of the Network attended the meeting. At the end of the meeting, a special statement was adopted on these violations.
2. In addition, the NIHR has also participated in the 17th meeting of the General Assembly of the Arab Network of National Human Rights



Picture 31 Virtual emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the Arab Network for National Human Rights Institutions

Institutions, with wide participation from all national institutions that are members of the Network. The meeting was held remotely due to the current conditions that the world is going through. The meeting started with transferring the Presidency of the Network from the Independent Commission for Human Rights in Palestine to the National Human Rights

Committee in Qatar, and it was agreed that the Presidency of the Network would be transferred to the National Human Rights Committee in Mauritania next year.



Picture 32 The 17th virtual meeting of the General Assembly of the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions

3. In addition, the NIHR took part, as an observer, in the 6th meeting of the Eurasian Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, entitled “Exchange of best practices on current problems in protecting the rights of young people in the Eurasia region”, which was organized by the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation, with the participation of more than (200) representatives of national human rights institutions, and a number of members of the Russian State Duma, where statements were presented on the role of national institutions in supporting youth rights, and national legislation supporting the role of youth in advancing development.
4. The NIHR has also participated in the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Arab Network, in which the annual report for the years 2019 and 2020, the financial report, and plan of action of the Network for the year 2021 were approved. The recommendations of the previous General Assembly were briefed, and the needs and challenges facing national

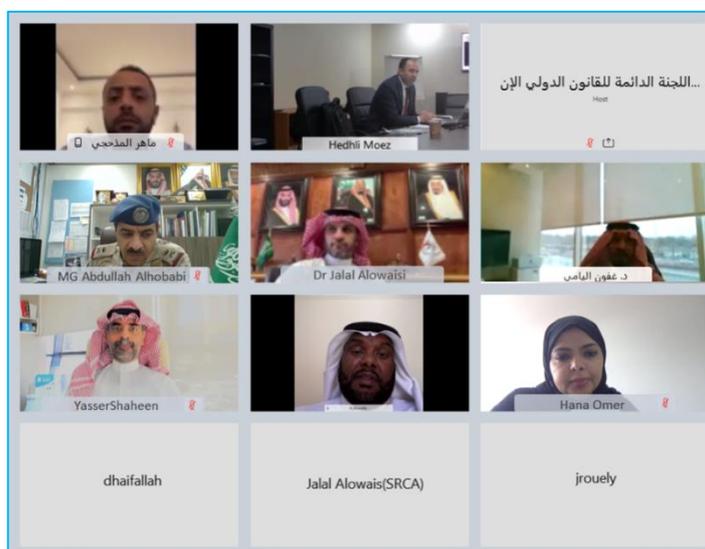
institutions during this period were reviewed. The Independent Commission for Human Rights in Palestine presented a summary of the latest developments in the Palestinian cause.



5. During the abovementioned meeting, the new members of the Executive Committee of the Arab Network, representing four geographical groups, were elected for a period of four years. The NIHR in the Kingdom of Bahrain, representing Arab Peninsula Group, and the National Council for Human Rights in the Arab Republic of Egypt, representing Egypt, Sudan and the Horn of Africa, the Higher Committee for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the Republic of Tunisia representing the Arab Maghreb group, and the High Commission for Human Rights in the Republic of Iraq representing Iraq and the Levant group were elected.
6. Within the same context, the NIHR participated in the symposium held by the Permanent Committee of International Humanitarian Law in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, entitled: “Protecting Children in Areas of Armed Conflict.” The symposium focused on three themes, where the first theme addressed the issue of protecting children during armed conflicts, whether under international humanitarian law, or international human rights law. The second theme focused on international efforts to protect children in areas of armed conflict, and the third was on best practices to ensure the protection of children in areas of armed conflict. The symposium concluded by identifying a number of legal challenges related to the protection of children during armed conflicts, highlighting the most

important international efforts to protect children in conflict areas, in addition to knowing the international requirements and challenges to provide protection for children in armed-conflict zones.

7. The NIHR has also participated in the annual meeting of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), which was held remotely, and included the meeting of the General Assembly of the Alliance and a number of side events. During the meeting of General Assembly of the GANHRI, the annual report of the Alliance was presented, the audited financial report was approved, 2021 plan of action was approved, and the annual budget for the year 2021 was approved. The four Chairs of the Alliance's Geo-Networks (Asia Pacific Forum, African Group, European Group, and Group of Americas) presented the achievements of



Picture 34 Symposium held by the Permanent Committee of International Humanitarian Law in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on “Protecting Children in Areas of Armed Conflict”

their networks.

8. A high-level session was held on the role of the UN human rights



Picture 35 Annual Virtual Meeting of GANHRI

Commission in supporting the coalition and the national institutions affiliated under it, in which a representative of the United Nations Development Program and a representative of the European Union participated. They discussed their support for national institutions, mechanisms of joint action and future cooperation.

9. Three other events were also held on the side-lines of the Annual Meeting, which focused on sharing knowledge of good practices, exchanging experiences and knowledge between all four networks, and how to benefit from the experiences of national human rights institutions. Business, human rights, and the experiences of the national human rights institutions in implementing the Edinburgh Declaration and furthering the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles, were discussed, as well as the Global Action Plan of GANHRI to support the protection and promotion of human rights defenders and civic space were also discussed.

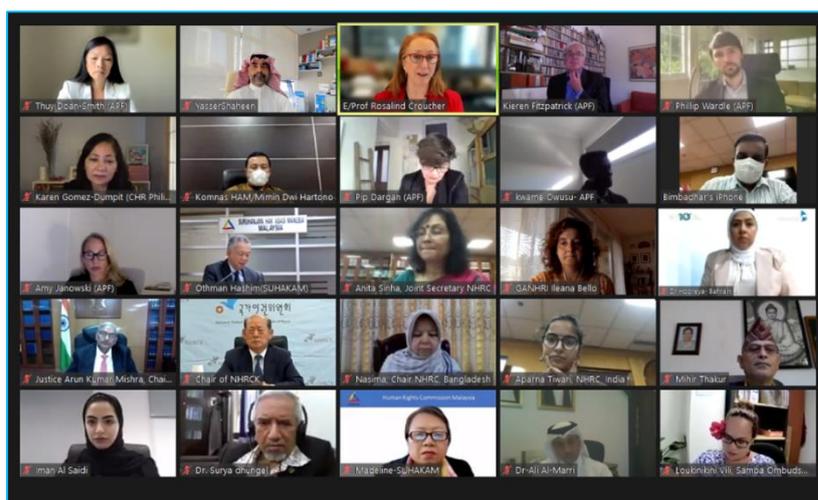
10. The NIHR, accepting an official invitation addressed to it by the Human Rights Commission of the Russian Federation, has also participated in observing the voting process in the elections to the Russian House of Representatives (Duma), which lasted for three consecutive days. During its participation, the NIHR held several meetings with officials responsible for the supervision of elections. Several electoral commissions and polling stations were visited; electoral management processes, and the remote

electronic voting mechanism, which is used for the first time on a large scale, were also explored.



Picture 36 NIHR's participation in observing the voting process in the elections to the Russian House of Representatives (Duma),

11. In addition, the NIHR participated in the 26th Annual General Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF), which was held via video conferencing over two days, with the participation of (25) national institutions in the Asia-Pacific region, in addition to representatives of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions concerned with the protection and promotion of human rights.



Picture 37 The 26th Annual General Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) (via video conferencing)

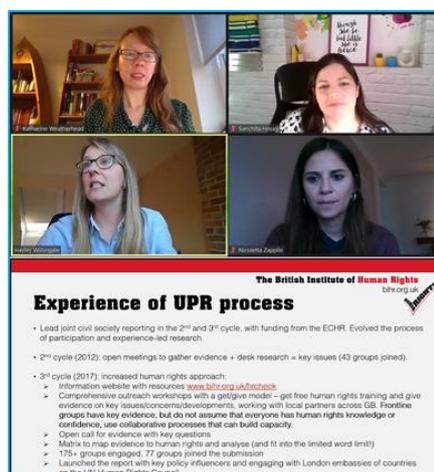
12. During the meeting, several elections were held for positions in the APF, in addition to the election of the candidate of the Asia Pacific Forum to chair GANHRI, and the elections for the position of Vice Chairperson of the APF after the termination of the membership of the representative of the Korean Committee. The election of an alternative member representing the APF in the GANHRI was postponed to the next meeting. At the end of the meeting, representatives of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Southeast Asia made a presentation on the national institutions for human rights and humanitarian action.
13. On the second day, the Asia Pacific Forum, in cooperation with the United Nations Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls in Asia and the Pacific, launched a report on “Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights for Women and Girls in Times of Crisis”, where Ms. Melissa Upreti, Chair of the Working Group, and Ms. Elizabeth Broderick, Sex Discrimination Commissioner in the Australian Human Rights Commission and member of the working group, presented an overview of the report and the role of the working group in it. A number of representatives of national institutions spoke about the sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls in times of crisis.
14. The NIHR has also participated in the deliberations of the regional symposium organized by the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions, in cooperation with the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), on “Mendez Principles for Effective Interviewing,” which aimed to familiarize members and personnel of Arab national human rights institutions with these principles, the important role of the institutions in disseminating and raising awareness of this document, and how to employ these principles in monitoring and dialogue with the authorities, in a way that leads to ensuring greater respect and full protection of human rights.

15. The NIHR has also taken part in the third phase of the national human rights institutions train-the-trainer program, on designing, managing and providing training in the field of human rights (TOT), which was organized by the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions in cooperation with the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Center for South-West Asia and the Arab Region in Doha, and the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt.



Picture 38 Participation of NIHR in the third phase of the national human rights institutions TOT program organized by the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions

16. In addition, the NIHR has also participated in a symposium on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism via Zoom (video conferencing), organized by the Equality and Human Rights Commission



Picture 39 symposium on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism via Zoom, organized by EHRC, in cooperation with UPR Info and the British Institute of Human Rights

(EHRC) in England, in cooperation with UPR Info and the British Institute of Human Rights, in which a number of national human rights institutions, civil society institutions and non-governmental organizations took part. The symposium aimed at defining the role of national human rights institutions in following up on the reports of countries submitted to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism of the United Nations Human Rights Council. During the Symposium, a working paper was presented on the role played by national institutions, and the broad mandate it enjoys in the field of protection and promotion of human rights, through its active participation in submitting the Parallel Report to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism.

17. The NIHR has also participated in the dialogue session entitled (The Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Facilitating Access to Remedies “Different Practices”), which comes within the work of the Tenth United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights, which was held via video communication technology, organized by the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises (also referred to as the Working Group on Business and Human Rights) of the United Nations, with the support of the GANHRI.
18. The NIHR has also participated in the dialogue session entitled (Voluntary National Review (VNR) of Progress in the 2030 Agenda for the Promotion



Picture 40 Participation of the NIHR in the dialogue session entitled (The Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Facilitating Access to Remedies “Different Practices”)

of Human Rights), which was held via video communication technology, organized by the Danish Institute for Human Rights in cooperation with the GANHRI within the framework of the Capacity Development Project of the National Institution for Human Rights and the European Union.

