

Final Evaluation

Establishing a Capacity Development Facility at BIPA in the Kingdom of Bahrain

2018

Executive Summary

In 2010, the Bahrain Institute for Public Administration (BIPA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office signed an agreement on establishing a Capacity Development Facility (CDF) at BIPA. The CDF was aimed at enhancing the capability of BIPA in serving the public sector and promote BIPA as the reference point for Quality Assurance in training, consulting and research for governmental institutions in Bahrain. The project was designed to provide critical and immediate capacity development interventions in policy, management, leadership and institutional reform, in support of sustainable national capacity development within the public sector. The project document was signed on 11 May 2011 and the Project Manager assumed his duties in February 2012, which then effectively marks the start of the implementation of the project.

Through the project, UNDP helped BIPA strengthen its capacity and enhance its research and consulting services in support of Bahrain's public institutions. Initially, the project supported the conduct of a detailed capacity assessment which amongst other things outlined a strategy for BIPA in its capacity development efforts towards the public sector. Subsequently, the project helped BIPA develop training programmes for internal consulting capacity in the public sector, conduct market surveys, stakeholder analyses, develop a Strategic and Business Plan, build an experts' database, prepare reference manuals for consulting products, develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework and Marketing Strategy, etc. With the support of this project, BIPA organized international conferences and executed major research projects in Arab countries by enrolling institutional members from across the region. It also ran workshops on academic research in public administration, on developing a research agenda for public administration, and held a showcase event on best practices in Arab public administration.

The project also helped BIPA establish the Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR), a network for research collaboration in public administration in the Middle East. The MENAPAR network was launched from the Kingdom of Bahrain on April 23, 2014, by acclamation of the participants in the organizational meeting. Collaboration agreements between regional public administrations were signed and are being implemented under the umbrella of the MENAPAR. Currently, MENAPAR is actively exploring, researching and supporting the implementation of innovative approaches to public administration management through evidence-policy studies, experimentation with emerging techniques and tools for citizen engagement in policy-making, and capacity development initiatives.

As far as the design of the project is concerned, the evaluation concluded that project outcomes to be pursued through the project have been described with clarity in the project document. They have been stated explicitly and the associated indicators are expressed in specific terms. The project's Results and Resources Framework is designed optimally and provides clear guidance to project partners. The measures included in the framework capture key dimensions of implementation that were tracked during the monitoring process. The Project Document has lacked

a Theory of Change that identifies the way in which the various activities and outputs are inter-linked and the channels through which the proposed interventions will produce their effects. A sound Theory of Change and clearly defined outcomes would have provided better guidance to the project team and BIPA, allowing them to keep sight of the ultimate goals of their work and not seeing the specific activities as the end-result of the process. The project's approach (strategy) has been informed by, and fully integrated with, the capacity assessment methodology and the definition of sectoral capacity development strategies. This formulation of risks has been adequate, conveying a real sense of the degree of risks associated with the project and prescribing specific measures to eliminate or mitigate certain risk factors. It has allowed the project team to identify not only the deep causes of the problem, but also the end-result (i.e. "work plan not achieved"). Also, the assumptions leading up to the risks and the management/project team's response have been identified explicitly. Also, the management arrangements and the monitoring framework were found to have been adequate.

With regards to relevance, the evaluation found the project to be highly relevant to the national processes of strengthening public administration and government services. The project is firmly grounded in Bahrain's *Economic Vision 2030*, which induces a growing demand for consulting and research services in Bahrain, and BIPA's *Strategic Plan 2011-2016*. The feedback received from interviewed stakeholders was that the project was fulfilling an important role in strengthening BIPA's ability to provide consulting services. This project has also been in line with all relevant UNDP's country programmes, which have been geared towards responding to Bahrain's key development challenges and reflecting priorities of the Government's vision for the country future development under the national reform agenda.

As for the effectiveness of the intervention, stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the contribution of the UNDP project. When asked which aspects of the collaboration with UNDP they found most useful, they singled out the following: (i) the low cost of UNDP assistance compared to private sector consulting companies; (ii) the quality of consultants the UNDP project had mobilized; (iii) the transparent recruitment process through the consultants database operated by UNDP; and, (iv) excellent relationship with the country office staff.

This evaluation report highlights a number of ways in which UNDP helped BIPA strengthen its capacity and enhance its research and consulting services in support of Bahrain's public institutions. The project initially supported the conduct of a scoping of needs which was followed by a detailed capacity assessment that amongst other things outlined a strategy for BIPA in its capacity development efforts towards the public sector. Subsequently, the project helped BIPA develop training programmes for internal consulting capacity in the public sector, conduct market surveys, stakeholder analyses, develop a Strategic and Business Plan, build an experts' database, prepare reference manuals for consulting products, develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework and Marketing Strategy, etc. With the support of this project, BIPA organized international conferences and executed major research projects in Arab countries by enrolling institutional members from across the region. It also ran workshops on academic research in public

administration, on developing a research agenda for public administration, and held a showcase event on best practices in Arab public administration. The project provided a clear direction to BIPA consulting and research activities, as well as helped improve the enabling environment and capacities that supported their successful completion. It supported the development of a robust, forward looking, and achievable *Strategic and Business Plan* for the Consulting and Research Unit (C&R Unit). Furthermore, the project helped BIPA establish the Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR), a network for research collaboration in public administration in the Middle East. Being one of the most practical and visible successes of the project, the MENAPAR network was launched under the BIPA umbrella in April 2014 by acclamation of the participants in the organizational meeting. In addition to capacity building in training, consulting and research, the project has provided valuable contributions in South-South cooperation through MENAPAR. BIPA is attempting to export the best practices of Bahrain through a number of collaborations with similar institutions in the region.

On the dimension of efficiency, the evaluation found that this project has been an example of the successful coordination role of UNDP with the national counterpart (BIPA). BIPA was explicit in appreciating the fact that project experts had provided BIPA with valuable international contacts and expertise, thereby saving BIPA resources that would otherwise have been spent on expensive consulting companies. The project experts have also been highly effective in guiding improvements for BIPA in other areas, knowing in detail what the capacity needs of BIPA were.

As for the project's sustainability, a good aspect identified in this report is the fact that CDF became an integral part of the workings of the government, instead of existing as an external body going in and out without much substance staying within the government. Another good indication of sustainability is the attention that has been paid by both UNDP and BIPA to the institutionalization of the MENAPAR network. This has been so important that a joint project between BIPA and UNDP was launched in September 2017, aimed exclusively at the institutionalization of MENPAR.

Overall, it should be noted that using the firm foundations that have been laid through the CDF project, BIPA will now be able to concentrate in further strengthening its capacity to convene different parties around common agendas. The combined involvement of government agencies, universities, research agencies and private sector companies provides for a package and approach that is highly likely to attract regional and possibly global interest. Bahraini partners in the efforts are likely to be invited to countries in the region and possible beyond with their expertise and sharing their experiences.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AWP	Annual Work Plan
BIPA	Bahrain Institute for Public Administration
C&R	Consulting and Research
CO	(UNDP) Country Office
CPAP	UNDP Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	UNDP Country Programme Document
CSOM	Consulting Services Operational Manual
GoB	Government of Bahrain
HR	Human Resource
IASIA	International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration
IIAS	International Institute of Administrative Sciences
IT	Information Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENAPAR	Middle East and North Africa Research Network
NCC	Net Contributing Country
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
PB	Project Board
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMU	Project Management Unit
RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nation Development Assistance Framework

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Country Context

Bahrain has a large public sector, with Bahraini nationals accounting for 85% of the public sector work force at the end of 2017¹. Rapid population growth, a high proportion of youth and dependence on foreign labour increase the pressure for job creation, training and education. Bahrain has taken on the challenge of expanding job opportunities for its growing young population, in order to ensure higher productivity at the national level. Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 aims to meet these challenges by transforming the Bahraini economy, and in particular by developing the quality and number of jobs for Bahrainis and improving skills for job seekers. Vision 2030 highlights the important challenges facing the Government, including the need to provide better policy making, better strategic planning and better services to the public.

The Bahrain Institute of Public Administration (BIPA) was established by Royal Decree 65 in 2006 with the aim of supporting the economic and social development plans of the Kingdom by upgrading the country's public administration through research, advisory work and training in ministries and governmental organizations. BIPA pursues the fulfillment of its goals through its three pillar roles: a training services provider, a center for research, and a consulting partner. Over the years, BIPA has become a vital government tool in training, developing, and preparing public sector employees to satisfactorily perform their job roles, responsibilities, and other professional demands. BIPA is already the privileged partner of the Civil Service Bureau, the Economic Development Board, and all government entities for their training and training related consulting needs. Furthermore, BIPA has increasingly invested the 'governance agenda' through leadership training, consulting and research, a "think tank" approach to strategic issues in the Public Sector, and providing assessment services to Government and Public Directorates.

Although still a quite young organization, BIPA has gradually expanded to its present size of some 50 staff members. It has expediently taken on its core assignment to provide training to the civil service and has up to date provided training in a variety of fields for public service staff members. It has established a Consultancy and Research Unit and has begun providing consulting and research services to a number of public sector entities. The main focus of BIPA consultancies is governance – i.e. strategic, operational, and Human Resource (HR) development of public sector organizations and higher education institutions. Some of BIPA's most prominent clients feature the National Oil & Gas Authority, the Ministry of Finance, the Applied Science University, the Bahrain Olympic Committee, the Ministry of Civil Service in Oman, the Ministry of Housing and Shura Council.

¹ Bahrain Labour Market Indicators (http://blmi.lmra.bh/2017/12/mi_dashboard.xml).

BIPA's ambitions go significantly further than establishing itself as a training provider. aiming "increasingly to invest in the 'governance agenda' through leadership training, consulting and research, a 'think tank' approach to strategic issues in the Public Sector, and providing assessment services to Government and Public Directorates". Box 1 presents BIPA's vision, mission and strategic goals.

Box 1: BIPA's Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals

- **Mission:** Acting as change Agent for sustained Transformation through training, learning and development in the public sector
- **Vision:** Partner of choice Developing First Class Civil Servants
- **Strategic Goals:**
 1. Develop human capacity through the delivery/brokerage of value added and quality assured training to all strata of Bahrain's public sector;
 2. Develop knowledge assets in the Public Sector through a systematic measurement process of competencies, inventory of knowledge assets, learning, and ROI.
 3. Develop organizational capacity in Bahrain's public sector through capacity assessment and capacity development initiatives and a consulting strategy oriented towards HR and organizational development.
 4. Promote a governance agenda for Bahrain Public Sector in the pursuit of strategic initiatives in line with Vision 2030 and relevant sections of the program of the government;
 5. Develop an evidence-based research agenda within BIPA to facilitate knowledge absorption and sharing of best practices throughout the public sector;

One of BIPA's most important achievements to date is MENAPAR, a research network launched during the 2013 conference in Bahrain of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) and the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA). MENAPAR was subsequently further developed under the leadership of BIPA, with the support of UNDP through the CDF project (whose evaluation results are presented in this report).

Box 2: MENAPAR Mission and Goals

Mission: "MENAPAR will promote evidence-based policy and decision-making in public administration through:

- Developing thinking and a research culture about strategic issues in Public Administration
- Building research capacities within public administration
- Building a network and harnessing the collective efforts of its members".

MENAPAR Goals:

- Provide a forum for research, analysis and academic-practitioner exchange on urgent topics of managing PA reforms and transitions.