19. During the abovementioned event, the significant convergence between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and human rights frameworks was addressed, for which the Voluntary National Review (VNR) provides the possibility of promoting human rights and advancing their implementation in various countries of the world. The VNR is the cornerstone in the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda, as national human rights institutions have an important role to play in all the steps of the review process, based on their competencies. At the end of the event, experiences of voluntary national reviews of national human rights institutions in several countries were shared.

20. Furthermore, the NIHR has participated in the meeting to review and update the status of the report on Integrating Reproductive Rights into the Work of National Human Rights Institutions of the Asia Pacific Region, “A Preliminary Study of Current Views and Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities”, organized by the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) in cooperation With the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA-APRO). During the meeting, the participants discussed the study that was prepared in 2011 by the organizers and updated this year. A number of topics were discussed in the same regard; the most important were sharing the results of the study and identifying the most important challenges and opportunities for national human rights institutions in the field of reproductive health. In addition, the results of the update of the study that took place during the year and the most significant experiences of countries in the Asia-Pacific region in promoting and protecting reproductive rights were presented.



Picture 41 The NIHR participation in the virtual meeting to review and update the status of the report on Integrating Reproductive Rights into the Work of National Human Rights Institutions of the Asia Pacific Region

21. Within the framework of joint cooperation and coordination between the NIHR and regional institutions and organizations, it has participated in a remote panel discussion entitled “The Media and Its Role in Child Protection during the Covid-19 Pandemic”, organized by the National Diwan for Human Rights and the National Society for the Protection of Child Rights in the sisterly State of Kuwait, where it presented a working paper on the protection of children’s rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain



Picture 42 NIHR’s participation in remote panel discussion “The Media and Its Role in Child Protection during the Covid-19 Pandemic”, organized by the National Diwan for Human Rights and the National Society for the Protection of Child Rights in Kuwait

during the Covid-19 pandemic titled “Achievements and Challenges”. In the paper, the NIHR touched upon the institution’s role in promoting and protecting human rights in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the impact of the pandemic on the right of the child in the field of education and health, and the exceptional measures and efforts adopted by the Kingdom of Bahrain to combat this pandemic, which took into account human rights in general, and the right of the child in particular.

22. At the national level, the NIHR has participated in the fourth dialogue forum (The King, the Leader, the Human), which was organized by the Al-Nafei Council, with the participation of a number of officials, dignitaries and specialists in a number of different fields, where the ongoing development in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in all fields and at all levels, was discussed, in light of the comprehensive development process of His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the country, may God protect and preserve him.
23. The NIHR has participated in the regional symposium on the role of the national judge in the effective application of international humanitarian law, which was held remotely under the generous patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, Chairman of the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and in cooperation with the Institute of Judicial and Legal Studies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (Kuwait Mission). The symposium comprised four sessions, over two days. The first session centred on application of human rights regime and international humanitarian law globally, while the second dealt with application of human rights regime and international humanitarian law locally. The third session addressed the manifestations of the uniqueness of the general provisions of international crimes compared to the national crime, and the fourth session was about the specifics of the national application of international humanitarian law. The symposium concluded with a number of recommendations that will be circulated and published
24. The NIHR has also taken part in the launch of the third national communication report on climate change, where His Excellency Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak bin Dina - Special Envoy for Climate Affairs and CEO of the Supreme Council for Environment inaugurated the report of the third national communication on climate change in the Kingdom of Bahrain, during the virtual meeting organized by the Council Through video communication, in cooperation with the West Asia Office, the University of Bahrain, the Arab Gulf University, and a number of parties involved in preparing the third national communication report on climate change.
25. The NIHR has participated in the symposium organized by the General Secretariat of the House of Representatives entitled "Towards a more Arab human rights promotion", where it presented a working paper titled "The NIHR's Role in the Field of Promotion and Protection of Human Rights during the Covid-19 Pandemic". It pointed out that the NIHR has continued

its work to promote and protect human rights during the pandemic, especially regarding the right to health. The NIHR has conducted several field visits to detention centers to determine the extent to which inmates enjoy basic human rights and freedoms, also the NIHR visited a number of health and social care homes during the Corona pandemic, to determine the extent to which individuals enjoy basic human rights and freedoms, and conducted several visits to workers' housing in the Kingdom, to ensure preventive measures and precautions are taken and implemented to address the Covid-19 pandemic.

Requirement Six

Interaction with International, Regional and National Human Rights Events and Days

1. The NIHR was definitely not far from interacting with international and regional occasions and days related to the promotion of human rights. During 2021, the NIHR issued twenty-two statements on a number of international, regional and national days, aimed to introduce those days and occasions of all kinds, and their importance, as follows:

Statements	Occasion	Date
International	International Women's Day	8 March 2021
	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	21 March 2021
	World Autism Awareness Day	2 April 2021
	World Health Day	7 April 2021
	International Workers' Day	1 May 2021
	World Press Freedom Day	3 May 2021
	World Environment Day	5 June 2021
	International Day Against Trafficking in Persons	30 July 2021
	International Day of Democracy	15 September 2021
	International Day of Older Persons	1 October 2021
	International Day of the Girl Child	11 October 2021
	United Nations Day	24 October 2021
	International Children's Day	20 November 2021

	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women	25 November 2021
	International Day of Persons with Disabilities	3 December 2021
	Human Rights Day	10 December 2021
Regional	Arab Human Rights Day	16 March 2021
National	Bahraini Women's Day	1 December 2021

2. In the same regard, the NIHR has followed up, with great concern, the information and news circulating through the media, news channels and social network sites regarding the arrest of the Bahraini champion Sami Haddad with a group of his friends while they were out on a fishing trip in the Bahraini territorial waters, by the Qatari Coast Guard patrols. It issued a statement calling for the immediate release of the Bahraini citizens, and expressed its regret for this act, which violates humanitarian principles and values, foremost of which is the principle of good neighbourhood, in addition to violating a set of human rights and fundamental freedoms guaranteed by international human rights covenants.
3. In addition, the NIHR has issued a statement regarding the death of one of the detainees in the pre-trial detention centre. It confirmed that a delegation consisting of members of the NIHR's Council of Commissioners will conduct a field visit to the pre-trial detention centre to ensure that the precautions and measures taken towards preserving the rights, safety and security of inmates comply with the standards of human rights. At the same time, the NIHR stressed the need for the concerned authorities, especially the Public Prosecution and the Ministry of Interior, to take all necessary measures to expedite the completion of the immediate investigation procedures.
4. The NIHR has also issued a statement on the measures taken by the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation against a number of inmates, as the NIHR reiterated that inmates should continue to enjoy their prescribed rights and not be subjected to ill-treatment in accordance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. At the same time, it called on inmates to abide by the executive

regulations of the Law of the Correction and Rehabilitation Institutions, and not to harm or infringe on the rights and freedoms of their fellow inmates.

5. In addition, the NIHR has issued a statement on the Royal directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Country, may God protect and preserve him, on commencing the vaccination of Bahraini citizens residing abroad against the Covid-19. The NIHR highly values the Royal directives, which reflect His Majesty's paternalistic concern for the health and safety of his citizens in various parts of the world, and which came as a continuation of His Majesty's directives at the end of last year to provide all the available safe vaccines against the virus, and to make it available free of charge to all citizens and residents in a manner that preserves the health and safety of all.

Requirement Seven
Training and Education in the Field of Human Rights

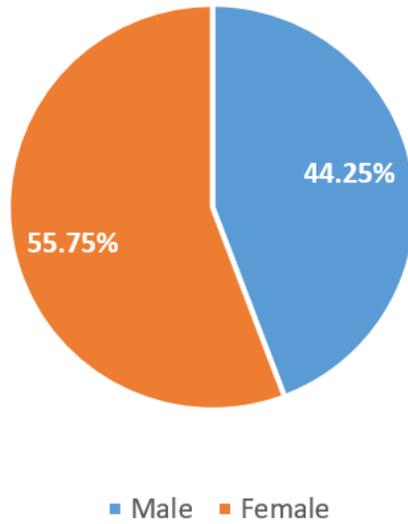


Figure 1 Percentage of Male to Female Participants in Training

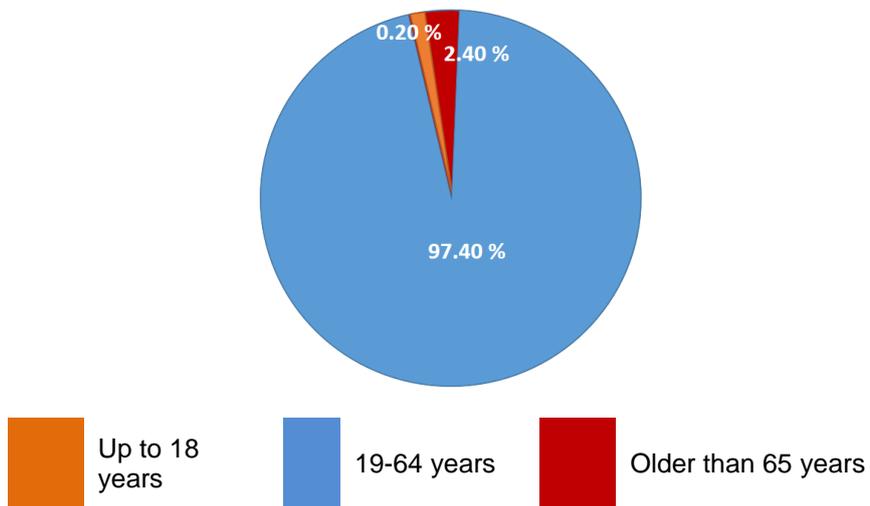


Figure2 Percentage of Age Groups of Participants in Training Programs

Section one: Participation in the legal clinic and human rights program

1. During the year 2021, the NIHR has received two groups of students who joined the Legal Clinic and Human Rights Program of the College of Law at the University of Bahrain, in the second semester of the academic year 2020-2021, and the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022. The training program included holding a number of events both in person and



Picture 43 Students who joined the Legal Clinic and Human Rights Program of the College of Law at the University of Bahrain

remotely.

2. The Program contained several topics on providing general information on human rights and fundamental freedoms, national, regional, and international mechanisms for the protection of human rights, and the NIHR's role in protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The students participating in the Program, in the course of 19 training sessions for each group, were introduced to the key services provided by the NIHR, and its role in protecting and promoting human rights at the local and international levels.

Section Two: Participation with the Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa Academy for Diplomatic Studies

1. The NIHR, in cooperation with the Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa Academy for Diplomatic Studies, has organized an introductory lecture on the role of the NIHR in promoting and protecting human rights in the



Picture 44 Introductory laecture on NIHR's role, organized by NIHR in cooperation with Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa Academy for Diplomatic Studies

Kingdom of Bahrain, for a number of diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs via video communication technology.