- Serve as an incubator testing ground for the development of a permanent regional “think tank” group for PA.
- The MENAPAR strategic objectives are:
- Promote Bahrain as an ‘intellectual hub’ for public administration research in the MENA;
- Harness the collective efforts of organizations in the region to promote evidence-based policy-making;
- Promote a research culture and research capacities in the region’s public sectors;
- Develop research about public administration, public policies, and good governance in the region;
- Participate in and coordinate debates about public policies and governance in the region;
- Serve as a regional forum for the exchange of ideas between the various actors in the field of PA and public policy;
- Form a network of PA-related institutions, both governmental and non-governmental,
- Create an intellectual link in the region by feeding IIAS/IASIA, regional organizations and network members with local research and policy impact assessment;
- Organize colloquia, forums, seminars, conferences and other types of meetings about PA issues in the region, with broad participation and co-sponsorship by other organizations, both regional and external to the MENA;
- Suggest strategies to develop capacities and expertise in the areas of public policies and governance.

1.1. Project Description

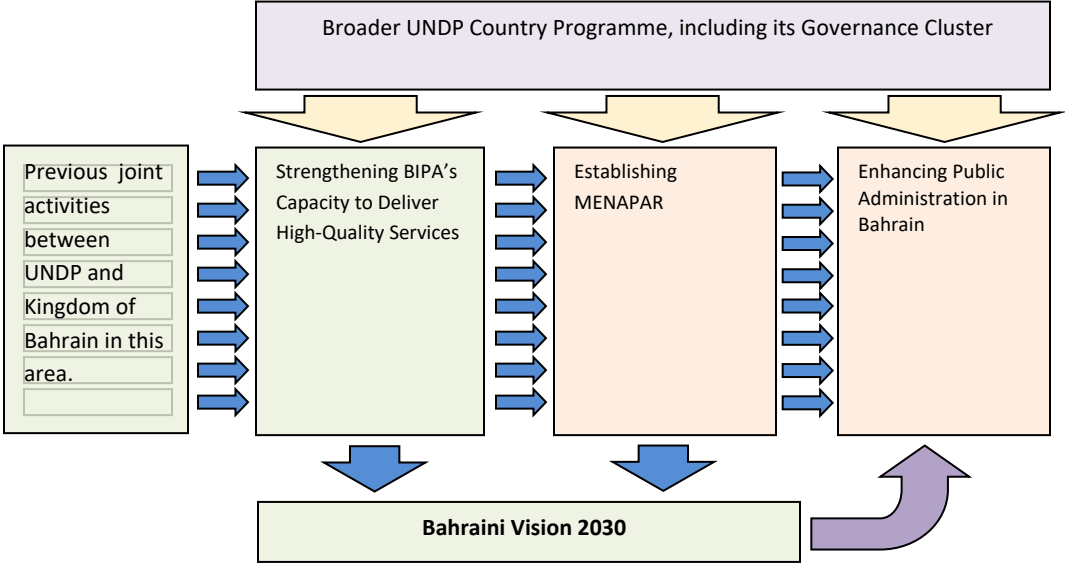
In 2010, the Bahrain Institute for Public Administration (BIPA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office signed an agreement on establishing a Capacity Development Facility (CDF) at BIPA. The CDF was aimed at enhancing the capability of BIPA in serving the public sector and promote BIPA as the reference point for Quality Assurance in training, consulting and research for governmental institutions in Bahrain. The project was designed to provide critical and immediate capacity development interventions in policy, management, leadership and institutional reform, in support of sustainable national capacity development within the public sector.

The project document was signed on 11 May 2011 and the Project Manager assumed his duties in February 2012, which then effectively marks the start of the implementation of the project. Through the project, UNDP helped BIPA strengthen its capacity and enhance its research and consulting services in support of Bahrain’s public institutions. Initially, the project supported the conduct of a detailed capacity assessment which amongst other things outlined a strategy for BIPA in its capacity development efforts towards the public sector. Subsequently, the project helped BIPA develop training programmes for internal consulting capacity in the public sector, conduct market surveys, stakeholder analyses, develop a Strategic and Business Plan, build an experts’ database, prepare reference manuals for consulting products, develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework and Marketing Strategy, etc. With the support of this project,

BIPA organized international conferences and executed major research projects in Arab countries by enrolling institutional members from across the region. It also ran workshops on academic research in public administration, on developing a research agenda for public administration, and held a showcase event on best practices in Arab public administration.

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Figure 1: Project Intervention Logic



2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This report presents the main findings of the terminal evaluation of the Project. The evaluation was commissioned by UNDP Bahrain and was carried out during the period May-July 2018 by an independent expert. This chapter provides an overview of the objectives of the evaluation and the methodology employed for the collection of information and the analysis of data. Readers who are not interested in the methodology can skip this chapter and go straight to Chapter 3 on the evaluation's main findings.

2.1. Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation's goal was to assess the project's overall progress towards expected results, identify how activities were designed and implemented up to this point and derive lessons and recommendations for the remainder of the implementation period and the continuation of activities in this area. More specifically, the evaluation was conceived and conducted with the following specific objectives in mind:

- To assess overall project performance against project objectives and outcomes as set out in the Project Document, the Logical Framework, and other related documents;
- To assess the extent to which results have been achieved, partnerships established, capacities built, and cross cutting issues such as gender equality addressed;
- To establish whether the project implementation strategy has been optimal and recommend areas for improvement and learning;
- To identify gaps and weaknesses in the project design and provide recommendations as to how it may be improved in the future;
- To assess project strategies and tactics for achieving objectives within established timeframes;
- To critically analyze the project's implementation and management arrangements;
- To provide an appraisal of the project's relevance and efficiency of implementation;
- To review and assess the strength and sustainability of partnerships with government bodies, civil society, private sector and international organizations;
- To draw lessons that may help improve the selection, design and implementation of similar project activities in the future;

The results of this terminal evaluation will be used primarily to:

- Support the decision making of the project team, Government and UNDP CO management on: i) implementation modalities, and ii) strategic planning of activities in this area in the coming years.
- Provide UNDP with lessons from this particular project on overall project implementation and delivery, including potential corrective/adaptive measures that need to be applied to the design/implementation of other country programme interventions to enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability prospects.

2.2. Evaluation’s Scope and Methodology

The Terms of Reference (ToR) that guided the evaluation process are attached in Annex I of this report. Key issues on which the evaluation focused were:

- Project design and its effectiveness in achieving stated objectives.
- Assessment of key financial aspects, including planned and realized budgets, financing, etc.
- The project’s effectiveness in building the capacity of local institutions and strengthening policy framework to encourage sustainable development.
- Strengths and weaknesses of project implementation, monitoring and adaptive management and sustainability of project outcomes including the project’s exit strategy.
- Recommendations, lessons learned, best practices that may be used further in the project or in future interventions.

The evaluation used OECD DAC criteria and definitions and followed the norms and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group. It was guided by UNDP’s evaluation toolkit, and in particular the “*Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results*”².

The methodology was based on mixed methods and involved commonly applied evaluation tools such as documentary review, interviews, information triangulation, analysis and synthesis. A participatory approach was taken for the collection of data, formulation of recommendations and identification of lessons learned.

Evaluation activities were organized according to the following stages: i) planning; ii) data collection; and, iii) data analysis and reporting. Figure 2 below shows the three stages and the main activities under each of them.

Figure 2: Evaluation Stages



Table 1 (below) further details the main activities that were undertaken by the evaluator under each stage.

² <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf>

Evaluation Planning

The planning and preparation phase included the development of the ToR by the CO and the design of the evaluation framework by the evaluator, which is presented in this inception report. The evaluator developed a detailed programmatic scope of evaluation activities, visits, as well as sample interview guides for interviews with stakeholders.

Table 1: Evaluation Steps

I. Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of the ToR (by the CO)• Start-up teleconference and finalization of work plan• Collection and revision of project documents• Elaborated and submitted evaluation work plan• Mission preparation: agenda and logistics
II. Data Collection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviewed key stakeholders• Further collected project related documents• Mission debriefings• Mission report summary
III. Data analysis and reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-depth analysis and interpretation of data collected• Follow-up interviews• Developed draft evaluation report• Circulated draft report with UNDP and stakeholders• Integrated comments and submitted final report

Data Collection

The data collection process involved a comprehensive desk review of project documents and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and partners (see Table 2 for a list of data sources).

- **Desk Review** - The evaluator started by analyzing relevant documents, project documents and progress reports, as well as national policies and strategies. Documents from similar and complementary initiatives, as well as reports on the specific context of the project formed part of the analysis.
- **Semi-structured Interviews** – A country mission took place in the week of May 3, 2018. Interviewees included, among others, project staff, UNDP CO staff and BIPA officials. Open-ended questions were used to enable interviewees to express their views freely and raise the issues they considered most important. A questionnaire was designed to guide the semi-structured interviews and ensure that questions would be investigated consistently across all interviews (the questionnaire can be found in Annex III). The list of people interviewed can be found in Annex IV.

Table 2: Data Sources

Evaluation tools	Sources of information	
Documentation review (desk study)	General documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures • UNDP Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results
	Project documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual work plans • Project Implementation Reviews • Project Board Minutes • Updated risk logs • A large number of reports produced by the project.
	Governments documents/papers	Including relevant policies, laws, strategies, etc.
	Third party reports	Including those of independent local research centres, etc.
Interviews with project staff and key project stakeholders	These included:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with key project personnel including the Project Manager and technical experts. • Interviews with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies.

Data Analysis

Information obtained through the documentary review and interviews was triangulated against available documented sources and was synthesized using analytical judgement. The method of triangulation is depicted in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Method of Triangulation

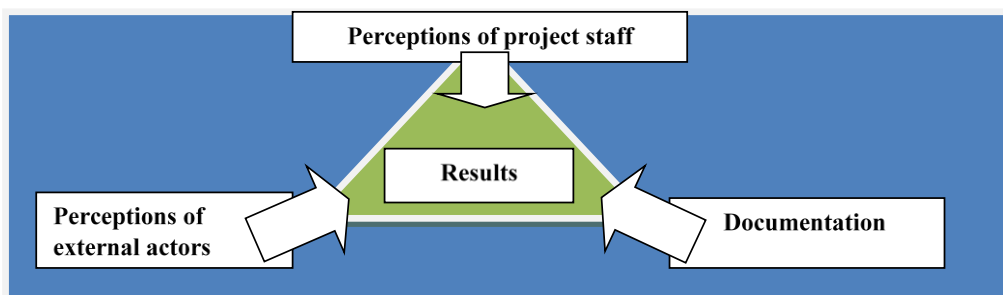
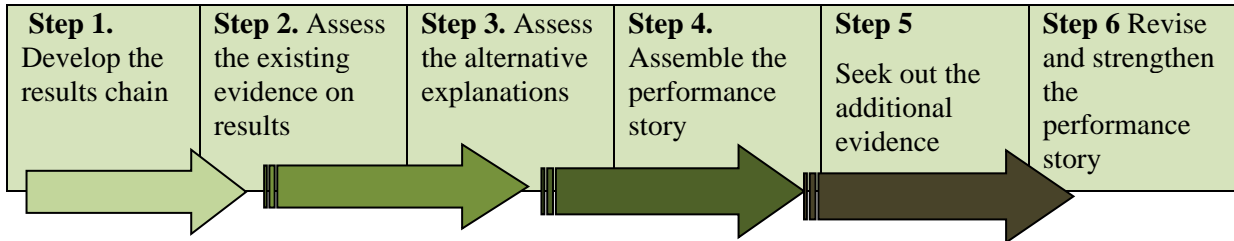


Figure 4 shows the steps that were taken for the analysis which was conducted on the basis of the standard criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability (see Annex II for a more detailed list of questions that were used for the analysis of information).