2. The lecture introduced the NIHR's establishing law, the services it provides to citizens and residents in protecting and promoting human rights, and NIHR's legal framework. In addition, it introduced other national mechanisms related to the protection of human rights, as well as reviewed the strategy and action plan of the NIHR, and the key achievements made by the NIHR in the field of protection and promotion of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
3. This lecture comes within the first edition of the Advanced Training Course for Diplomats, organized by the Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa Academy for Diplomatic Studies during the period from November 2020 to January 2021, which targets diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Section Three: Participation in the "Opportunities" (FURAS) Program

1. Within the framework of the strategic partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, and the Ministry of Youth and Sport Affairs, to provide training for Bahraini youth through "Opportunities"(FURAS)

Program, the NIHR has organized a remote introductory meeting on its human rights training program “Human Rights Research Fellowship”. The Program targets university students, whether studying in the Kingdom of Bahrain or abroad, and who have the desire to perform practical training for their academic requirements, or individuals and researchers who have a desire to know the mechanism of the NIHR’s work and gain experience in the field of human rights.

2. The Training Program aims to develop skills in research, analysis, and critical thinking in the field of human rights, and to develop skills in the human rights field by providing information on human rights principles and concepts. Several topics were discussed, the most important of which are: the tasks and functions of the Specialized Standing Committees in the NIHR, international instruments concerned with human rights, and standards for declared and unannounced visits to correction and rehabilitation centers.

Section Four: Organizing a Round Table on “Distance Education in Light of the Covid-19 Pandemic”

1. The NIHR has organized a round table entitled: “Distance education in light of the Covid-19 pandemic between reality and hope” through visual communication technology, in order to shed light on the efforts of the concerned authorities in dealing with the challenges imposed by the pandemic. Representatives from the General Secretariat of the Higher Education Council and a number of concerned schools and universities, in addition to representatives of a number of concerned civil society organizations have participated in the Round Table.



Picture 45 Round Table entitled “Distance education in light of the Covid-19 pandemic between reality and hope” organized by the NIHR

2. During the event, the role of the NIHR in promoting and protecting the right to education considering the Covid-19 pandemic, and the efforts made by the relevant authorities in the Kingdom to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on education were reviewed. In addition, the most important challenges facing education in public and private schools and universities and the major challenges related to providing the right to education for all segments of society in light of the pandemic were discussed. Ensuring the continuity of the educational process, the reality, aspirations of distance education in light of the pandemic, especially with regard to educational content and students, were considered.
3. The Round Table event hosted by the NIHR concluded with a number of recommendations and proposals aimed at finding solutions to the challenges facing the educational process in light of the pandemic, such as training teachers, students and their parents on the use of modern technology in education, finding ways for joint cooperation between all governmental and private stakeholders, setting up a specific mechanism to deal with urgent unforeseen conditions in education, and developing laws and legislation to serve the distance education process.

Section Five: Organizing a Round Table on “The extent to which urban planning is compatible with the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in the Kingdom of Bahrain.”

1. The NIHR has organized, through visual communication technology, a round table entitled “the extent to which urban planning is compatible with the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in the Kingdom of Bahrain” for several official bodies and relevant civil society institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Round Table aims to shed light on the right to live in a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.



Picture 46 Round table, via video conferencing, entitled “the extent to which urban planning is compatible with the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in the Kingdom of Bahrain” organized by the NIHR

2. The first session of the event included five main themes that dealt with the reality of urban planning and its impact on the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Engineer Luma Abbas Al-Mahroos, Acting Director of the Environmental Assessment and Control Directorate at the Supreme Council for Environment, presented an overview of the role of the Supreme Council for Environment in the field of urban planning to ensure the protection of the environment and wildlife in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the most important legislation and laws regulating this.
3. In the second theme, Engineer Wahiba Ali Muhammad Abdullah, Head of the Planning and Technical Services Department at the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, explained the most important urban planning strategies used to preserve the ecological balance and wildlife in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
4. In the third theme, Engineer Reda Muhammad Al-Adraj, Assistant Undersecretary for Housing Projects in the Ministry of Housing, focused on the most important construction requirements approved by the Ministry of Housing to harmonize urban planning with the right to provide a healthy and sustainable environment for all, and the most important projects for that.
5. In the fourth theme, Engineer Issa Abdul Rahman Al Buainain, Urban Strategic Planning Advisor at the Urban Planning and Development Authority, presented a summary of the main standards adopted in urban planning, which are consistent with providing a healthy and sustainable environment for all.
6. Dr. Wafa’a Ibrahim Al-Sharbati, Director of the Health Promotion Directorate at the Ministry of Health, focused, in the fifth and final theme,

on the role of the Ministry of Health in harmonizing urban planning with the right to a healthy and sustainable environment for all.

7. The second session of the event focused on the role of civil society institutions and their importance in defining and raising awareness of the importance of urban balance in the preservation of the environment, as civil society institutions are essential partners in the promotion, development, and protection of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Dr. Intissar Al Bana, member of the Board of Directors of “Mabade” (Principles) Association for Human Rights, and Dr. Hanadi Al-Jowdar, Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Environment Friends Society, gave an overview of the most important activities undertaken by civil society institutions to promote and protect the human right to a healthy environment.
8. The event concluded with a number of recommendations that focused on the importance of harmonizing national legislation with international conventions on human rights, especially those related to the right to a healthy environment. The recommendations emphasized giving priority to human rights in all policies and strategies to make cities more sustainable for all, updating the regulatory requirements for construction, and strengthening community culture to implement the best practices related to the environment and to raise their awareness of environmental concepts.

Section Six: A Dialogue Seminar on “Women’s Rights and Equal Pay”

1. Coinciding with Bahraini Women's Day, the NIHR has organized a Dialogue Seminar titled "Women's Rights and Equal Pay", via video communication technology. Representatives of a number of government and private agencies, civil society institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and a number of international organizations participated in the Seminar.
2. The Dialogue Seminar comprised seven main themes through which the efforts of the Kingdom of Bahrain in promoting the principle of equality and eliminating discrimination between women and men in wages were highlighted. The Chairperson of the NIHR presented a synopsis on the role of the NIHR in strengthening and protecting the rights of working women and spreading awareness of all the efforts being made in the field of consolidating the principles of justice and equality pursued by the Kingdom of Bahrain.

- On the second theme, Ms. Jihan Al-Morbati, representative of the United Nations Coordinator and Acting Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program in the Kingdom of Bahrain, presented an overview of the most important women's rights contained in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.



Picture 47 Dialogue Seminar titled "Women's Rights and Equal Pay" organized by the NIHR via video conferencing

- As for the third theme, His Excellency Mr. Reda Abdullah Faraj, Deputy Chairman of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee of the Shura Council, focused on the impact of legislation and policies that support the principle of justice and equality in salaries and wages between women and men in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- Regarding the fourth theme, Ms. Hanan Al-Mudhaki, Director of the Legal Affairs Department in the House of Representatives, presented a summary of the most important systems and mechanisms for following up on applications of equal opportunity to curb discriminatory phenomena and practices in the field of employment.
- In the fifth theme, Dr. Muhammad Walid Al-Masry, legal advisor at the Supreme Council for Women, explained the efforts of the Supreme Council in directing and following up the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities, gender balance and equality in job benefits.
- Ms. Noura Majid Al Ghatam, Director of the Wages and Benefits Directorate, touched, in the sixth topic, on the efforts of the Civil Service Bureau in implementing policies related to ensuring equality in treatment

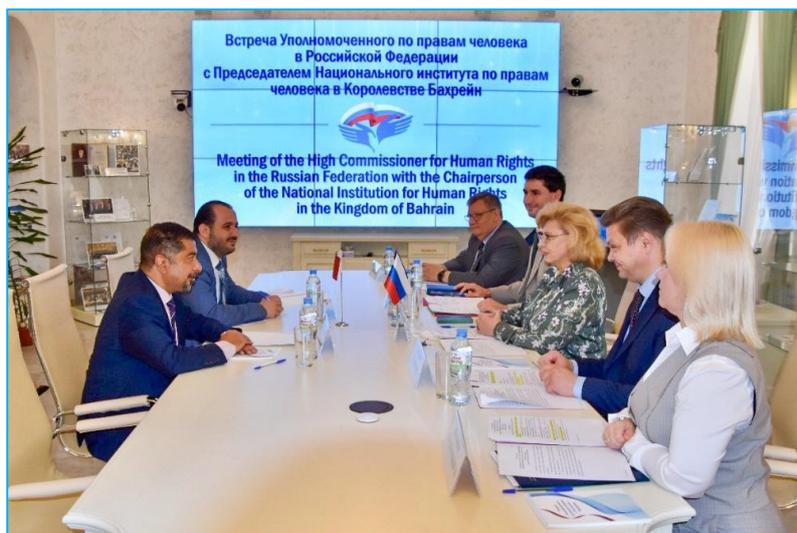
and equal opportunities for all male and female workers in the public sector.

8. In the seventh and final topic of the Dialogue Seminar, Mr. Ali Salman Abdullah, Head of the Trade Unions Affair Unit at the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, gave an overview of the role of the Ministry in following up and implementing Decree-Law No. (16) of 2021 to amend some provisions of the Labor Law in the private sector.
9. At the conclusion of the Dialogue Seminar, a number of results and recommendations aimed at enhancing women's rights and ensuring equality and equal opportunities with men in all sectors were made. The most important of these recommendations are: following up on the recommendations of the National Plan for the Advancement of Women and implementing its outputs; establishing a clear database that a legislator use to pinpoint the legal needs and legislative shortcomings; foster the culture of exclusive jobs based on sex, color, gender or religion; involve disadvantaged groups in technology and science training; continue to support women through training and contribution to wages; and urge the private sector to employ women by providing government facilities.

Section Seven: Signing Memoranda of Understanding

1. Out of keenness of the NIHR to spread and strengthen the culture of human rights among all segments of society, and its full encouragement of the educational and academic process in the Kingdom of Bahrain, it has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Gulf University to coordinate cooperation between the two sides. In doing so, the NIHR has sought to strengthen community partnership and develop legal knowledge among male and female university students through offering specialized training programs. Such programs are intended to provide them with the necessary skills, and prepare them to engage in the labor market and respond to its requirements to achieve the serve the Kingdom of Bahrain and achieve the National Vision 2030. The Memorandum aims at activating the joint role of the two parties in the field of training and education and strengthening cooperation to advance human rights and educational work in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
2. Within the same context, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the NIHR and its Russian counterpart, with the aim of deepening cooperation in the field of protecting and following up the rights of citizens of both countries in the other country. In addition, it aims to agree on exchange of information and technical cooperation between the two sides,

and to hold joint events by organizing scientific and practical conferences, seminars, courses and training programs to introduce human rights concepts and principles at various local, national and regional levels. This is the first memorandum of understanding signed by the NIHR with one of the national institutions that is a member of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions of the GANHRI concerned with the protection and promotion of human rights.



Picture 48 Signing a memorandum of understanding between the NIHR and its Russian counterpart

3. Within the framework of the cooperation between the NIHR in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the High Commission for Human Rights in the Russian Federation, and further to the memorandum of understanding concluded between the two sides in accordance with the powers granted to each of them under the relevant national legislation, the two sides signed a Cooperation Protocol. The aim of this Protocol is to provide a framework for cooperation and facilitate cooperation between them in areas of common interest through the exchange of legal procedures, participation in meetings on international cooperation and human rights, participation in the Expert Council of the High Commission for Human Rights of the Russian Federation, as well as reviewing jointly the experiences of the two institutions in the field of protecting and promoting women's rights.



Picture 49 Signing a Cooperation Protocol between the NIHR and the High Commission for Human Rights in the Russian Federation

Section Eight: Participation in Career Exhibitions

1. The NIHR participated in the Career Day exhibition organized by the Gulf University under the patronage of His Excellency Mr. Jamil bin Mohammed Humaidan, Minister of Labor and Social Development, through visual communication technology, to activate the memorandum of understanding concluded between the NIHR and the Gulf University.
2. The NIHR asserted, during the event, that these exhibitions are one of the most important means that help students to know the requirements of the labor market, and that they contribute to achieving alignment between the outputs of universities and the needs of the labor market in specific fields and specializations. It also stressed that the NIHR is working to provide specialized training in the field of human rights for students, and will continuously spread the culture of human rights among various segments of society.
3. On the sidelines of the exhibition, the NIHR held a remote meeting with Dr. Muhannad Al-Mashhadani, President of the Gulf University, where several topics related to human rights were discussed. In addition, a mechanism for promoting and disseminating a culture of human rights in the academic community through training and educational programs offered by the NIHR in partnership with community organizations and civil and academic institutions was explored.
4. In the same context, the NIHR has participated in the Careers Day exhibition organized by the Royal University for Women via visual

conferencing, with the aim of introducing university students to the career and training opportunities offered by the participating parties in the exhibition. The NIHR presented an overview of the Research Fellowship Program in the field of human rights. This program targets academics, university students, human rights defenders and all those interested in conducting research in the field of human rights. The conditions for applying to the program and the mechanism for enrolling in it were reviewed. The basic objectives, of the Program were also explained, which include developing skills in critical thinking and analysis in the field of human rights, supporting and developing innovation and creativity skills, to find the best ways to promote and protect human rights, and to strengthen partnership with international organizations and universities working in the field of human rights.

Section Nine: Participation in the Bahrain Summer Festival

1. The NIHR has participated in the press conference to announce the



Picture 50 NIHR's virtual participation in Career Day exhibitions

activities of the Bahrain Summer Festival in its thirteenth edition, which is held throughout the month of July 2021, via visual communication technology. The Festival is one of the most anticipated events in the Kingdom of Bahrain due to its multicultural programs and the wide range of activities and workshops especially for children.

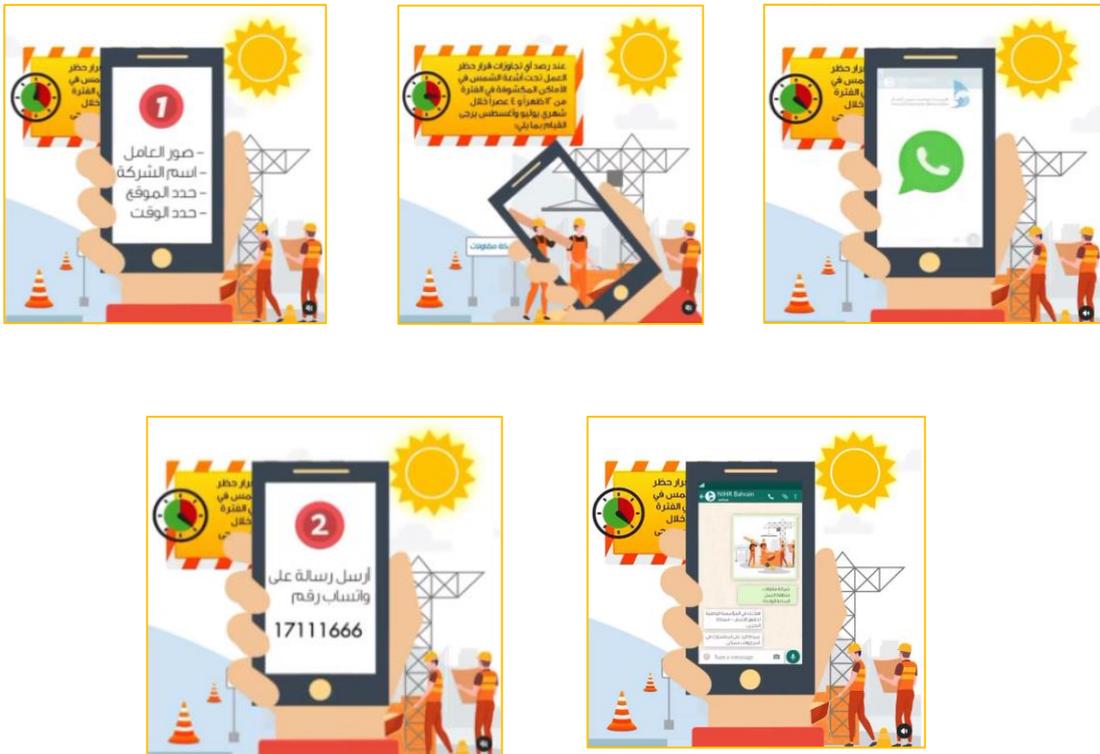
2. Through its participation in the Festival, the NIHR published a number of its publications concerned with the right of the child, such as a coloring book on children's rights and a brochure on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for Children in both languages (Arabic and English), on the NIHR's Festival website.

Section Ten: Launching the “Monitoring the Noon Work Ban” initiative

1. Acting based on the role entrusted to it within the framework of promoting and protecting fundamental rights and freedoms, and in view of the significance of the right to a safe work environment, the NIHR launched, for the third year in a row, the “monitoring noon work ban initiative”.

Through this initiative, the NIHR reports breaches pertaining to making workers, whose nature of work requires them to be in the sun in outdoor sites during the period from twelve noon until four in the afternoon during the months of July and August, in implementation of Decision No. (3) of 2013 of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development regarding prohibiting noon work in open places during the prescribed ban hours.

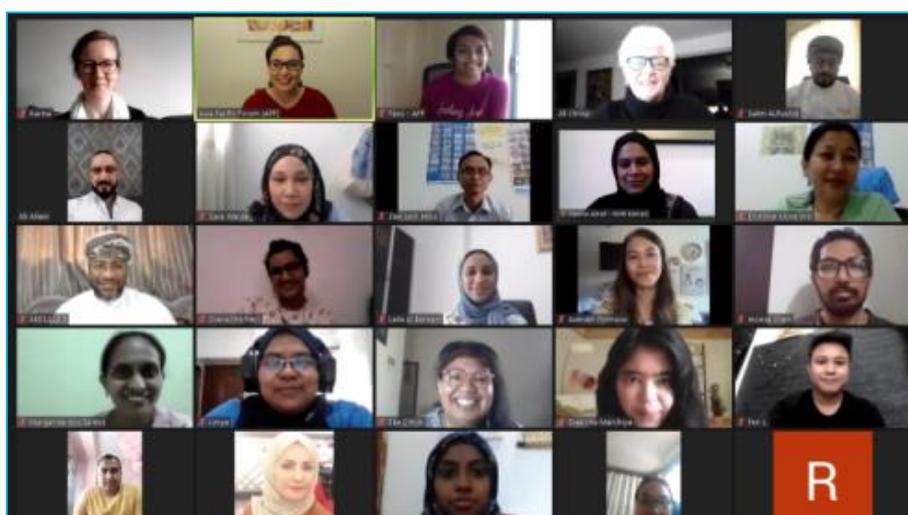
2. The NIHR has allowed everybody to monitor violations, determine their location and time, and publish such on social networks using the hashtag #Ensure_YourRight (#اضمن_حقوقك). The public could also share the violations and media material through, the NIHR's WhatsApp at 17111666, or report these violations through the free hotline 80001144.



3. Through this initiative, aiming to boost community culture of backing workers' rights supportive of the efforts of the government to address any breaches, the NIHR called on employers to respect the law, protect workers' rights, create a decent work environment for them, and provide the necessary measures to adapt to the decision in accordance with international standards.

Section Eleven: Participation with the Network of Facilitators and Educators in the Field of Human Rights in the Asia Pacific Forum

1. Within the framework of cooperation and coordination between the NIHR's Secretariat General and the Executive Management of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Institutions (APF), the NIHR's Secretariat General has participated in the training program on preparing a network of facilitators and educators in the field of human rights, which ran from May to June 2021.
2. During the training period, lessons were posted weekly on the Forum's training website, and an evaluation test was carried out for each lesson. All lessons were discussed through live broadcasts with all the participants. The topics included training and education in the field of human rights, linking it to the work of national human rights institutions, in addition to explaining the theory, principles and methods of education and training, and providing a brief explanation about human rights education using modern electronic means for distance training.



Picture 51 Participation of NIHR's Secretariat in the training program on preparing a network of facilitators and educators in the field of human rights, in cooperation and coordination with the APF

3. At the conclusion of the training program, a network of human rights facilitators and educators was established for all national human rights institutions participating in the (AEFN) training program, which included more than (14) national institutions in Asia and the Pacific, including the NIHR in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Section Twelve: Participation in the Legal Training Program for Students of the College of Law at the University of Bahrain

1. The NIHR has participated in delivering the legal training program for students at the College of Law at the University of Bahrain, which was organized by the College of Law over two consecutive days, within the framework of bilateral cooperation between the NIHR and the University. The training program aims to develop juristic and legal skills for male and female students by introducing them to the principles and concepts of human rights, through practical training that enables them to acquire these skills.
2. On the first day, the NIHR addressed the definition of the concept of human rights in general and its divisions and clarified the most important international agreements and obligations in the field of human rights and international instruments ratified by the Kingdom of Bahrain, in addition to the general rights and duties enshrined in the Constitution of Bahrain. It also presented an overview of the NIHR's work and specializations in accordance with the law of its establishment and the services it provides to citizens and residents. On the second day, the focus was on introducing detention and rehabilitation centers, the legal framework for the mechanism of visits, standards for visiting prisons and detention sites, in addition to the basic principles of treatment of prisoners.

Section Thirteen: Organizing Awareness Lectures

1. Within the framework of the NIHR's efforts to promote and spread a culture of human rights among all segments of society, and to raise awareness of national, regional, and international standards related to human rights, the NIHR presented a distance introductory lecture on its role in promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This lecture was organized in cooperation with Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission. The lecture defined the concept of human rights in general and its divisions, and clarified the most important international agreements and obligations in the field of human rights and international instruments

ratified by the Kingdom of Bahrain, in addition to the general rights and duties enshrined in the Bahraini Constitution.