- **Relevance**, covering the assessment of the extent to which outcomes were suited to national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time;
- **Effectiveness**, covering the assessment of the achievement of the immediate objectives (outputs) and the contribution to attaining the outcomes and the overall objective of the project; and an examination of the any significant unexpected effects of the project;

- **Efficiency**, covering the assessment of the quality of project implementation; adequacy of financial management; efficient implementation;
- **Sustainability**, covering likely ability of the intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion.

Figure 4: Steps in Analysis Process



The analysis also covered aspects of project formulation, including the extent of stakeholder participation during project formulation; design for sustainability; linkages between project and other interventions; adequacy of management arrangements, etc.

2.3. Evaluation Limitations

No limitations were encountered in the conduct of this evaluation. All relevant stakeholders were interviewed and their opinions are reflected in this report. The UNDP CO provided great support in organizing all the necessary meetings and helping with the logistics of the mission.

2.4. Structure of the Report

The report begins with an introductory section that provides a description of the project and the country context (previous chapter). The second (current) chapter provides an overview of the evaluation objectives and methodology. The third chapter presents the main findings of the report and consists of three parts: the first part assesses key aspects of project design and formulation; the second part focuses on implementation issues; and, the third part presents an assessment of the results achieved by the project along the standard dimensions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The fourth chapter identifies key “lessons learned” drawn from the experience of this project. The fifth section summarizes the main conclusions and the last (sixth) chapter provides a set of recommendations for the consideration of project stakeholders. Additional information supporting the arguments made throughout the document is provided in the seven annexes attached to this report.

3. FINDINGS

While the amount of information generated by this evaluation was enormous, the findings presented in this chapter cover only the most essential aspects of the project. The findings, and the rest of this chapter, are organized in the following three sections: *i) Project Design; ii) Project Implementation; and, iii) Project Results.*

3.1. Project Design

One of the components of the evaluation was the assessment of the design of the project. The following is a brief summary of the main findings of this assessment. It should be noted that this section does not relate to any implementation issues – it is strictly focused on design matters. Findings related to the implementation of the project are presented in section 3.2 of this report (Project Implementation).

The project “*Establishing a Capacity Development Facility at BIPA in the Kingdom of Bahrain*” (hereinafter referred to as the CDF project) has a long history which goes back to May 2011 when the Project Document was signed between UNDP and BIPA. The project was designed to be implemented over a period of 36 months, comprising the mobilization of the project team, as well as the implementation of all planned outcomes and outputs. The total budget for this period was US\$ 884,255, with equal contributions from BIPA and UNDP. Starting from 2013, the project was extended a number of times to accommodate new activities such as the Research Agenda Project, MENAPAR events or the Public Administration Center of Excellence Regionalization project. Following a thorough review of project activities by the Project Board in 2016, the project was further extended to the end of 2018.

As the Project Document indicates, the project was intended to enhance BIPA’s capability in serving the public sector by establishing the Capacity Development Facility and promoting BIPA as the reference point for Quality Assurance in training, consulting and research for government institutions in Bahrain. A more detailed description of the project’s goals and expected outcomes is provided in Box 2 below.

Box 3: Project’s Goals and Outcomes

In line with BIPA’s vision, the establishment of the Capacity Development Facility in partnership with UNDP was intended to provide BIPA with the necessary capacity and infrastructure to establish itself as a portal for the public sector offering quality assurance services in training, consulting and research, rather than providing the services directly. BIPA was expected to offer other types of value-added services to help build different types of capacities in the Public Sector, namely:

- Establishing Capacity Building Facility (CDF) through an inclusive process and launch experiment phase;

- Assessment of training needs within the public sector, leading to a tailored ‘Portfolio’ of courses and value-added programs, including IT, management skills and soft skills;
- Online skills assessment, including self-assessment facilities, for use in both recruitment and ongoing staff development;
- A Portal connected to the Public Sector Institutions’ intranet covering all areas of administration of training courses, including booking, authorization and scheduling and completion of (online) evaluations;
- Accredited training programs, designed by BIPA together with the ministries and associate providers;
- Development and delivery of tailor-made courses through BIPA’s associate trainers;
- A comprehensive system for evaluating courses through monthly reports which take into account attendance (including sex-disaggregated data), cost (including wastage), participant evaluations and observed results.
- Develop a guide for good governance in public administration management including women empowerment and gender equality;
- Develop a guideline framework for code of ethics drafting, appropriation, implementation and evaluation.

3.1.1. Project’s Logical Framework

An analysis of the Project Document and associated planning tools such as the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) or Annual Work Plans (AWP) was conducted in the framework of this evaluation. The following is a brief summary of the main findings.

Given the long-running cooperation between UNDP and BIPA in the area of support to public administration reforms, the Project Document (both before and after the revision) builds on extensive experience and information that has been accumulated over many years.

The Project Document (for the period 2011-2013) identified two specific outputs:

1. Capacity Development Facility established, fully operational and mainstreamed among Public Sector Institutions.
2. BIPA is Promoted as a reference point for Quality Assurance System of Capacity Development and qualified human resources put in place.

Box 4: Definition of Outputs Targets in the Project Document

The following are the main output targets identified in the Project Document’s RRF:

Output 1

- Establish a clear framework for CDF establishment, and initiate inclusion of government institutions and asses needs for public administration development.
- Establish CDF as a unit inside BIPA, and organize recruitment, staff trainings, etc.

- Set standards for BIPA’s CDF as a center of excellence providing value added support to governmental, and lead three pilot training.

Output 2

- Establish CD as a reference center for value added input to improve PA in Bahrain
- CD is mainstreamed in government institutions with BIPA as a reference and TA center
- Establish a diverse pool of professional human resources available at BIPA as a reference center, in particular promoting the inclusion of women and persons with disabilities and public sector management innovation.

While a deeper analysis of the Project Document and project design would have been too lengthy for this document, the following section provides a brief summary of the major features.

- **Well defined outcomes** - Project outcomes to be pursued through the project are described with clarity in the project document. They are stated explicitly and the associated indicators are expressed in specific terms (meeting the SMART criteria³). This adequate formulation of outcomes allowed for easier measurement of project results during implementation (as will be seen further in this report).
- **Adequate Results and Resources Framework (RRF)** – The project’s RRF (shown in Annex VI of this report) is designed optimally and provides clear guidance to project partners. The measures included in the framework capture key dimensions of implementation that were tracked during the monitoring process. The Project Document provides Annual Work Plans (AWP) for each of the three years of intended implementation period (see Annex VII). These AWP’s were updated accordingly by the Project Team, as will be seen in the section on Adaptive Management. Although not detailed, the AWP provides the Project Team with clear guidance on what needs to be achieved. A number of indicators provide detailed measures for tracking the achievement of outputs. So, from a monitoring perspective, these indicators provide significant clarity and consistency. Measures capturing results (outcomes) could have been more specific in demonstrating progress along the two key project dimensions. Overall, the RRF provides project stakeholders with effective tools for monitoring implementation. It should also be noted that after BIPA’s capacity assessment conducted in May 2012, a new Results Framework was developed with more relevant and focused outputs where the two original outputs, namely: 1) Capacity Development Facility established, fully operational and mainstreamed among Public Sector Institutions, and 2) BIPA is promoted as a reference point for Quality Assurance System of Capacity Development and qualified human resources put in place, were replaced with following ones:
 1. BIPA has integrated the CD Approach in its consulting, learning/training and research assignments with its clients.

³ Specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time- bound.

2. BIPA has developed a coherent vision operationalized through an appropriate organizational structure and work processes.
3. BIPA has established a network with relevant institutions that is commensurate with BIPA's vision and operational focus.

Accordingly, a new operational work plan and results based framework was developed with new output targets, activities, and indicators. One key recommendation from the report was that” *BIPA is an evolving organization in its visioning, its organizational structure, its operating processes and profile in the market. This means that a long term detailed activity plan is **unlikely** to remain relevant for the implementation period of the UNDP support project. We therefore strongly recommend establishing a rolling planning framework with detailed planning for **a six month period** and indicative plans for the remainder of the project period. Such a plan then would be updated every six month*”⁴. Thus, a new six months work plan was developed in line with the new outputs covering the period starting from July till end of December 2012. This was followed by successive annual work plans for the remainder of the project's lifetime.

- **Lack of Theory of Change** – The Project Document lacks a Theory of Change that identifies the way in which the various activities and outputs are inter-linked and the channels through which the proposed interventions will produce their effects. A sound Theory of Change and clearly defined outcomes would have provided better guidance to the project team and BIPA, allowing them to keep sight of the ultimate goals of their work and not seeing the specific activities as the end-result of the process.
- **Adequate Project Approach** – The project's approach (strategy) is informed by, and fully integrated with, the capacity assessment methodology and the definition of sectoral capacity development strategies. While the emphasis is on the development of a framework which addresses long-term capacity development needs, the Project's approach is flexible enough to take into account emerging and revised priorities. The CDF is designed to act as facilitator and convening agent that contributes in sectors where it has a competitive edge.

3.1.2. Assumptions and Risks

The Project Document identifies the following five high-impact risks.

1. Insufficient involvement or cooperation from the national authorities in CD initiative
2. Lack of cooperation with the project and the experts, by requesting parties
3. Lack of political will to implement changes recommended
4. Insufficient commitment by PSIs to mainstream CD in their systems

⁴ UNDP Capacity Assessment Final Report May, 2012.

5. Insufficient funding and time to establish all the objectives stated

This formulation of risks is adequate because it conveys a real sense of the degree of risks associated with the project and prescribes specific measures to eliminate or mitigate certain risk factors. It allows the project team to identify not only the deep causes of the problem, but also the end-result (i.e. “work plan not achieved”). Also, the assumptions leading up to the risks and the management/project team’s response have been identified explicitly.

With hindsight, we can say that none of the risks in the list above materialized in the course of the project’s life to a significant. However, the framework provided in the Project Document seems to have provided the project team with a good contingency plan for dealing with risk factors.

3.1.3. UNDP’s Comparative Advantage

UNDP has a long-running history of engagement with the Kingdom of Bahrain that harks back to 1971.⁵ As a globally recognized organization with an established presence in the MENA region and many projects in the public sector, UNDP was seen by BIPA as an ideal partner for facilitating the establishment of the MENAPAR network and strengthening its internal capacities for research, advice and advocacy. It was in this context that BIPA decided to establish a long-term cooperation arrangement with UNDP with the idea that UNDP could bring MENAPAR partners on board and, hence, provide an entry point for the MENAPAR promoted research agenda. Through a cooperation arrangement with UNDP, MENAPAR would be provided with the backing of a global institution, regional and global networking options and the capacity to quickly bring together expertise to reflect on emerging issues. UNDP was to bring MENAPAR members into practical cooperation (ongoing and new) with public sector for specific research.

In this area, UNDP presents a number of other comparative advantages, which are related to UNDP’s core mandate and extensive global experience with the promotion of good governance and sustainable development. From this perspective, this project’s activities in the area of public administration are directly connected to key aspects of good governance and sustainable development, such as the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), e-government, improved service delivery, transparency and accountability in the public sector, etc.