2. The lecture also touched on the functions of the NIHR and the services it provides to citizens and residents to protect and promote human rights. It also mentioned the legal framework of the NIHR's work, its relationship with regional and international bodies, as well as a review of the NIHR's strategy and work plan, and its most prominent achievements in the field of protecting and promoting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
3. This lecture is part of a series of lectures organized by the Legislative and Legal Opinion Commission for all segments of Bahraini society and presented by several officials and specialists in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
4. Emanating from the strategic partnership with various bodies; and with the aim of developing the skills of participants in the field of human rights; and in implementation of its action plan to spread a culture of human rights among various groups of society in accordance with national and international standards; the NIHR, in cooperation with the Public Prosecution, organized a distance lecture on the NIHR's role in the field of promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, as part of the training program for the Public Prosecution given to a group of university students.
5. The lecture introduced the NIHR's law and the services it provides to citizens and residents in protecting and promoting human rights and its legal framework. In addition, the lecture reviewed the NIHR's strategy and action plan, and the most prominent achievements in the human rights field, as well as introducing other national mechanisms related to the protection and promotion of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
6. As part of its role aimed at spreading and promoting awareness of human rights principles for all segments of society; and in implementation of its strategy and action plan, in cooperation with its partners from the different organizations; the NIHR organized a lecture - remotely - on its role in the promotion and protection of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, targeting employees from the various governorates in the Kingdom. The lecture touched upon several topics defining the NIHR's law, the services it provides to citizens and residents in the field of human rights, and the legal framework of the NIHR, in addition to introducing other national mechanisms related to the protection and promotion of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

7. On the occasion of the International Day Against Breast Cancer, the NIHR held an awareness lecture for female employees in cooperation with the Bahrain Cancer Society. Dr. Haneen Al-Bosta gave a lecture in which she discussed the importance of spreading health awareness, especially with regard to ways to prevent cancer, the causes and symptoms that lead to its occurrence, and ways to avoid or eliminate breast cancer and treat it before it spreads.

Section Fourteen: Building the Capacity of the Staff of the NIHR's Secretariat General

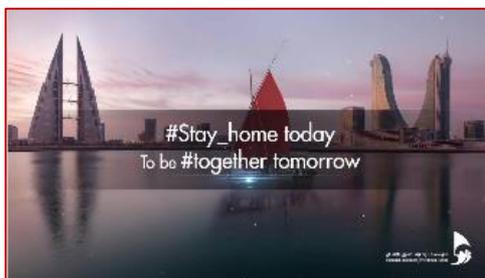
1. The NIHR engaged its employees in a number of training programs and various events to build their capacities in various fields, especially those related to human rights. The most important topics that the NIHR's Secretariat General employees have been trained on were mediation in criminal matters, a virtual workshop to present updates on the system of tenders and auctions, understanding of national human rights institutions and the Paris Principles.
2. In addition, they were involved in programs on the role of the national judge in the implementation of international humanitarian law, national sovereignty and human rights and the role of the NIHR in protecting and promoting these rights, cybercrimes, assessment committee qualification cycle, good practices arising from the Universal Periodic Review, and readings in the National Action Charter "Nahj", and gender equality for national human rights institutions.

Section Fifteen: Dissemination of Tweets and Awareness Messages in Social Media

1- Publishing an awareness video entitled "Stay Home" (خليك بالبيت)

In supporting the efforts of the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Corona virus (COVID-19), the NIHR's Secretariat General, in cooperation with one of the companies specialized in the field of montage, video design and motion graphics, designed a one-minute bilingual (Arabic and English)

awareness video on the importance of complying with the preventive precautionary measures to contribute effectively in curbing the spread of



Covid-19. The Video also calls for not leaving the house during this period unless necessary. The NIHR explained that the video is broadcasted on Bahrain TV and Channel 55, and it can be viewed on the NIHR's official website www.nihr.org.bh.

2- Posting awareness tweets

The NIHR interacted with the public on its account on Twitter by posting a number of tweets this year, focusing on the following:

- Based on its broad mandate in accordance with its Establishing Law, the NIHR welcomes receiving requests to substitute the remainder of the sentence for inmates sentenced to freedom-depriving penalties, provided that the formal conditions stipulated in Article No. (13) of Law No. (18) of 2017 on Alternative Penalties and Measures are met, namely, the convicted person have served half the term and have paid all the financial liabilities handed down against him, if any. In this regard, the NIHR would like to clarify that it is not the competent authority to consider and take the decision to substitute the sanction, change the place of serving the alternative punishment, or determine the quality of the alternative punishment, as its role is limited only to studying the extent to which the formal conditions apply to the applicants, in preparation for addressing the concerned authorities with jurisdiction in deciding whether or not to impose alternative penalties.

The NIHR affirms that its endeavours and initiatives in the field of alternative punishments, which is considered a giant stride in protecting and promoting human rights, come from the premise of its solid humanitarian approach in instilling the values of tolerance among the various segments of society, and the rehabilitation and integration of the convicts into society. In the same context, the NIHR urges all concerned

parties to expand the application of the Alternative Penalties and Measures Law whenever its formal conditions are met, as it is in line with the reform project of His Majesty the King, may God protect him, and the strategic vision of His Highness the Prime Minister in implementing the open prison policy, as well as being in line with the international principles of human rights, the most important of which are the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules), and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules).

- The #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights values the approval of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Country, may God protect him, to promulgate Law No. (4) of 2021 regarding #corrective_justice_for_children_and_protecting them from ill-treatment after it was approved by the Shura Council and the House of Representatives. The #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights commends the Law on #Correctional_Justice_for_Children, which aims to create an appropriate environment to care for children and protect them from ill-treatment, by separating them from the penal scope of the law and its criminal procedures to concepts based on prevention, protection, reform, reinstatement, integration with the community, and promotion of shared responsibility with the family.

The #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights affirms that the #Restorative_Justice_for_Children Law is in line with the United Nations Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime, and the Kingdom of Bahrain's international obligations arising from its accession to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which urged all member states to take all legislative and administrative measures to protect children and take into account the optimal interest of the child at all times to achieve justice in its comprehensive sense. Based on the humanitarian and oversight role of the #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights, and based on its broad mandate confirmed by the its Establishing Law, it will continue performing its competencies by attending court sessions held before the #Restorative_Justice_Children_Courts, which will have jurisdiction over crimes committed by children over the age of 15 full calendar years at the time of committing the crime, to ensure fair trial guarantees.

The #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights will also cooperate with the #Judicial_Committee_for_Children, which was formed by the

#Restorative_Justice_For_Children Law, which is specialized in examining cases of child endangerment and ill-treatment and providing all the information it obtains in this regard. It will also cooperate with the #Child_Protection_Center, which will be established under the #Restorative_Justice_For_Children Law, and will be specialized in developing plans and programs to ensure the prevention and protection of children from abuse.

The #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights also affirms that it will communicate with the competent authorities to provide them with its observations and recommendations on the complaints it receives regarding violations of the rights of the child, and the results of its monitoring of the proceedings of the cases that will be heard by the #Restorative_Justice_Courts_for_Children. The

#National_Institution_for_Human_Rights will continue its work to protect and promote #Children's_rights and to cooperate constructively with all parties to promote and protect the best interests of the child and deepen the awareness of the community of children's rights and protect them from all forms of exploitation and violence. The #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights calls on those who wish to communicate with it to do so via its free hotline (80001144), mobile application NIHR Bahrain, or via its website: nihr.org.bh to report any violations of children's rights.

- The #National_Institution_for_Human_Rights would like to clarify, regarding the application of the alternative penalties and measures, that it is one entity from among the others identified by the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments where convicts can serve their alternative penalties in, and that it is not the entity responsible for selecting or nominating convicts to implement alternative penalties.

Noting that the NIHR contributes, through its human rights and humanitarian position, to receiving and referring some requests to the concerned authorities for their consideration and taking such actions as they deem appropriate.

Section Sixteen: Press Releases and News

First: Press Releases

1. During this year, the NIHR issued a number of press statements, the most prominent of which was a statement on "Covid-19, Human Rights and the Vaccine". In this statement, it affirmed that the Kingdom of Bahrain is

proceeding steadily in sponsoring everything related to the promotion of human rights values and principles. It also confirmed the reality of tolerance and coexistence under the state of institutions and rule of the law, under the patronage of a lofty monarchy that left no doubt about its deep belief in human dignity, its respect for human rights, and its commitment to protecting it without discrimination or distinction, which made the Kingdom a pioneering model to be followed.

2. In the same regard, the NIHR issued a statement praising the health and safety procedures followed during the administration of vaccinations to limit the spread of the Corona virus. Regarding the right to health, the NIHR issued a statement to confirm that health care continues for the inmates of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center and places of detention and arrest. The NIHR also issued a statement on the “Mechanism for vaccinating the inmates of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center”.
3. The NIHR issued a statement regarding the statement of the European Parliament about the state of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain. In its statement, the NIHR expressed its deep regret and surprise at what was stated in the statement issued by the European Parliament regarding the situation of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, which ignored the great efforts made, and are ongoing, by the Kingdom to promote and protect human rights. In addition, the NIHR issued a statement regarding the unannounced visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Jaw conducted by a delegation of the NIHR to examine the visitation mechanism and procedures of inmates who have received the vaccination against Covid-19, which the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation announced earlier.
4. The NIHR also issued a statement on “The Kingdom of Bahrain’s commitment to provide vaccines to all citizens and residents in line with the requirements and provisions of national and international human rights mechanisms.” It issued a second statement about “the death of an inmate who contracted Covid-19”. A third statement was issued about “organizing visitations to inmates who have received the vaccine against Covid-19.” The NIHR explained that its delegation made an unannounced visit to the Correction and Rehabilitation Center in the Jaw area to examine the mechanism and procedures for visitation of inmates who have received the vaccination against Covid-19, which the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation announced earlier.

5. The NIHR issued a statement in which it valued the issuance of Decree-Law No. (16) of 2021 amending some provisions of the Labor Law in the Private Sector, which stipulated adding a second paragraph to Article No. (39) of the Labor Law in the Private Sector promulgated by Law No. (36) of 2012, stating that, “It is prohibited to discriminate in wages between male and female workers for work of equal value.”
6. In appreciation of the prominent role of the Supreme Council for Women in supporting Bahraini women and advancing their status in various fields and at all levels; the NIHR issued a statement on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Supreme Council for Women. In its statement, the NIHR expressed great pride in the Bahraini women’s stride, who is a role model in terms of the achieved successes, raising the name of the Kingdom of Bahrain in various Arab, regional and international forums.
7. In addition, the NIHR issued a statement in which it valued the issuance of Decree-Law No. (24) of 2021 amending Article No. (13) of Law No. (18) of 2017 on Alternative Penalties and Measures. In its statement, the NIHR affirmed that, in general, alternative punishments are a qualitative leap and guarantee that sentences are diverse commensurate with the humanitarian conditions of the convict. They achieve the desired goals for which they were enacted, while at the same time assist in rehabilitating the convict to coexist with his social environment, given that the alternative punishment is a successful measure and a sound foundation of the principles of justice to prevent repeating crime.
8. The NIHR issued another statement in which it affirmed that the royal directives to initiate setting up the necessary mechanisms for open reform centers and prisons reflect the serious and sincere political will to develop the penal systems. The NIHR also called for accelerating the realization of the royal directives to put in place the executive mechanisms and infrastructure necessary to apply alternative punishments to include larger segments of the convicts. At the same time, it called on all private and civil sectors and bodies, and civil society institutions to accept those subject to alternative sanctions and measures to contribute effectively to its success and expansion, to reach its core purpose.
9. The NIHR issued a statement welcoming Bahrain's pledge to support international climate change initiatives. In its statement, it affirmed that the challenges caused by climate change threaten human rights of millions of people in all parts of the world. The NIHR highlighted that international human rights law emphasized ensuring the protection of those affected by

climate change in addition to providing the necessary means of adaptation so that everyone can enjoy a decent life, by controlling the emissions of greenhouse gases and mobilizing sufficient resources to mitigate the effects of climate change.

10. The NIHR also issued a statement in which it valued the wise leadership's support for Bahraini women. It affirmed its full support for anything that could enhance women's enjoyment of their rights at various levels, political, economic, social and cultural, being a key partner in Bahraini society alongside men, in line with the efforts and endeavors of the Supreme Council for Women aimed at empowering Bahraini women and integrating them into comprehensive development programs, to achieve the principle of equality and non-discrimination.
11. In a statement issued by the NIHR on "continuing its services despite the measures and procedures taken to combat Covid-19 pandemic," it confirmed that its Secretariat General continues its efforts and carries out its responsibilities at a steady pace, through activating remote work mechanism through electronic technologies. This has greatly contributed to holding remote meetings, of the Council of Commissioners, Council's Office, and the permanent special committees at the NIHR via teleconferencing. In addition, the periodic meetings held with the Secretariat's employees, or the events supervised by the General Secretariat, such as round table events, workshops, programs, and training courses such as the Research Fellowship Program in the field of human rights, were also resumed in cooperation with several relevant authorities without any interruption. The Complaint and Call Centre, which receives calls via the toll-free hotline (80001144), the smart phone (mobile) application (Bahrain NIHR) and via e-mail complaint@nihr.org.bh, continued its work despite cutting down the physical attendance of the employees of the General Secretariat by 70%. Working mothers and a number of employees who have health issues were allowed to work from home, based on the royal directives and decisions issued by the National Taskforce in this regard in order to preserve the public interest and the health of all.
12. The NIHR valued the royal directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Country, may God protect and preserve him, to provide several types of the vaccine and make them available for free to citizens, whether inside the Kingdom of Bahrain or abroad, and free of charge to all residents in the Kingdom, reflecting His Majesty's keenness on maintaining the health and safety of all.

13. The NIHR also issued a statement on “the Wages Protection System that enhances Bahrain’s position as a destination characterized by regulations and laws that preserve workers’ rights.” In its statement, the NIHR affirmed that the implementation of the Wages Protection System greatly contributes to the commitment of the private sector to pay wages, as agreed and on time. At the same time, it enables the licensing body (the Labor Market Regulatory Authority) to know the extent of the commitment of the private sector enterprises to pay workers' wages in full and on the specified dates, in accordance with the laws and conditions stipulated in the Labor Law.
14. The NIHR issued a statement in which it welcomed the application of alternative penalties to (30) convicts. It considers that the expansion and flexibility in applying the provisions of the Alternative Penalties and Measures Law is in line with international standards and protocols contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with regard to the treatment of persons whose freedom is deprived in a humane manner and respecting human dignity and the principle of self-rehabilitation. The NIHR stressed its full support for the directives aimed at implementing and expanding additional alternative punishments, thus contributing to the rehabilitation of the convicts and preventing them from repeating crime.
15. In addition, the NIHR issued a statement on the 12th anniversary of its establishment, in which it highly valued the incessant support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Country, may God protect and preserve him, to advance the human rights system transparently and independently in accordance with the Paris Principles.

Second: TV and Radio interviews

In a related context, the NIHR has participated in a number of television and radio interviews to promote a culture of human rights and raise awareness of the role entrusted to the NIHR in the field of promoting and protecting human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The interviews addressed a number of topics, for example, "Violations against Bahraini fishermen", "the 20th anniversary of the National Action Charter", and "the Restorative Justice for Children and their Protection from Maltreatment Law".

Third: Press news

1. To enhance cooperation with national bodies concerned with human rights, and to further extend the frameworks of communication with

governmental and non-governmental agencies, and individuals interested in the field of human rights, the NIHR held a meeting with the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee of the House of Representatives. During the meeting, ways to enhance joint cooperation between the NIHR and Parliament were discussed, as well as a number of issues related to the developments in the human rights file, especially the grave violations that occurred against Bahraini fishermen and seafarers, and the importance of taking the necessary measures to protect their rights, were reviewed. In addition, the meeting touched on alternative penalty mechanism and the role of the NIHR in this regard.

2. In the same regard, the NIHR has received several members of the House of Representatives, where several issues of common interest and a number of topics related to the developments of the legal file were discussed, as well as the role of the NIHR in this regard.
3. The NIHR has also received the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bahrain Association for the Development of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. During the meeting, the NIHR highlighted the importance of protecting human rights in entrepreneurship and companies and promoting their agenda in various sectors. The NIHR explained that business institutions are a partner in promoting and protecting human rights stipulated in the relevant international instruments being part of society, and, accordingly, must bear an independent responsibility that differs from that responsibility entrusted to governments, which the State is committed to with its various agencies.
4. As part of the strenuous efforts made by the NIHR to improve the quality of the services it provides and the tasks it undertakes. In line with the 2030 Vision of the Kingdom of Bahrain to attain overall quality and improve services. The General Secretariat was eligible to obtain, for the second time in a row, ISO certification in its updated version (ISO 9001: 2015) in Quality Management System (QMS) from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). A series of procedures were carried out that included a careful review conducted by "Bureau Veritas Holdings," UK branch, on all processes and procedures carried out by the NIHR's General Secretariat to ensure they are in line with the objectives and competencies of the NIHR, and to take action to improve the work environment and develop a unified methodology to ensure the application of the standards and requirements of the Quality Management System.
5. In the context of strengthening the NIHR's strategy and action plan to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights in the Kingdom

of Bahrain, as well as its belief in the implication of the Alternative Penalties and Measures Law, which is a pioneering experience in the region aimed at promoting human rights. The NIHR has begun the application of alternative penalties and measures for a number of convicts whose freedom-depriving penalties have been commuted by alternative penalties that vary between community service and enrollment in rehabilitation programs and damage repair instead of imprisonment, to complete the remaining period of the original sentences imposed.

Fourth: Monthly newsletters, and periodic news about the work of the Special Standing Committees.

1. The NIHR has continued to issue monthly newsletters that include a summary of all the news, meetings, events and activities of the NIHR during each month, which can be viewed through the following link:

<http://www.nihr.org.bh/eLibrary/?category=69>

2. Starting October 2021, the NIHR has published quarterly periodical news that include the most important decisions and recommendations issued by the three Standing Committees in the NIHR (the General Rights and Freedoms Committee, the Detention and Facilities Visitations Committee, and the Complaint, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee), which can be viewed on the following link:

<http://www.nihr.org.bh/About/Periodical%20news/>

Chapter Five

Advisory Opinions Submitted by the National Institution for Human Rights to the Constitutional Authorities

Preface and Partitioning:

1. Urging the ratification of or accession to regional and international human rights instruments, and ensuring their effective implementation, is a major function of national human rights institutions. The matter does not stop at that, but goes beyond to reveal the extent to which the State party complies with regional obligations and international standards arising from ratification or accession, together with proposing legislation, regulations or practices or amending existing ones in line with relevant regional or international standards.
2. Referring to the provisions of Law No. (26) of 2014 establishing the NIHR, we find that Paragraph (b) of Article No. (12) thereof stipulates that the NIHR shall, **“To study legislation and regulations enforced in the Kingdom which come under the human rights areas together with recommending amendments it deems fit in this respect particularly those consistent with such legislation and the Kingdom's international obligations in the human rights field. The Institution shall be empowered to recommend issuing new legislation related to human rights.”** These mandates are a reflection of the contents of the “Paris Principles” and the General Observations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation (SCA).
3. To activate these competencies, the NIHR has expressed its views on several issues referred to it by the Council of Representatives and the Shura Council. The total number of advisory opinions during the timeframe of this report is (19) views, of which (3) views were submitted to the Shura Council, while (16) views were submitted to the Council of Representatives.
4. Accordingly, in this chapter, the advisory opinions submitted by the NIHR to the constitutional authorities will be discussed in two main topics: the first is devoted to reviewing a summary of its views referred to the House of Representatives, while the second is devoted to a summary of its views referred to the Shura Council, on the topics that it considers have a direct impact on human rights and fundamental freedoms, bearing in mind the provisions of the Constitution and the relevant regional and international instruments and standards.

First Topic

Advisory Opinions Submitted by the National Institution for Human Rights to the House of Representatives

Preface:

During the time range this report, the NIHR presented to the House of Representatives sixteen (16) views, the most important of which can be summarized as follows:

Requirement One

Draft Law to Add a New Article No. (316-bis) to the Penal Code Promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding a draft law adding a new Article No. (316-bis) to the Penal Code, promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, which consists of, in addition to the Preamble, two articles, the first article included the addition of a new Article No. (316-bis) to the Penal Code, while the second Article is executive.
2. The new Article No. (316) of the draft law stipulates that, **“any person, male or female, who willingly has sexual intercourse (incest) with one of his/her mahram (unmarriageable relatives), knowing or has reason to believe that he/she is one of his/her mahrams (unmarriageable relatives), shall be punished with imprisonment for a period of no less than five years and not exceeding seven years.”**
3. The NIHR concluded by emphasizing the importance of prescribing punitive texts that criminalize the act of incest, being an act violating the moral constitution with which God created people. The focus of this criminalization is to protect the entity of the family, which is the foundation of society. The NIHR is in the opinion considers it necessary that the draft law includes an interpretation (a definition) of mahrams (unmarriageable relatives), as to whether they fall under the category of eternal mahrams or temporary mahrams. It also recommends that the text in the draft law deal with the practical problems in applying it to the category of those who are not subject to Law No. (19) of 2017 promulgating the Family Law, taking into account pluralism and religious, ideological and sectarian diversity and culture prevailing in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in a manner that does not lead to discrimination between legal statuses, in order to achieve the principle of equality.

Requirement Two
Draft Law Amending Some Provisions of the Penal Code Promulgated by
Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding a draft law amending some provisions of the Penal Code, promulgated by Legislative Decree No. (15) of 1976, which, in addition to the Preamble, consists of two articles. The first article included adding a third paragraph to Article No. (345), and a second paragraph to Article No. (347) of the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, while the second article is executive.
2. The third paragraph added to Article No. (345) as stated in the draft law, stipulates that, **“Subject to the provisions of Articles (32), (70) and (71) of the Penal Code, any female who consents to having sexual intercourse shall be punished with the same penalty.”** The second paragraph added to Article No. (347) of the same draft law under study, provides that **“Subject to the provisions of Articles No. (32), (70) and (71) of the Penal Code, whoever accepts the assault on his/her honor shall be punished with the same penalty.”**
3. The NIHR concluded that it is advisable to reconsider the provisions prescribed by the draft law under study, to take into account the age of criminal responsibility contained in the applicable law, focusing on the category of those who have completed their fifteen years of age but have not completed their eighteen years. This age category is still within the scope of childhood age, without ignoring the provisions of the relevant legislation in force, to achieve the best interests of this age group.