Box 5: Key Elements of UNDP’s Comparative Advantage

- UNDP boasts excellent partnerships with the government, civil society, private sector, universities, etc. National stakeholders value UNDP for its neutrality and impartiality. The trust and respect commanded by UNDP and the access it has to government officials, as well

⁵ As a trusted multilateral partner serving in more than 130 countries around the world, UNDP has the global scope and presence to help nations enhance their capacity to reach their development goals. The UNDP first opened its office in Bahrain in 1971, and has enjoyed the full support of the Government of Bahrain since that time.

as civil society, place UNDP in a good position to play a strong advocacy role on the one hand, and, on the other, to undertake pioneering initiatives.

- UNDP has extensive experience supporting capacity development initiatives of national governments and other stakeholders through advocacy, policy advisory, and technical assistance services. Implementation of this project benefited from the experience and technical support UNDP provided as a specialist in capacity development.
- Its global experience and lessons learned in the same sectors in many countries around the world and in the region in particular, provide UNDP with a distinct advantage. When needed, UNDP is able to mobilize support from a range of UNDP and UN structures. Its access to a vast global network of experts allows it to tap into comparative experiences and technical support from other regions. UNDP's regional office, in particular, provides technical support to numerous projects across a number of areas. Regional technical advisors assist with project formulation and input into the development of the logical frameworks, recruitment of international experts, identification of key stakeholders, etc.
- UNDP has extensive experience and capabilities related to regional cooperation. A significant part of UNDP's work is regional (multi-country) in nature. It has great capabilities for promoting south-south and triangular cooperation and can mobilize technical expertise to develop a suitable regional knowledge platform.
- Another one of UNDP's strengths is its broad based development approach focused on strengthening national capacities for good governance and sustainable development through the integration and mainstreaming of various development aspects. SDGs are used by UNDP as an integrating platform for all development efforts in various countries and as an instrumental for engaging with a wide spectrum of stakeholders, which has proven to be a critical factor of success in many instances.
- UNDP's extensive and historical presence in Bahrain is one of its strongest assets and a huge comparative advantage when it comes to delivering technical assistance. Long established partnerships with national partners are crucial for ensuring smooth implementation, sustainability and replication of the CDF initiatives.

3.1.4. Management arrangements

Given Bahrain's Net Contributing Country (NCC) status, the project was designed to be implemented under the National Implementation Modality (NIM), with BIPA as the national implementing agency. The Project Document identified two key parties in the project:

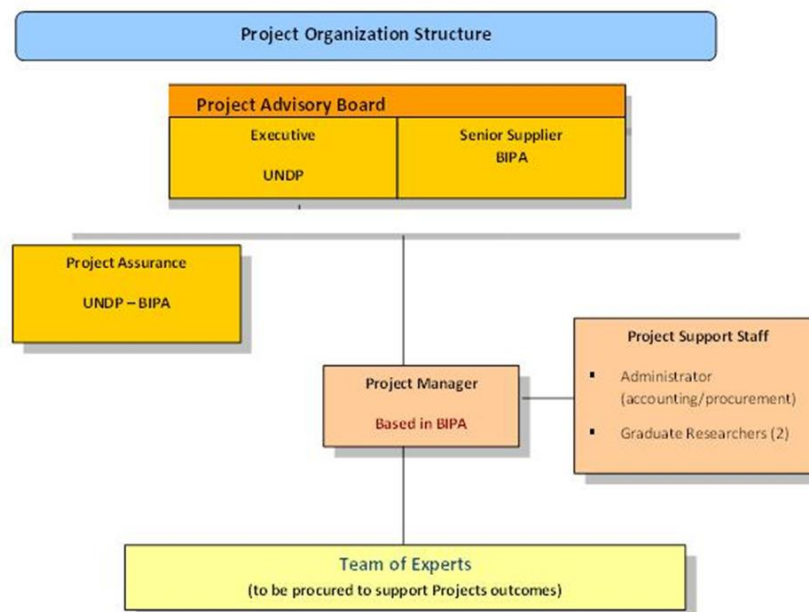
1. **BIPA** was assigned the responsibility for the day to day implementation of the project including coordination of national activities, monitoring of project progress, ensuring the quality of delivered services and participation in the Project Board (PB).

2. **UNDP** was assigned the responsibility to provide the necessary support for the implementation of the project as defined in UNDP’s NIM Manual, including administrative services, oversight and quality control of project implementation, and assignment of the consultants in line with the UNDP guidelines, Project Board decisions and BIPA’s approval.

The Project Document also provides a detailed description of the responsibilities and authority of the Project Board, the quality assurance functions exercised by UNDP, the duties of the Project Manager and project consultants who will be hired as necessary. The Project Board was designed to provide management oversight of project activities and was to be chaired by BIPA. The Board would review progress and evaluation reports, and approve programmatic modifications to project execution, as appropriate and in accordance to UNDP procedures.

The organogram provided in the Project Document for the project implementation arrangements is shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Management Arrangements for the CDF Project



Project Team

The Project Unit was designed under BIPA from which it was to expand its intervention to other concerned stakeholders through a well-designed plan of action. The Project is headed by a Project Manager to whom the authority for daily management of project activities is delegated. A Project team (3 staff) is foreseen to be established by the project manager in consultation with UNDP and BIPA to provide needed support in logistics, as well as event organization. Additional short-term consultants are to participate in delivering the various outputs through specific activities designed to meet the set objectives. Accordingly the Project Unit has the following, general responsibilities:

1. The PMU acts as the secretariat of the Advisory Board (Steering Committee), which is the ultimate decision making body.
2. The PMU provides substantive input and support to the Government related to the Capacity Development Strategy, either directly or through sourcing of resource persons on capacity assessment, monitoring and evaluation, leadership, human resources, etc.;
3. The PMU cooperates with the Government in preparation of the requests for assistance and present them to the Board for approval. The PMU will monitor the progress of each assignment and report in the Board meetings on the progress made;
4. All terms of reference for the Project and capacity development interventions will be submitted for ex ante approval by the Board.

Oversight and Implementation Arrangements

The Project Manager, recruited by UNDP in consultation with BIPA, is based at BIPA, along with the team, which ensures proper delivery of outcomes and outputs. Project assurance is the joint responsibility of BIPA and UNDP. Assigned UNDP Project Analyst (Assurer) and a BIPA assigned assurer have joint oversight on the project operation, as well as lead discussions with the central government in coordination with the manager. They report directly to the Project Advisory Board (Steering Committee), which is responsible for making strategic management decisions for the project when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendation for solving problems, approval of project amendments and revisions (as shown in the organizational chart in Figure 5 above).

The Project Manager has the following responsibilities: (1) Provide day-to-day management; (2) Prepare annual and quarterly implementation plans, including monitoring and evaluation (3) ensures timely mobilization of short term experts; (4) Process expenditures through competitive bidding according to UN rules and regulations; (5) Process invoices upon receipt, certify goods and services and liaise with Finance Unit(s) to ensure timely payment; (6) Maintain record and control systems; (7) Prepare annual and quarterly progress and financial reports on achievements and disbursements of funds; (8) Prepare the final report; (9) Manage the asset inventory; (10) Update and maintain risk logs, issues logs and quality assurance logs; (11) Maintain timely implementation of the action plan developed for every component; (12) report on any major deviation from the initial plan in order to get Board approval ; and (13) act as the secretariat to the Project Advisory Board.

3.1.5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Project Document identifies a number of monitoring tools such as on-site monitoring, regular reporting, and financial expenditure tracking. The monitoring framework is designed to achieve the following purposes.

- Results-Orientation: Ensure appropriate measurement and assessment of Project performance in order to more effectively improve performance and achieve results.
- Quality Assurance: Ensure quality in Project activities supported through the Project to ensure best possible benefit for beneficiaries, through monitoring Project delivery and identifying issues that need corrective action and ensure that additional assistance is provided early.
- Accountability: Ensure accountability in the use of Project resources through heavy emphasis on financial reviews to make sure that funds are being appropriately used to achieve Project outputs, and that the responsible parties / delivery agents have sufficient controls in place to demonstrate that funds are being used appropriately.
- Transparency: Ensure transparency in Project activities, finances, and results to all stakeholders.
- Learning: Ensure that the Project has mechanisms to ensure learning for purposes of improving ongoing implementation and guiding new initiatives, and to identify key lessons learned and successes stories from Project implementation to feedback into planning and implementation processes of UNDP, the Government and development partners;

In order to achieve these purposes, the monitoring framework for the Project incorporates the following measures:

- Appropriate Resourcing of Monitoring: The Project dedicate staffing to ensure proper implementation of monitoring systems, as well as financial resources for monitoring purposes.
- Lessons from previous Projects: The Project addresses lessons from previous evaluations and assessments of UNDP and Government Projects regarding monitoring systems.
- Field-Based: Priority is placed on active on-site field monitoring and regularly scheduled field visits to all project activities to ensure close interaction with responsible parties.
- Template Based System: The Project will seek to apply a template based system to structure monitoring information and ensure its collection on a regular basis.
- Joint Monitoring: Monitoring includes joint monitoring activities with government and UNDP.
- Operational Effectiveness: Ensure proper application of UNDP's and government's internal control framework, and reviews of operational effectiveness.

In summary, based on the analysis presented in this section, it can be concluded that the Project Document was formulated with clarity and consistency. It was adequately structured, and as such has had a positive effect on project activities and results (as will be seen further in this report).

3.2. Project Implementation

While a lot of information was collected in the course of this evaluation on how the project was implemented, the focus of this section will be on crucial aspects of implementation which are: i) implementation approach; ii) how the monitoring and evaluation tools were used; and, iii) how the project was able to react to and address challenges through adaptive management. Before investigating these three issues, here is a brief overview of some of the project's key implementation features. It should be emphasized that the focus of this section is on what actually transpired during implementation, and not on what was planned in the Project Document (that was the focus of the previous section of the report – “Project Design”).

- **Implementation Timelines** – The Project Document was signed by UNDP and BIPA in May 2011. The project was designed to be implemented over a period of 36 months, comprising the mobilization of the project team, as well as the implementation of all planned outcomes and outputs. The total budget for the project was US\$ 884,255, with equal contributions by BIPA and UNDP. Starting from 2013, the project was extended a number of times to accommodate new activities such as the Research Agenda Project, MENAPAR events or the Public Administration Center of Excellence Regionalization project. Following a thorough review of project activities by the Project Board in 2016, the project was further extended to the end of 2018.
- **Focus of activities** – The CDF project build on a long history of cooperation between BIPA and UNDP Bahrain. Before the beginning of the CDF project, BIPA and UNDP were cooperating in the area of e-training.⁶ This experience led to the emerge of the CDF concept focused on two key areas. The first was strengthening BIPA's role as a provider of training, consulting and research for government institutions in Bahrain. The second area of focus was the establishment of the Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR) as a network for research collaboration in public administration in the Middle East.
- **Financing** – The total amount of financing for the project was US\$ 884,255 and was provided by BIPA and UNDP on equal amounts.
- **GoB commitment** – Given the key role that the project has played in the implementation of Bahrain's Vision 2030 and the public administration reform, the project has had the full commitment of the government, and in particular BIPA.

⁶ This cooperation took place under the joint UNDP-BIPA the project “Establishing e-Training System in Bahrain: Creating Knowledge Workers”.

The stakeholders that have played a key role in the implementation of project activities are listed below in no order of importance, along with a brief description of their main responsibilities.