Requirement Three
Proposed Law to Amend Article No. (45) of Law No. (23) of 2014 on Traffic Law

1. The NIHR has expressed its advisory opinion regarding the proposed law to amend Article No. (45) of Law No. (23) of 2014 on the Traffic Law, which, in addition to the Preamble, consists of two articles. The first article includes canceling Clause No. (23) of Article No. (45) thereof, and adding a new and final paragraph to the same Article, while the second article is executive.
2. The last Paragraph of Article No. (45) as stated in the original proposed law stipulates that, **“Without prejudice to the measures prescribed in accordance with the provisions prescribed in this Law or any harsher penalty stipulated in any other law, anyone who commits any of the following acts:..... shall be punished by a fine of not less than twenty dinars and not more than one hundred dinars. If the violator occupies the parking spaces designated for people with disabilities, he/she shall be punished by a fine of no less than (400) dinars and not more than (500) dinars.”**
3. The NIHR has concluded that the provisions of the proposed text in question augments the prescribed fine in the event that the violator occupies the parking spaces designated for people with disabilities. The NIHR believes that it is not considered a harsher penalty that leaves an impact on the enjoyment of the basic rights and freedoms of individuals, nor does it not constitute a violation of human rights according to the relevant international human rights instruments. However, the NIHR has noted that the present wording of the text in the proposed law does not take into account the principle of progressive application of the penalty in the event the offender repeats committing the same violation in the future, as is the case in the text in force. In addition, the NIHR sees that the nature of the violation subject of the proposed law does not require stricter penalties that are, perhaps, inconsistent with the nature of the violation itself, while the in force penalty is enough to achieve the necessary deterrence.

Requirement Four

Draft Law on Mental Health accompanying Decree No. (80) of 2013

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding a draft law on mental health, accompanying Decree No. (80) of 2013, which, in addition to the preamble, consists of seven chapters contained in (66) articles. The first chapter includes definitions and a list of mental health facilities; the second chapter indicates the rights and duties of the patient and those working in the relevant medical professions. The third chapter contains the agencies competent to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the law, while the fourth chapter deals with admission of patients to mental health facilities. The fifth chapter addresses treatment of the patient, the sixth chapter prescribes the penalties for violating the provisions of the law, and the seventh chapter contained concluding provisions.

2. The NIHR concluded that it agrees with all the legal provisions included in the draft law on mental health, accompanying Decree No. (80) of 2013 in general, stressing the importance of the prompt enactment of this law - after meticulously examining it - as it represents a protective barrier for the rights and duties of the parties in the psychiatric sector. However, the NIHR advises the esteemed committee to reconsider Articles (14), (15), (23), (38), (39), (48), (51) of the draft law.

Requirement Five
Proposed Law to Amend Article No. (64-bis) of the Penal Code
Promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the proposed law to amend Article No. (64-bis) of the Penal Code, promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, which, in addition to the preamble, consists of two articles. The first article replaces the text of Article NO. (64-bis) of the Penal Code, while the second article is executive.
2. Article No. (64-bis) as stated in the proposed law stipulates that, **“if a foreigner, male or female, is convicted of one of the crimes stipulated in this law, the judge may order, in his ruling, to repatriate him/her permanently or for a specified period of not less than three years, after payment of all his/her debts”**.
3. The NIHR concluded that it agrees in principle with the objectives of the proposed law, as it preserves the right of creditors to get their money back from the foreign debtor in the event of a repatriation judgment is imposed. However, the NIHR is advises to reconsider and study the proposed text thoroughly, considering that the present text in the proposed law does not constitute a radical solution to the issue. In addition, it may lead to a restriction of the rights and freedoms of the convict guaranteed to him/her under the Constitution and the relevant international and regional instruments, especially Article No. (11) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded under Law No. (56) of 2006.

Requirement Six
**Proposed Law to Add Article No. (172-bis) of the Penal Code Promulgated
by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976**

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the proposed law to add Article No. (172-bis) of the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, which, in addition to the preamble, consists of two articles. The first article includes the addition of a new Article No. (172-bis) to the Penal Code Promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, while the second article is executive.
2. The added Article No. (172-bis) of the Penal Code stipulates that, **“a punishment of imprisonment and a fine or by one of these two penalties shall be imposed on whoever establishes, manages, or runs a website or publishes information on a computer network or information technology means to promote or favor any programs or ideas that may stir up sedition, hatred, racism or sectarianism, harm national unity or social peace, or disturb public order or public morals.”**
3. The NIHR concluded that the provisions stipulated in the proposed law do not constitute a violation or infringement of any of the established basic rights and freedoms, but rather an amendment in line with the provisions of Paragraphs (2) and (3) of Article No. (19) and Article No. (20) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Kingdom of Bahrain acceded under Law No. (56) of 2006.

Requirement Seven
**Proposed Law to Amend some Provisions of Law No. (15) of 2007 on
Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances**

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the proposed law to amend some provisions of Law No. (15) of 2007 regarding Narcotic drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which, in addition to the preamble, consists of three articles. The first article includes adding a phrase to the text of Article No. (1) of Law No. (15) of 2007 on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and the second article adds new paragraphs to each of Article No. (3) and Article No. (35) of the same law, while article three is executive.
2. The first article of the proposed law stipulates that, “the following phrase shall be added to Article No. (1) of Law No. (15) of 2007 on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Volatile substances: are every substance listed in the fourth group, annexed to this law.” The second article stipulates that, “A new paragraph shall be added to Article No. (3) and a new paragraph (c) to Article No. (35) of Law No. (15) of 2007 on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which read as follows: Article No. (3) a new paragraph: It is also prohibited to consume volatile substances listed in the fourth group annexed to this law. Article (35) paragraph (c): Whoever has consumed one of the substances listed in the fourth group annexed to this law.”
3. The NIHR concluded that it is in agreement with the goals and objectives that the proposed law under study aims to achieve, which target the protection of young people and children by criminalizing the use of volatile substances, which cause serious harm to their health and lives when consumed. Such substances are found in many common household products, such as adhesives, paint, cleaning supplies and other products. The NIHR finds it desirable that the present proposal regarding the penalties contained therein take into account the age of the perpetrator at the time of committing the offence. It also recommends that the prescribed penalty or the appropriate alternative measure is commensurate with the age of the perpetrator in light of the measures provided for in the Restorative Justice for Children and their Protection from Maltreatment Law.

Requirement Eight
Draft Law to Add a New Item No. (c) to Paragraph (1) of Article No. (18) of Aliens (Immigration and Residence) Law of 1965

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding a draft law adding a new clause, (c) to Paragraph (1) of Article No. (18) of the Aliens (Immigration and Residence) Law of 1965, which, in addition to the preamble, consists of two articles. The first article includes the addition of a new clause to Paragraph (1) of Article No. (18) of the Aliens (Immigration and Residence) Law of 1965, while the second article is executive.
2. The new clause (c) contained in Paragraph (1) of Article No. (18) as stated in the draft law stipulates that, “Unless this is with the permission of the ruler, it is not permissible to grant a residence permit to a foreigner or renew his/her residence permit except in the following cases: that he/she is a child of a Bahraini woman, in accordance with the controls and criteria to be determined by a decision of the Minister of Interior.”
3. The NIHR concluded that it is in agreement with the goals and objectives that the draft law aims to achieve, which is to preserve the entity and stability of the Bahraini family, and to realize the principle of equality between the children of Bahraini women from a foreign father and the children of a Bahraini citizen in obtaining benefits and services, especially, in the absence of a legislative text that addresses their obtaining a residence permit in the Kingdom being not affiliated with a job.

Requirement Nine

Draft Law Amending some Provisions of Decree-Law No. (47) of 2002 on Press, Printing and Publishing, accompanying Decree No. (77) of 2021

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding a draft law amending some provisions of Decree-Law No. (47) of 2002 regarding organizing Press, Printing and Publishing, accompanying Decree No. (77) of 2021, which, in addition to the preamble, consists of eight articles that, in total, include changing the title of the Law to become Decree-Law No. (47) of 2002 on Press and Electronic Media, replacing some of its provisions, and adding other provisions to the same Decree-Law, while Article No. (8) thereof is an executive article.
2. The NIHR concluded that it agrees with the principles and foundations of the draft law, which aims to abolish the penalty of imprisonment in all penal provisions contained in the draft law, and suffice with the penalty of a criminal fine, in addition to regulating electronic media. However, the NIHR cannot find any acceptable justification that makes a person deprived of his political rights (the right to be elected) deprived of exercising his right to freedom of opinion and expression through owning a website or contributing to its ownership. In addition, the NIHR calls for reviewing the terminology used to clarify the conditions that must be met by the owner of a website or who contribute in its ownership, as there is a difference between the deprived and the one who is prohibited from exercising his political rights. The NIHR also advises to reformulate the conditions that must be met by the manager responsible for the media website, whether a Bahraini or a foreigner, and to review the period that grants the right of administrative cancellation in the event that the content of the website is not updated, as it may be unsuitable and unreasonable.

Requirement Ten
Draft Law Amending Article No. (231) of the Penal Code Promulgated by
Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding a draft law amending Article No. (231) of the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, this, in addition to the preamble, consists of two articles. The first article includes replacing the text of Article No. (231) of the Penal Code, while the second article is executive.
2. Article No. (231), as stated in the draft law, stipulates that, “A penalty of imprisonment for a period of no less than one year and a fine of no less than two hundred dinars and not more than two thousand dinars, or either of these two penalties, shall be imposed on whoever, while practicing a medical or health profession, examines a dead person or rescues a severely injured person, where marks are found on his body indicating that death or injury is a felony or a misdemeanor, or if other circumstances exist that call for suspicion of its cause, and he did not report such to the public authority.”
3. The NIHR concluded that it is in agreement with the goals and objectives that the draft law under study aims to achieve, which are to impose heavier penalties for health and medical workers, including doctors, consultants and nurses, who do not report crimes discovered by them by virtue of their work, which enables them to examine and diagnose the condition of the deceased or injured. Thus, real obligation to report crimes will be achieved, as the current penalty is not commensurate with the nature of the crime and the result of not reporting crimes, which affects the process of justice and retribution against the offender responsible for the felony or misdemeanor. However, the NIHR finds it advisable to reconsider the penalty contained in the draft law, to be more proportionate and appropriate with the criminalized act, without exaggeration or unjustified aggravation. Hence, the penalty shall be (imprisonment or a fine) with no minimum limit, which gives the adjudicating court a broader discretion in deciding the appropriate penalty in accordance with the facts of the criminal case.

Requirement Eleven
Decree-Law No. (24) of 2021 Amending Article No. (13) of Law No. (18) of 2017 on Alternative Penalties and Measures

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding Decree-Law No. (24) of 2021 amending Article No. (13) of Law No. (18) of 2017 regarding Alternative Penalties and Measures, which, in addition to the preamble, consists of two articles. The first article includes replacing the text of Article No. (13) of Law No. (18) of 2017 on Alternative Penalties and Measures, while the second article is executive.
2. Article No. (13) as stated in the Decree-Law, stipulates, “The relevant authority at the Ministry of Interior may request the executive judge to substitute the original penalty by one or more of the alternative penalties set forth in Article No. (2) of this Law, provided that it would not pose a threat to public security, and that the convicted person must have paid all the financial liabilities handed down against him by a criminal court, unless it is impossible for him to pay. The relevant authority at the Ministry of Interior, may also, after coordinating with the reformation and rehabilitation institution, request the executive judge to substitute the original penalty by one or more of the alternative penalties set forth in Article No. (2) of this Law, for a period equivalent to the remaining period of the penalty or the total number of penalties, should the convicted satisfy the following conditions: (1) They must be of good conduct; (2) Their release would not constitute a public security risk; (3) They must have paid all the financial liabilities handed down against them by a criminal court, unless it is impossible for them to pay. The execution judge shall decide upon such request after hearing the statements of the Public Prosecution. The provisions of Part Five of Book Five of the Criminal Procedure Code promulgated by Decree-Law 46/2002 shall apply to the enforcement of the alternative sanctions.”
3. The NIHR concluded that it considers that the breadth pursued by Article No. (13) as stated in the Decree-Law is fully consistent with the prevailing approach in the United Nations regarding modern legislative policy based on limiting the penalties involving deprivation of liberty and resorting to non-custodial alternative sentences capable of integrating the convict into society towards reformation and making him useful. Undoubtedly, these alternatives feed directly into promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms to achieve full justice. They are in line with international resolution pertaining to human rights, especially the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-

custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules), the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), and the Basic Principles on the Use of Restorative Justice Programs in Criminal Matters.

Requirement Twelve
Draft Law Amending some Provisions of the Penal Code Promulgated by
Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the draft law to amend some provisions of the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, which in addition to the preamble consists of three articles. The first article includes the amendment of the title of Chapter Three of Part VII of the Special Section of the Penal Code issued by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976 to be “Debauchery, Prostitution and Perversion.” The second article adds two new articles No. (329-bis) and (329-bis-1), while the third article is executive.
2. Article No. (329-bis), as stated in the draft law, stipulates that, “A penalty of imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years and a fine of not less than three thousand dinars and not more than five thousand dinars, or either of these two penalties, shall be imposed on the following: (1) Whoever raises a flag or emblem or insignia or any reference symbolizing homosexuals; (2) Whoever promotes, by any means, the ideas and beliefs of homosexuals; (3) Whoever invites, organizes or attends any gathering or meeting of homosexuals.” Article No. (329-bis-1) of the same draft law states that, “without prejudice to the liability of a natural person pursuant to the provisions of this Law, a legal person shall be punished with a fine of no less than ten thousand dinars and not more than fifty thousand dinars, if he commits one of the acts mentioned in Article No. (329-bis), and it was the result of the agreement or knowledge of the members of the board of directors, the proprietor, or owner of the establishment. In the case of a conviction, the court shall order denying the legal person access to participate in public projects, or the closure of the premises in which the offense occurred, or its dissolution and the closure of all its premises, temporarily or permanently. The court shall, in all cases, order the confiscation of the assets, belongings, equipment and papers that may have been used or prepared for use in committing the offense or obtained from committing the offense, without prejudice to the rights of bona fide third parties.”
3. The NIHR concluded that it agrees technically with the legal and realistic principles, foundations, and goals that the draft law aims to achieve by creating legislation that criminalizes acts and behaviors that explicitly contradict public order or Islamic Sharia, being acts that contradict human nature and common sense, and negatively affect the public and the family structure based on shared roles that are integrated by the presence of both

the father and the mother and their relationship with each other, and thus represent a threat to the continuity and stability of the human entity. For the purpose of optimal application of the provisions contained in the proposed law, the NIHR considers it important to provide a definition of the category (homosexuals “gays”) or their characteristics or their particularities, and specify their logo or flag, as the application of these provisions is not possible without specifying the criminalizing acts, in an exhaustive list and not in an illustrative or general one. Otherwise, the text would then be arbitrary and undisciplined in terms of determining the material component of the punishable criminal behavior. In addition, some of the criminal acts in the proposal were not accompanied by criminal intent so that the behavior would be punishable, i.e. the elements of the intentional crime are not complete and this contradicts the general principles in drafting criminal legislation.

Requirement Thirteen
Proposal with Desire that the Esteemed Government Seek the
Establishment of a Gulf Commission for Human Rights Based in the
Kingdom of Bahrain

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the proposal with desire that the esteemed government seek the establishment of a Gulf Commission for Human Rights based in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
2. The NIHR concluded that even though the essence of the proposal is out of its jurisdiction as stipulated in its establishing law, however, it supports the goals and justifications that the proposal aims at namely, the promotion and protection of human rights among the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, coordinating handling issues, and following up on human rights issues between member states and local, regional and international human rights institutions.

Requirement Fourteen
Proposal with Desire that the Government Undertakes Intelligence Governance and Places Human Rights at the Centre of Regulatory Frameworks related to the Development and Use of Digital Technologies

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion on the proposal that the government undertakes intelligence governance and places human rights at the heart of regulatory frameworks related to the development and use of digital technologies.
2. The NIHR concluded that it agrees with the objectives and justifications that the proposal with desire aims at, which is the governance of artificial intelligence for the observance of digital human rights, through the development of an organizational and administrative structure, regulatory and institutional rules, and ethics for its use in a manner that maximizes the benefits of the features it provides, and at the same time prevents violations of digital human rights. The NIHR believes that the issuance of Law No. (30) of 2018 on Personal Data Protection, in which Article No. (3) thereof entrusts the Board of Directors of the Personal Data Protection Authority to issue the necessary decisions to implement the provisions of this law, is a key aspect towards implementing the essence of the proposal with desire, in practice.

Requirement Fifteen

Proposal with Desire Regarding the inclusion in the program of preparing human rights cadres and leaders of the outputs of the Muhammad bin Mubarak Academy to include the theoretical and practical aspects

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the proposal with desire to include theoretical and practical parts in the program for preparing human rights personnel and leaders graduating from Mohammed bin Mubarak Academy.
2. The NIHR concluded that it agrees with the objectives and justifications of the proposal with desire, namely the importance of preparing human rights leaders and cadres, spreading a culture of human rights, and enhancing knowledge of human rights mechanisms at the national and international levels, through the adoption of comprehensive human rights training topics. The NIHR commends in this regards, its prior cooperation with the Mohammed bin Mubarak Academy for Diplomatic Studies, and its contribution to some of the programs that the Academy is implementing.

Requirement Sixteen
Draft Law to Add a New Article No. (318-bis) to the Penal Code
Promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding a draft law adding a new article No. (318-bis) to the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, this, in addition to the preamble, consists of two articles. The first article includes adding a new article No. (318-bis) to the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, while the second article is executive.
2. The new added Article No. (318-bis), as stated in the draft law stipulates that, “Whoever refuses, without excuse, to allow the person entitled to visit the child in custody from visitation, shall be punished by imprisonment or a fine.”
3. The NIHR concluded that it agrees with the goals and objectives of the draft law, which is to punish anyone who refuses without excuse to enable the person entitled to visit the child in custody to visit him. In its opinion, the addition of the new article, as contained in the draft law, does not affect or undermine human rights and basic freedoms, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and regional and international instruments and agreements related to human rights, but rather it is an addition that achieves the desired balance between the right to custody and the right to visitation, without violating either of them, to achieve the best interest of the child in custody.

Second Topic

Advisory Opinions Submitted by the National Institution for Human Rights to the Shura Council

The NIHR submitted to the Shura Council during the timeframe of this report, a total of three (3) views, the most important of which can be summarized as follows:

Requirement One

Draft Law to Add a New Article No. (261-bis) to the Penal Code Promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the draft law adding a new Article No. (261-bis) to the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, which consists of, in addition to the preamble, two articles, the first includes the addition of a new Article No. (261-bis) to the Penal Code promulgated by Decree-Law No. (15) of 1976, while the second article is executive.
2. The text of the new Article No. (261-bis) as stated in the draft law, reads as follows, **“if there are multiple participants in one of the crimes stipulated in this Chapter, and one of the offenders took the initiative to report it to the judicial and administrative authorities before using the counterfeit or forged seals, signatures, fee stamps, stamps, public signs, metal plates and postage stamps, and before the start of the preliminary investigation, is shall be considered a legally mitigating excuse. He may be exempted from punishment if the judge deems it appropriate. The provision of the previous paragraph shall apply to the offender who enables the authorities during the investigation to arrest the other perpetrators of the crime”**.
3. The NIHR concluded that it agrees with the commendable approach taken by the draft law by encouraging perpetrators of some crimes to report them to the public authorities, and to consider this notification as a mitigating excuse or exemption from punishment. In addition, the NIHR believes that the addition of the new article as contained in the draft law does not affect or undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and regional and international instruments and agreements related to human rights.

Requirement Two

Draft Law to Add a New Clause to Article No. (2) of Law No. (58) of 2006 on Protection of Community against Terrorists Acts

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the draft law adding a new clause to Article No. (2) of Law No. (58) of 2006 regarding the Protection of Community against Terrorists Acts, which consists of, in addition to the preamble of two articles. The first article provides for the addition of a new clause No. (11) to Article No. (2) of the Law, which aims to reduce the phenomenon of concealment of fugitives in terrorist crimes, whether they are accused or convicted, for deterring them from committing other terrorist crimes or impunity, which contributes to maintaining and stabilizing security in the Kingdom. The second article is executive.
2. The NIHR concluded that it agrees with the House of Representative's decision to add a new Article No. (16-bis) to the draft law, after amending the name of the draft law. It especially commends the humanitarian approach of not establishing crime and punishment of the spouse of the person who have harbored the accused or the convicted neither him nor a parent, descendants, brothers or sisters and those of the same rank of relatives by virtue of intermarriage. It is an approach that is consistent with the basic principles of human rights, and takes into account the surrounding family and societal dimensions.

Requirement Three

Proposed Law to Amend some Provisions of Law No. (19) of 2006 on Regulating the Labor Market

1. The NIHR expressed its advisory opinion regarding the proposed law to amend some provisions of Law No. (19) of 2006 on Regulating the Labor Market, this, in addition to the preamble, consists of three articles. The first article includes replacing the texts of Article No. (2), paragraph (a), and Article No. (4) Introduction Paragraph (a), Clause (5) Paragraph (e), Clause (10), Article No. (35), and Article No. (42) Paragraph (a) of Law No. (19) of 2006 on Regulating the Labor Market. The second article repeals Chapter Three of Part II of the same law, and cancels the definition of a foreign employer from Article No. (1) and Article (4), Paragraph (d) clauses (5) and (8) of the same law. Article three is executive.

2. The NIHR concluded that, given the controversy surrounding the (flexible work permit) system, in terms of its benefits to the Bahraini labor market, and its negative effects on national employment and the national economy, it is therefore important to reach a consensus of these views among stakeholders, whether the government or the legislative authority (the House of Representatives and the Shura Council), the Bahrain Chamber of Industry and Commerce, or civil society institutions and trade unions. The NIHR calls for bringing forward a consensual formula from a legislative and administrative point of view, in a way that provides legal protection for national labor and for the Bahraini employer, and ensures the protection of the labor market alike. This, in all cases, is aimed at protecting the national economy and ensuring that everyone enjoys their rights and freedoms in this regard.

“[The Human Rights Council] Emphasizes the urgent need to ensure the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and to facilitate the development of robust health systems and universal health coverage, encompassing universal, timely and equitable access to all essential health technologies, diagnostics, therapeutics, medicines and vaccines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other health emergencies, in order to ensure full access to immunization for all, in particular persons and groups in vulnerable situations, as a matter of global priority for all States.”

[United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution No. \(46/14\) at its forty-sixth session, held from February 22 to March 24, 2021](#)