- **UNDP** – UNDP brought to the project its global network of advisors on capacity and human development, its extensive partnerships with leading institutes and UN agencies, the benefits of its presence in over 130 countries, and the accumulation of best practices in capacity development from decades of experiences around the world.
- **BIPA** – Bahrain Institute of Public Administration (BIPA) was created by the Decree No. 65 promulgated by His Majesty the King, Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa in June 2006. The Institute aims to develop the public administration and training in the ministries and governmental organizations, and to deliver research and advisory work so as to ensure the upgrading of public administration and to support of the economic and social development plans of the Kingdom of Bahrain. BIPA pursues the fulfilment of its goals through its three pillar roles: a training services provider, a center for research, and a consulting partner. The main focus of BIPA consultancies is governance of public sector organizations and higher education institutions.
- **Project Board** – The Project Board consisted of BIPA (chairing the board) and UNDP, as well as representatives from the Civil Service Bureau, Ministry of Health, e-Government, University of Bahrain, Bahrain Institute for Political Development, and Tamkeen. BIPA and UNDP were represented by their leadership – BIPA’s Director General and UNDP’s Deputy Resident Representative. High-level representation has been common in this project. The board has been very involved, holding regular meetings at regular intervals.
- **Project Unit** – A Project Unit was established in BIPA to carry out the day-today operations, monitoring and oversight.

3.2.1. Implementation Approach

The Project was implemented under the National Execution (NIM) modality, and the main counterpart within the Government of Bahrain was the Bahrain Institute for Public Administration (BIPA). Activities proceeded on the basis of a number of building blocks which proved essential for the project. For ease of understanding, the analysis of the project’s implementation is examined here in three sections – support to BIPA’s capacity, the establishment of MENAPAR and main project challenges.

3.2.1.1. Strengthening BIPA's Capacity

Support for BIPA's capacity development was at the heart of this project. The approach taken by the project to organize and deliver this support consisted of the three main steps shown in Figure 6 below: i) scoping of BIPA's activities and needs; ii) capacity assessment of BIPA; and, iii) revision of the project's scope to reflect better BIPA's real needs.

Figure 6: Project Approach in Support of BIPA's Capacity Development



As can be seen, the approach has been gradual and flexible, building on a progressive understanding of needs and opportunities and developing a trustworthy relationship with BIPA management and staff on a continuous basis.

Scoping of BIPA's Needs

Prior to the implementation of a full capacity assessment, the project undertook a quick scoping of BIPA's capacity and needs to ensure an appropriate targeting of the capacity assessment (which is a more intensive and time consuming undertaking). The scoping exercise took place in April 2012 and addressed BIPA's core functions based on self-assessment, group discussions and interviews. The specific objective of the scoping exercise was to prepare the full capacity assessment of BIPA in order to assess the readiness of BIPA to implement its vision identify the strengths and possible weaknesses in relation to the change agenda BIPA wished to implement. A questionnaire developed by the project was presented to the Assistant Director General and circulated by e-mail to all BIPA staff. The inclusion of all staff in the scoping exercise provided the project with a deep understanding of the BIPA's challenges, needs and opportunities.

The Questionnaire consisted of 40 questions under four thematic areas, i.e., Institutional Arrangement, Human Resources Management, Knowledge Management, and Clients and Partnerships Management. The questions asked the personal opinion of the respondents the following issues related to the core of the BIPA change agenda:

- Institutional arrangements
- Human resource management
- Knowledge management
- Client and partnership management

Based on the questionnaire, the project organized focus group discussions across the organization. The focus of the focus group discussions was on verifying the outcomes of the scoping

questionnaire as being a ‘reasonable’ reflection of the perceptions of the BIPA staff members. The project analyzed the results and based on the results and developed a basic proposal for the focus of the full capacity assessment, which took place subsequently.

Capacity Assessment

BIPA’s comprehensive capacity assessment was conducted a UNDP mission from the Bratislava Regional Center and UNDP/PAPP, which took place in May 2012. The capacity assessment was designed and implemented with two paramount objectives. First to assess how well positioned BIPA was to implement its own agenda for change, and secondly to expose the staff of BIPA to the nature of such an assessment as part of the overall Capacity Development Approach.

Revision of Project’s Scope

One of the main results of the capacity assessment was the recommendation to recalibrate the activities laid out in the Project Document to match the identified needs of BIPA. Subsequently, the project’s Results and Resources Framework was adjusted to include more relevant and focused outputs. As noted in the “Project Design” section of this report, the two original outputs were replaced with following three:

1. BIPA has integrated the CD Approach in its consulting, learning/training and research assignments with its clients.
2. BIPA has developed a coherent vision operationalized through an appropriate organizational structure and work processes.
3. BIPA has established a network with relevant institutions that is commensurate with BIPA’s vision and operational focus.

Accordingly, a new operational work plan and results based framework was developed with new output targets, activities, and indicators. One key recommendation that came in the report was that” *BIPA is an evolving organization in its visioning, its organizational structure, its operating processes and profile in the market. This means that a long term detailed activity plan is **unlikely** to remain relevant for the implementation period of the UNDP support project. We therefore strongly recommend establishing a rolling planning framework with detailed planning for **a six month period** and indicative plans for the remainder of the project period. Such a plan then would be updated every six month*”⁷. Thus, a new six months work plan was developed in line with the new outputs covering the period starting from July 2012 till end of December 2012. This flexible approach was crucial for the success of the project and will be discussed in more detail in the section on “Adaptive Management”.

After the Revision

⁷ UNDP Capacity Assessment Final Report May, 2012.

After the revision of the Project Document, the project proceeded with a number of activities strengthening BIPA's capacity, and through it helping build capacity in the Bahraini public sector. In line with the recommendation of UNDP's expert, the CDF was not setup as a separate unit within BIPA, but its activities were integrated into the existing Research and Consultancy activities. The CDF was conceived as an operational and organizational resource base reaching out internationally, as well as building capacity domestically. The project re-shaped the business model of the CDF by integrating it as a service of BIPA instead of the original vision of being a separate unit or department. Some of the results achieved through these activities will be discussed in the "Project Results" section further in this report.

3.2.1.2. Supporting the Establishment of MENAPAR

The establishment of the MENAPAR network was another major achievement and activity area of this project. UNDP supported the founding of MENAPAR through the CDF project and has provided substantial support for the network within its philosophy of south-south, and north-south cooperation. MENAPAR has now become a reputable network of organizations that are active in the scholarship/practice of Public Administration in the Middle East.

The idea of building a regional network for research in public administration was established at a preliminary meeting of the International Conference on Administrative Sciences (ICAS) and the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Management (IASIA) on June 1st, 2013 with more than 50 participants. The idea went forward at a workshop organized by BIPA, in partnership with UNDP under the framework of the Capacity Development Facility project, in early November 2013 to determine the future of this network, what its research agenda would be and how it would be managed to secure its sustainability. On November 24, 2013, the CDF and BIPA, jointly organized a two-day Workshop on "Developing a Strategy, Governance, and Research Agenda for the MENAPAR (Middle East and North African Public Administration Research)". MENAPAR was formally launched on April 23, 2014, by acclamation of the participants in the organizational meeting of MENAPAR on 24 April 2014 and at the press conference that followed the meeting.

3.2.1.3. Project Challenges

Given the novelty of activities and approaches undertaken by the project, there have certainly been a number of challenges that the project stakeholders had to address. The following are the three main challenges that were identified by stakeholders during interviews for this evaluation.

- The project was operating in an environment with a constrained absorption capacity as a result of under-staffing in BIPA. Interviews showed that BIPA is operating at about 30% of its optimal staffing capacity, which made the absorption of some of the activities undertaken by the project quite challenging.

- Certain UNDP procedures were perceived as too rigid and were reported to have resulted in the delay of certain processes. For example, the signing of project documents took longer than expected and the recruitment of experts was perceived in certain occasions as too lengthy.
- Also, another suggestion brought up during the interviews as that Project Managers should to be selected carefully and should have strong management and technical skills relevant to the area of work. For example, the first Project Manager of this project was not sufficiently skilled, and left at the last stage of the project. So, the project management had to hire several consultants to fill the gap, as hiring a substitute was not feasible.

On both dimensions, the UNDP team was able to take action and address the partners' concerns.

3.2.2. Monitoring and Evaluation

Given the strong national ownership of this project, its activities were closely monitored not only by BIPA, but also by UNDP. As discussed in the design section, the Project Document included a Result and Resources Framework (RRF) and Annual Work Plans (AWPs) with targets, baselines and indicators. These instruments provided the logical structure for monitoring the project's performance and delivery using a set of indicators and targets.

The project team designed the M&E plan in cooperation with the UNDP CO analyst and prepared on a regular basis quarterly progress reports which contained a wealth of information and were used effectively to update board members on project activities and issues. Additional reports and status updates are provided for counterparts on an ad hoc basis, as requested by the board members.

The evaluator had access to a wide range of project documentation for the assessment of the M&E framework. The reports provide a reasonable picture of project progress as well as the issues being dealt with during implementation. The M&E plan was generally well executed. The project team followed the common M&E template and used standard tools such as risk logs. Progress reports provided a platform for engaging other stakeholders on the discussion of the project's progress. Lessons were discussed in Project Board meetings and analyzed in annual Progress Reports.

This evaluation is the first instance of evaluation for this project – the previous phases were not evaluated.

3.2.3. Adaptive Management

Given the innovative nature of this project and the long timeframe in which activities have taken place, the use of adaptive management by the project team was crucial for dealing with unexpected

contingencies and taking advantage of emerging opportunities. While a number of adaptive strategies and actions employed by the project team were observed during the evaluation, this section will focus on the project team’s ability to act swiftly in response to evolving needs and emerging opportunities.

As reiterated several times in this report, being a young and fast evolving organization in the process of defining its place in the market, BIPA needed to go through a learning process and therefore a significant level of internal flexibility was required to allow the organization to evolve. An organization that is in the process of defining its vision and overall strategic direction within the scope of its mandate needs to take time to develop this vision and strategic direction. Solidifying this too early may result in misfiring positioning and ultimately the demise of the organization. This meant that some level of uncertainty about future direction and overall strategic positioning was to remain part and parcel of the overall management in the organization.

The project realized this need pretty early in the engagement process and considered it harmful to push the process too fast while the ideas of within BIPA were not yet mature or not yet fully ‘mainstreamed’ throughout the organization. The project relied on the scoping questionnaire to understand the views of BIPA staff on the pace and strategic direction of change, including associated changes in the organizational structure and work processes. The project realized to need to ensure that staff members were very well informed about developments and remained committed to the organization, despite the flexibility that was required of them regarding job and task descriptions and assignments and the overall uncertainty that the process might entail. A very strong, frequent and harmonized senior management approach to communicate with all staff members was seen a sine-qua-non for this kind of organizational change.

Consequently, BIPA and UNDP agreed on a three-step approach, shown in Figure 7 below:

- Scoping of BIPA’s capacity and needs.
- Capacity assessment of BIPA.
- Revision of the project scope based on the outcomes of the capacity assessment.

Figure 7: Project Approach



The scoping and assessment of BIPA’s capacity and needs were described in detail in the previous sections, but the main point here is that they allowed for great flexibility in organizing project activities to fit the actual needs of BIPA. The project experienced a period of pause following the outcomes of the two assessments. This was mainly due to the time it took BIPA’s management to

study and discuss the recommendations of the two assessments, particularly the one focused on BIPA's internal re-structuring and improving its work processes.

Based on the results of the assessments and BIPA's response to their recommendations, a new Results Framework was developed with more relevant and focused activities, outputs, targets, and indicators. Furthermore, to ensure full flexibility, the project established a rolling planning framework with detailed planning for a six month period and indicative plans for the remainder of the project. The project plan was thus updated every six months.

Another example of adaptive management was the fact that in line with the recommendations of the UNDP's expert, the CDF was not setup as a separate unit within BIPA, but its activities were integrated into the existing Research and Consultancy activities. The CDF was conceived as an operational and organizational resource base reaching out internationally as well as building capacity domestically. The project re-shaped the business model of the CDF by integrating it as a service of BIPA instead of the original vision of being a separate unit or department.

Furthermore, MENAPAR, one of the most important results of this project, was not foreseen in the original project document. It came about as a result of the process of interaction between the project and BIPA (including the project experts), thanks to the flexible approach taken by the project team. It was this high degree of flexibility in supporting this idea which led to the success that MENAPAR turned out to be.

3.3. Project Results

This section is organized along the four standard dimensions of UNDP evaluations: i) *relevance* - the extent to which the project has been relevant to country priorities and needs; ii) *effectiveness* - whether the project has been on track in the achievement of desired and planned results; iii) *efficiency* - whether the process of achieving results has been efficient; and, iv) *sustainability* - the extent to which the benefits of the project are likely to be sustained⁸.

3.3.1. Relevance

While the prime objectives for both BIPA and UNDP to engage into a cooperation arrangement were to ensure strengthened capacities for BIPA, this initiative took place within the wider objectives of the Government of Bahrain and UNDP.

Relevance to the country's needs and priorities

The feedback received from interviews staff was unambiguously positive. It was stated that the project was fulfilling an important role in strengthening BIPA's ability to provide consulting services. The project is also relevant to the national processes of strengthening public administration and government services.

The project is firmly grounded in Bahrain's *Economic Vision 2030*⁹, which induces a growing demand for consulting and research services in Bahrain. Vision 2030 promotes in particular the implementation of coordinated reforms that will build an *efficient and effective government*. Vision 2030 further highlights a number of key aspirations for the Government that can propel consulting and research services, such as developing *high-quality policies*, making the *public sector more productive and accountable for delivering better-quality services via leaner organisations and operations*, or installing a *predictable, transparent and fairly enforced regulatory system that facilitates economic growth*. Vision 2030 further calls for moving from an oil economy to new industries and markets, which should legitimately spur innovation throughout the economy and push for further reforms in the public sector. Industrial and economic innovation and institutional change offer necessarily good prospects for consulting and research activities.

A second fundamental framework for BIPA consulting and research activities, in which this project fully fits, is the *BIPA Strategic Plan 2011-2016*¹⁰. This guiding document spells out a compelling vision for BIPA, which is to be the "Partner of Choice Developing First Class Civil Servants". The Strategic Plan stresses that the BIPA's mission is "act[ing] as a change agent for

⁸ This section will present only a tentative analysis of sustainability, as a complete assessment of sustainability will be possible only at the end of the project.

⁹ The Government of Bahrain, *From Regional Pioneer to Global Contender: The Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain*, 2008.

¹⁰ BIPA, *Strategic Plan 2011-2016*, 2010.

sustained transformation through training, learning and development in the public sector”. This is to be achieved through five strategic goals:

1. Develop human capacity through the delivery/brokerage of value added and quality assured training to all strata of Bahrain's public sector;
2. Develop knowledge assets in the Public Sector through a systematic measurement process of competencies, inventory of knowledge assets, learning, and ROI;
3. Develop organizational capacity in Bahrain's public sector through capacity assessment and capacity development initiatives and a consulting strategy oriented towards HR and organizational development;
4. Promote a governance agenda for Bahrain Public Sector in the pursuit of strategic initiatives in line with Vision 2030 and relevant sections of the program of the government;
5. Develop an evidence-based research agenda within BIPA to facilitate knowledge absorption and sharing of best practices throughout the public sector.

Relevance to UNDP Country Priorities

This project has been in line with all relevant UNDP’s country programmes, which have been geared towards responding to Bahrain’s key development challenges and reflecting priorities of the Government’s vision for the country future development under the national reform agenda. Box 7 (below) shows that the project fits into the key goals of UNDP’s Country Programme.

Box 6: Key Goals in UNDP’s CPD Supported by the Project

UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome and Output:	Outcome 3: Institutions enabled to deliver universal access to basic services
Country Programme Document (CPD) Outcome, Output and associated indicator(s):	Outcome 1: <i>Enhanced transparency and accountability of public institutions, as well as participation of all constituencies in systematic national decision-making in Bahrain</i>

3.3.2. Effectiveness

Effectiveness in the context of this assessment means the extent to which the project achieved what it planned to achieve at the outset. This section provides a brief overview of the project’s main achievements.

Overall, through this project, UNDP helped BIPA strengthen its capacity and enhance its research and consulting services in support of Bahrain’s public institutions. As already described, the project initially supported the conduct of a scoping of needs which was followed by a detailed capacity assessment that amongst other things outlined a strategy for BIPA in its capacity development efforts towards the public sector. Subsequently, the project helped BIPA develop

training programmes¹¹ for internal consulting capacity in the public sector, conduct market surveys, stakeholder analyses, develop a Strategic and Business Plan, build an experts' database, prepare reference manuals for consulting products, develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework and Marketing Strategy, etc. With the support of this project, BIPA organized international conferences and executed major research projects in Arab countries by enrolling institutional members from across the region. It also ran workshops on academic research in public administration, on developing a research agenda for public administration, and held a showcase event on best practices in Arab public administration.

During the interview conducted in the context of this evaluation, BIPA representatives expressed satisfaction with the contribution of the UNDP project. When asked which aspects of the collaboration with UNDP they found most useful, they singled out the following: (i) the low cost of UNDP assistance compared to private sector consulting companies; (ii) the quality of consultants the UNDP project had mobilized; (iii) the transparent recruitment process through the consultants database operated by UNDP; and, (iv) excellent relationship with the country office staff.

Two specific areas deserve particular attention as far the support of the project for BIPA's capacity development is concerned: BIPA's consulting and research capacity and the establishment of the regional network MENAPAR.

BIPA's Consulting and Research Capacity

The project provided a clear direction to BIPA consulting and research activities, as well as helped improve the enabling environment and capacities that supported their successful completion. It supported the development of a robust, forward looking, and achievable *Strategic and Business Plan* for the Consulting and Research Unit (C&R Unit). The business plan provided the following contributions:

- Institutional level:
 - BIPA C&R Unit was clearly positioned in the structure of the organization
 - The structure of BIPA C&R Unit was defined
 - Partnerships with external institutions were developed to leverage consulting and research
- Organizational level:
 - Support was provided in developing and implementing BIPA's research methodology
 - BIPA consulting methodologies were anchored in a cohesive and distinctive BIPA model

¹¹ BIPA provides training for three grade levels in the public sector: Principal, Professional and Leadership. Public employees are not appointed to their respective positions unless they have completed the trainings required for that position. These are customized trainings benchmarked to international models.

- Systems available to capture C&R knowledge were leveraged
- Provided training for BIPA experts in order to create consistency across service lines and individuals

Table below provides a summary of consultancies offered by BIPA during the period 2011-2013, a period at which project support was at its highest.

Table 3: Consultancies offered by BIPA during the period 2011-2013

Organization	Area	Year
National Oil & Gas Authority	TNA	2011/2012
Ministry of Finance	TNA	2012/2013
CSB	Performance Management	These projects are owned by CSB in which BIPA sponsored them
CSB	Salary Restructuring	
AMA-International University	QA Review	2011
Applied Science University	Strategic & Operational Planning	2011
Applied Science University	MBA Competency mapping & Curriculum Validation	2011
Applied Science University	Assessment Strategy	2011 (Draft contract in MMT files. It should have been signed at the same time as the IT Agreement.)
Applied Science University	IT strategy	2011
Applied Science University	Governance	2011
Applied Science University	Strategy Implementation Retainer	2012/2013
Bahrain Olympic Committee	Organizational redesign/HR	2012
Oman	e-Training	2012/2013
Ministry of Housing	TNA	2013
Shura Council	TNA	2013

The project conducted a market research with the public sector and identified six existing consultancy lines within BIPA as the top priorities in consulting needs. Subsequently, the project assisted BIPA in creating its propriety consulting approach based on the identified six existing service lines of consultancy to the public sector. The process involved taking all the outputs generated through these consultancies with the task to homogenize/harmonize the different approaches in the different consultancies to come up with a unique BIPA approach. The driving force behind this was the intention to streamline BIPA's consulting process and offer the Bahraini public sector organization an opportunity to not just be recipients of BIPA's consultancies but also develop capacity within their institutions on how to perform consultancies. This was conceived as part of the institutionalization of consultancies and led to the development of a Consulting Services Operational Manual (CSOM) which was circulated among government institutions. Additionally, training manuals were generated for the six service lines of consultancy based on the proprietary methodology in the CSOM.

Through the CDF, BIPA developed three courses for developing the research capacity of the public sector. They were related to research design, how to identify an issue, set it as a problem to solve

and then implement it through research tools and then present the results. This was used to generate papers for the IASIA Congress in 2013, in which there were 42 submissions from the public sector and another 20 to the MENAPAR Conference in 2014. A compendium of research was published which was a repository of research cases from the public sector. Some of these contributors were part of the research network of BIPA itself.

MENAPAR

Furthermore, the project helped BIPA establish the Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR), a network for research collaboration in public administration in the Middle East. Being one of the most practical and visible successes of the project, the MENAPAR network was launched under the BIPA umbrella in April 2014 by acclamation of the participants in the organizational meeting.

As a Bahian-based network, MENAPAR is the first of its kind in the Arab countries and aims to dedicate applied research in public administration, especially those related to achieving the 2030 Global Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. BIPA provides support and secretariat services to MENAPAR – continuously highlighting its leadership role in this network – and plays an important role in setting the overall agenda for MENAPAR.

MENAPAR has been active in organizing conferences, meetings, seminars, etc., not only in Bahrain, but also in other countries.¹² By being a contributor to the various global networks interested in public administration in the Arab countries and beyond, MENAPAR has generated important lessons learned and best practices that have benefited BIPA.

Collaboration agreements between regional public administrations have been signed and are being implemented under the MENAPAR framework. Currently, MENAPAR is actively exploring, researching and supporting the implementation of innovative approaches to public administration management through evidence-policy studies, experimentation with emerging techniques and tools for citizen engagement in policy-making, and capacity development initiatives. Areas where the attention of BIPA and the project has focused are:

- Producing high-quality research and ensure it contributes to the overall themes in the MENAPAR research agenda.
- Stimulating action-research in the Bahraini administration to address key issues of regional concern. This has two aspects: contributing to regional understanding of these core issues, and promoting Bahraini lessons learned.
- Research on the government – society inter-face.

¹² For example, the Research Agenda Project (RAP) is a MENA region research project of the MENAPAR which has been initiated across 7 countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine and Tunisia. Its goal has been to investigate how research is done in the public sector in the MENA region including studying the key public sector issues and how they are being pursued.

- Implement research of different types in improving government performance (e.g. applied behavioural science, design approaches, ICT based engagement approaches, etc.).

There is no doubt as to the importance of the emergence of this regional home-grown research initiative in the field of public administration. This network brings together global and regional research initiatives and researchers and helps this community learn from regional experiences and expertise and develop regionally-rooted pathways to address the challenges the regional public administrations are facing.

In conclusion, the CDF project is highly valued by BIPA. It has provided BIPA with a business model for building their consultancy dimension and providing these consulting services to government institutions. This support has resulted in the establishment of a system that has facilitated the conduct of research and provision of consulting services, which in turn have strengthened BIPA's ability to offer attractive service to clients both inside and outside of Bahrain. BIPA has become a reference when it comes to public sector training and research. The project has also facilitated the regional and global profiling of BIPA in a number of key areas. Furthermore, the activities supported by the project (and subsequently BIPA) contributed to broader national outcomes, such as good governance or improved services provided by Bahraini government agencies.

3.3.3. Efficiency

This section provides an overview of the project's efficiency. As the term efficiency is typically used to indicate the cheapest way of achieving a particular result, best assessments of efficiency are standard cost-benefit analyses which quantify the benefits and costs of an intervention and compare them to certain benchmarks. Given the difficulty of converting capacity gains in the public governance sector in financial terms combined with the lack of indicators at the outcome level, this type of estimation was not possible for this evaluation. Instead, to assess efficiency, the report focuses on a number of parameters which are closely associated with efficient project management.

An indicator of project efficiencies is the extent to which implementation falls behind established timelines. The evaluation found that the project managed to achieve its work plans and deliver the outputs that it had set out to deliver. This was done through a very slim project structure consisting primarily of one Project Manager/Coordinator, with support from the UNDP CO. Furthermore, the annual budgets seem to have been realistic and financial and human resources have been by-and-large adequately balanced to achieve the project's work plans. Overall, there is evidence that the UNDP Country Office has efficiently planned resources and delivered activities in accordance with the work plans agreed by the Project Board.

Further, the achievements in the establishment of MENAPAR and the various activities conducted in its framework with the participation of a number of domestic and international stakeholders is a demonstration of the results possible with a very modest budget, where it was even possible to deliver outputs beyond the initial work plan. Although a quite small project in budget, CDF may be considered as very good value for money. It testifies to the importance of establishing long-term partnerships with institutional counterparts such as BIPA.

This project has also been an example of the successful coordination role of UNDP with the national counterpart (BIPA). BIPA was explicit in appreciating the fact that project experts had provided BIPA with valuable international contacts and expertise, thereby saving BIPA resources that would otherwise have been spent on expensive consulting companies. The project experts have also been highly effective in guiding improvements for BIPA in other areas, knowing in detail what the capacity needs of BIPA were. The current project is the continuation of almost a decade of cooperation between UNDP and BIPA, and the degree of trustworthy cooperation and partnership that has been achieved has been highly efficient.

3.3.4. Sustainability

Before the CDF project, UNDP had been providing capacity building services to various Bahraini ministries. However, that mode of support was not sustainable as the support was not fully institutionalized and the capacity transfer was shallow. With the establishment of the CDF infrastructure, UNDP's contribution became more sustainable and with lasting effects. CDF became an integral part of the workings of the government, instead of existing as an external body going in and out without much substance staying within the government.

Another good indication of sustainability is the attention that has been paid by both UNDP and BIPA to the institutionalization of the MENAPAR network. This has been so important that a joint project between BIPA and UNDP was launched in September 2017, aimed exclusively at the institutionalization of MENAPAR. The objective of the project is to explore the various options available to register this network officially; a due step to institutionalize it. Progress has been made recently on this front – MENPAR is in the process of being registered in Belgium – this will give the network a much higher profile and increased membership. Also, a chapter of MENAPAR as an international organization will be registered in Bahrain. Secretariat support will continue to be provided by BIPA. The ultimate aim for MENAPAR is to achieve financial and strategic sustainability for research in the field of public administration and to promote the best practices, and to highlight the successful historical experiences of the Kingdom of Bahrain in the administrative field. The network is also expected to be introduced as part of Global Coalition of Think Tanks initiative, to be established by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) within South-South cooperation.

It should be noted that in addition to capacity building in training, consulting and research, the project has provided valuable contributions in South-South cooperation through MENAPAR. BIPA is attempting to export the best practices of Bahrain through a number of collaborations with similar institutions in the region. BIPA has collaboration with counterparts in Palestine, Oman, Tunisia and Morocco. These partnerships further strengthen the sustainability of the initiative.

Overall, it should be noted that using the firm foundations that have been laid through the CDF project, BIPA will now be able to concentrate in further strengthening its capacity to convene different parties around common agendas. The combined involvement of government agencies, universities, research agencies and private sector companies provides for a package and approach that is highly likely to attract regional and possibly global interest. Bahraini partners in the efforts are likely to be invited to countries in the region and possible beyond with their expertise and sharing their experiences.

4. LESSONS LEARNED

As has already been mentioned several times, this entire project has been a learning experience, but certain specific lessons identified from interviews with project stakeholders can be highlighted more prominently.

Lesson 1: Depth of Engagement

Through the CDF project, UNDP Bahrain has created depth in the area of public administration reform and has built a very strong and positive relationship with BIPA. This is a result of a very long-term engagement which has consolidated into a relationship of trust. The strength of this approach was the project's focus on a well-defined niche through a number of high-impact activities where UNDP has a clear comparative advantage and can add significant value. Although small in scale, these activities have catalyzed large-scale and sustainable changes and innovations in the working of BIPA, and especially the creation of MENAPAR. Also, the project has been able to introduce in Bahrain world-class experience in public administration reforms and at the same time disseminate Bahrain's good development practices in countries where such experience is valued.

Lesson 2: Importance of Flexibility

Another important lesson that can be drawn from this project is the importance of flexibility in project design and implementation. Perhaps the most positive aspect of this project has been the gradual approach to developing a support strategy for BIPA that best matched its needs and context. This approach included two assessments and involved a process through which the project design was adjusted. The key lesson from this is that projects of this kind should be flexible enough to allow stakeholders to make necessary adjustments in line with evolving needs and a better understanding of the process.

Lesson 3: Need for Political Support

Political will and commitment are crucial for any capacity development initiatives in the public sector, and special attention should be paid to building commitment and finding champions to promote the project as a tool which supports the implementation of public administration reforms. BIPA was crucial in providing the right level of political support for the project activities. This was particularly the case for MENAPAR that has now been converted into an international network with bases in Bahrain and Belgium. Without the government's strong political support, and in particular BIPA's, MENAPAR would not have become as successfully established and active as it is today.

Lesson 4:

Given the project's magnitude and importance, BIPA could have hired at least two highly-capacitated staff to focus on its activities. Furthermore, all products, studies and reports could have been archived more systematically and some senior staff from BIPA could allocate specific time to go back, study and get the best out of those products.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation has examined a number of key dimensions of the project, both at the design and implementation stage. The findings outlined in this report present a balanced view of the project, informed by the stakeholders who were interviewed in the process. While a number of gaps were found in the availability of quantitative information, which for this type of projects is quite common, the project team sought to triangulate as much as possible the various views that were presented by the interviewees. The following are a few conclusive remarks, including a perspective on how UNDP could build further on the foundations laid by this project.

The CDF project is a continuation of the fruitful cooperation between the UNDP and the Institute of Public Administration since its inception in 2006. It represents an innovative intervention, with very strong ownership from the Bahraini side and building on a flexible approach to capacity building. As noted several times in the report, the use of adaptive management was one of the most positive features of this project.

The CDF project is highly valued by BIPA's management because it has provided them with a business model for building their consultancy dimension and providing these consulting services to government institutions. This support has resulted in the establishment of a system that has facilitated the conduct of research and provision of consulting services, which in turn have strengthened BIPA's ability to offer attractive service to clients both inside and outside of Bahrain. BIPA has become a reference when it comes to public sector training and research. The project has also contributed to the establishment of MENPAR – one of the best success stories of BIPA since its establishment. Now, efforts are underway with the help of UNDP to further institutionalize MENAPAR, and get it registered as an independent international NGO.

The project has also facilitated the regional and global profiling of BIPA in a number of key areas. Furthermore, the activities supported by the project (and subsequently BIPA) contributed to broader national outcomes, such as good governance or improved services provided by Bahraini government agencies.

Looking Ahead

BIPA is well positioned and is a recognized brand in the area of training and, to some extent, research. But as far as consulting is concerned, BIPA is still a young organization. Looking forward, BIPA is now exploring ways of leveraging its strong position in training and research to develop a comparative advantage and get recognition in the area of consulting. The key instrument to this transition is the idea of the “Innovation Lab” for the public sector. The innovation lab is expected to serve as a link between the various projects that BIPA has running on training and the activities it wants to promote in the area of research and consulting. This will be done by promoting new approaches to policy analysis such as design thinking and behavioral insights. So consulting activities will be promoted by promoting the concept of innovation lab, which from a marketing

perspective is expected to generate interest and demand. The idea of innovation lab will be explored with UNDP and discussions are underway to design a project with a joint set of activities in this area. The current CDF project may be used as the infrastructure for building this new partnership.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents a set of recommendations derived from the analysis presented in the previous sections of this report.

Recommendation 1: Using the CDF Infrastructure to Develop the Innovation Lab

The infrastructure established through the CDF project provides strong foundations for building the Innovations Lab which has been conceptualized by BIPA with the help of UNDP. This will require the extension of the CDF project and the development of a new project design focused on the Innovation Lab.

Recommendation 2: Integrating Public Administration Activities with the SDGs

Given the central role of SDGs in UNDP's mandate and the commitment of the Government of Bahrain to the achievement of SDGs, UNDP and BIPA could explore how new joint activities could be integrated more effectively with Bahrain's SDG agenda. This could apply to ongoing activities that have benefitted from UNDP's support, such training, but could also become a cornerstone of the Innovation Lab idea that is currently being discussed between UNDP and BIPA.

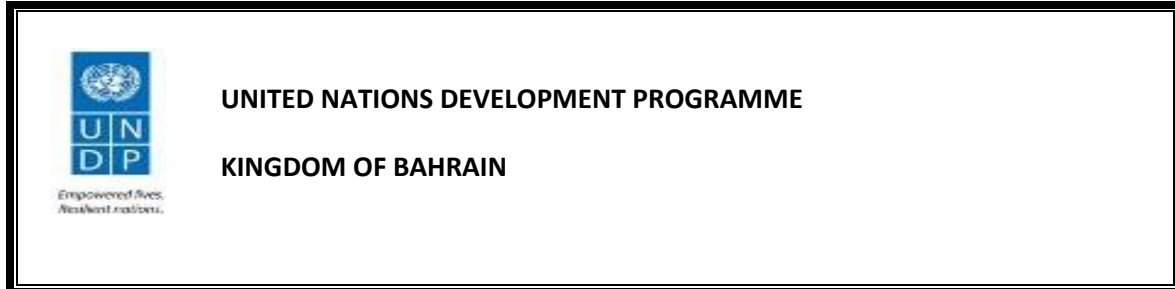
Recommendation 3: Going Beyond Technical Skills

Most of the support that has been provided by UNDP to BIPA so far has focused on technical skills related to training, research and consulting. BIPA feels that there is also a need to go beyond these technical skills and build the ability of its staff to engage with clients and make deals, especially in the consulting area. This will require the development of inter-personal, negotiation and persuasion skills. This is an area that UNDP and BIPA could explore further together and see if there is a possibility for support from UNDP.

Recommendation 4: Getting Recognized as a Provider of Consulting in the Public Sector

While a well-recognized name in the area of training and research, BIPA needs to build its image and reputation as the partner of choice for consulting services in the public sector – initially in Bahrain, but later regionally and beyond. There is a lot of potential for this, but it will require a marketing effort that could benefit from the support of UNDP. Therefore, BIPA and UNDP could further explore opportunities in this area and see if there is an opportunity for joint cooperation.

ANNEX I: EVALUATION'S TERMS OF REFERENCE



International Consultant - Terminal evaluation of the MENAPAR Project

Location : Manama, BAHRAIN and other locations, if needed (to be agreed with UNDP)

Application

Deadline :

Additional Category Government Efficiency

Type of Contract : Individual Contract

Post Level : International Consultant

Languages Required : English

Starting Date :
(date when the selected candidate is

expected to start)

Background

In 2010, the Bahrain Institute for Public Administration (BIPA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office signed an agreement on establishing a Capacity Development Facility (CDF) at BIPA. The CDF aims to enhance the capability of BIPA in serving the public sector and promote BIPA as the reference point for Quality Assurance in training, consulting and research for governmental institutions in Bahrain.

BIPA has been launched with the core mandate of providing value-added training to the public sector. Moreover, BIPA's ambition has been increasingly to invest the 'governance agenda' through leadership training, consulting and research, a 'think tank' approach to strategic issues in the Public Sector, and providing assessment services to Government and Public Directorates.

The project implementation started in 2013 and the expected project's closing date is 31 December 2017.

Duties and Responsibilities

Objective and scope

Responsibilities:

The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as defined and explained below;

Evaluation Criteria

1. Relevance

The extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time;

Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.

2. Effectiveness

The extent to which an objective has been achieved.

3. Efficiency

The extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible; also called cost effectiveness or efficacy.

4. Results

The positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen changes to and effects produced by a development intervention;

Results include direct project outputs, short to medium-term outcomes, and longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects and other local effects.

5. Sustainability

The likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion;

Projects need to be environmentally, as well as financially and socially sustainable.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular BIPA, UNDP Country Office and other key stakeholders.

Competencies

Technical Competencies

- International experience in similar assignments
- Understanding of Gulf country contexts

Functional competencies

- Excellent analytical skills.
- Excellent ability to communicate in English both written and spoken, and to work in a team.

Personal Competencies

- Demonstrates integrity and ethical standards.
- Positive, constructive attitude to work.
- Ability to act professionally and flexibility to engage with government officials, , development partner representatives, private sector and communities.

Required Skills and Experience

Qualification:

- PhD or Master's degree in Business Administration, Public Management, Economics, Development Studies or other related fields.
- At least ten (10) years of relevant professional experience in conducting similar assignments

Language:

- Fluency in written and spoken English

ANNEX II: KEY QUESTIONS DRIVING THE ANALYSIS OF DATA

Dimension	Key Questions
Relevance	<p>Were the project’s activities relevant for the main beneficiaries?</p> <p>Has the project tackled key challenges and problems?</p> <p>Were cross-cutting issues, principles and quality criteria duly considered/mainstreamed in the project implementation and how well is this reflected in the project reports? How could they have been better integrated?</p> <p>How did the project link and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent was the project relevant to the strategic considerations of the GoB? • To what extent was the project implementation strategy appropriate to achieve the objectives?
Effectiveness	<p>To what level has the project reached the project purpose and the expected results as stated in the project document (logical framework matrix)?</p> <p>What challenges have been faced? What has been done to address the potential challenges/problems? What has been done to mitigate risks?</p>
Sustainability	<p>How is the project ensuring sustainability of its results and impacts (i.e. strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices, etc.)? Did the project have a concrete and realistic exit strategy to ensure sustainability?</p> <p>Were there any jeopardizing aspects that have not been considered or abated by the project actions? In case of sustainability risks, were sufficient mitigation measures proposed?</p> <p>Has ownership of the actions and impact been transferred to the corresponding stakeholders?</p> <p>Do the stakeholders / beneficiaries have the</p>

	capacity to take over the ownership of the actions and results of the project and maintain and further develop the results?
Impact	<p>Is there evidence of long lasting desired changes, in which aspects?</p> <p>Has the project appropriately reached its target groups?</p> <p>How did the project contributed to (more) sustainable management of natural resources?</p> <p>Is there evidence that institutional systems/mechanisms are in place which:</p> <p>1) Supports further capacity development at the national and local level; and</p> <p>2) Promotes sustainable and inclusive development</p>
Efficiency	<p>Have the resources been used efficiently?</p> <p>How well have the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness? (in comparison to the plan)</p> <p>Were the management and administrative arrangements sufficient to ensure efficient implementation of the project?</p>
Stakeholders and Partnership Strategy	How has the project implemented the commitments to promote local ownership, alignment, harmonization, management for development results and mutual accountability?
Theory of Change or Results/Outcome Map	Is the Theory of Change or project logic feasible and was it realistic? Were assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently taken into consideration?

ANNEX III: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

For each interview obtain the following information of all the people who were part of the meeting

Name of Interviewee	Title, Department	Institution
Date of Interview	Time	Location
Other Persons present/title	Team members present	

Below is the list of indicative questions which we need to answer for the evaluation. Depending on who we interview, we need to choose among the questions below the suitable ones to ask (particularly given that we have normally just around 1 hour for each interview). For example, with implementation partners of specific projects, we may want to focus on part A and some additional questions in other parts as appropriate. For donors and other development partners we may want to focus on part B.

1. EFFECTIVENESS:

- 1.1. To what extent has the project **achieved its expected objectives**? Were all the planned project outputs and outcomes achieved? What were the **key results achieved** (Please describe, in particular, what **“changes”** have been brought about by the project)?
- 1.2. Were there any key results not achieved and why? Were there any positive or negative unintended results?
- 1.3. What was the quality of the deliverables?
- 1.4. Do you think that all the strategies and plans that were supported will be implemented? Do you think that for projects like this there should be more focus on implementation?
- 1.5. What were the major **factors contributing** to the achievements of this project? What were the **impeding factors**?
- 1.6. **Partnerships:** Who were the partners in implementing the project? In your view, how effective has UNDP been in using its partnerships?
- 1.7. To what extent were government counterparts engaged and interested in the project activities? What roles did they play? Can you mention specific government actors and specific roles they played?
- 1.8. UNDP’s role in **policy guidance:** Has UNDP provided upstream policy advisory services in this project? To what extent was this project able to affect policy change? If yes, can

you mentioned some specific examples? What is the implication of such policy change to the country?

- 1.9. In what ways can UNDP strengthen its policy advisory role (what worked and what didn't work; why)?

2. RELEVANCE:

- 2.1. To what extent do you think the project objectives were in **alignment with country needs and national priorities, policies or strategies**? How about in terms of the **local needs**?
- 2.2. How was the work conducted under this project connected to the broader reform agenda that is under way now in Bahrain? Was it integrated with the existing reform architecture led by the Presidential Administration? Please provide specific examples.
- 2.3. Was the work of this project sufficiently focused on the sub-national (local) level? Do you see these types of projects being more useful at the national or sub-national levels?
- 2.4. To what extent were the **approaches taken by the UNDP** appropriate in terms of the project **design and 'focus,'** and the balance between **upstream and downstream** efforts?
- 2.5. How coherent was the project in terms of how it fit with the policies, programmes and projects undertaken **by other development partners**?

3. EFFICIENCY:

3.1. **Managerial and operational efficiency:**

- a) Has the project been implemented **within expected dates, costs estimates**? Explain **'factors'** influencing the level of efficiency.
- b) Has the project management taken prompt actions to solve implementation and other operational issues? What was **project management structure** (incl. reporting structure; **oversight** responsibility)?
- c) How adequate were the Project Management arrangements put in place at the start of the project? Did the project display effective adaptive management?
- d) What were the implications of the project's organizational structure for the its results and delivery?

3.2. **Programmatic efficiency:**

- a) Were the financial resources and approaches envisaged appropriate to achieving planned objectives? Was there a 'good' mix of upstream and downstream efforts to maximize the results?

- b) Were the resources focused on a set of activities that were expected to produce significant results (**prioritization**)? Has the project achieved ‘value for money’?
- c) Has the project followed any known ‘best practices’?
- d) Were there any efforts to ensure ‘synergies’ with other projects within UNDP (and those of other partners)? Explain results, and contributing factors.

3.3. What could have been done to improve the overall efficiency of the project?

4. SUSTAINABILITY:

- 4.1. To what extent are **project benefits likely to be sustained** after the completion of the project? What are the supporting/ impeding factors?
- 4.2. What are the risks that are likely to affect the persistence of project outcomes?
- 4.3. What plans were put in place to ensure the continuity of the efforts (e.g., funding, technical capacity)? Has there been an **exit strategy** that describes these plans?
- 4.4. Do you think that the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow?
- 4.5. Would you want to see this project extended in its current form or some other form?
- 4.6. Do you think a project like this would be useful in promoting the achievement of SDGs in Bahrain?

B. ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT’S STRATEGIC POSITIONING

- 5.1. To what extent has the project been **responsive** to meeting the needs of the country? How responsive was the project to changes in development priorities?
- 5.2. To what extent has the project been able to **integrate the concept of sustainable development** in the policymaking process in Bahrain (design, allocation of resources and implementation)? Examples?
- 5.3. To what extent has the project been able to broker **South-South cooperation** (i.e., adopt lessons and best practices available in other countries, and share its own with others, for mutual learning). Examples?
- 5.4. What **was the comparative advantage of UNDP** in the area of sustainable development, when compared to other actors in the same area?

- To what extent has UNDP been able to provide **technical guidance**, and knowledge?
 - What are UNDP's **comparative strengths**, vis-à-vis other development partners, if any?
 - To what extent do UNDP have the skills and expertise needed to support this area in Bahrain?
- 5.5. To what extent has the project been able to establish **partnerships and networks** with relevant partners and build strategic alliances in supporting key national priorities in the sustainable development area?
- 5.6. What do you think would be the **role of UNDP in helping Bahrain planning for, implementing strategies to achieve and/or monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals?**

C. OTHER ISSUES

Are there any issues that you would like to raise about the project's performance that have not been covered in this interview?

ANNEX IV: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED FOR THIS EVALUATION

Name	Title	Institution
Dr. Ra'ed Mohamed BenShams	Director General	BIPA
Dr. Sofiane Sahraoui	Assistant Director General	BIPA
Ali Salman	UNDP Programme Analyst	UNDP

ANNEX V: BIPA

Bahrain Institute of Public Administration (BIPA) was created by Decree No. 65 for the year 2006 promulgated by His Majesty the King, Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, on 28th June 2006. The Institute aims to develop public administration and training in Ministries and State institutions and contribute to qualifying and training the staff of these Ministries and institutions.

This is to be conducted in accordance with the requirements of training programs, R&D and consultancy endorsed by BIPA's management with the main objective to enhance public administration and support economic and social development plans.

BIPA's scope of work is to:

- Determine the training, study and research programs appropriate for the varying levels of public administration, including leaderships, top executives, professionals, etc.
- Hold courses, workshops, seminars and meetings on public administration and training for various levels of public administration, with a view to enhancing public administration and strengthening economic and social development plans.
- Conduct studies, and gather, publish and maintain public administration documents, researches and data.
- Work with national, regional and international research & study centres and scientific organizations in the field of public administration.
- Coordinate with all Government entities, universities and institutes as well as private-sector institutions and obtain, from the same, data, statistics and studies pertinent to BIPA's objectives.
- Establish a specialized library that is accessible to administration, science and training researchers and interested people.

Ongoing Supporting Initiatives

Bahrain Qualification Framework

Is one step among others towards a far-reaching educational reform in the Kingdom and part of extensive plans by the leadership of Bahrain and the Economic Development Board to revamp the Kingdom's education and training opportunities and prepare Bahrain's next generation for the workplace of the 21st century.

The process is expected to take two years and will be managed on a day-to-day basis by "Tamkeen" and a project Steering Committee which reports progress to the Education Reform Board.

The Bahrain Qualifications Framework will ensure the relevance of qualifications to the changes in demand within the labor market. It will further allow Bahraini to enhance their professional and vocational skills for improving their personal career path.

TNA

The TNA study has identified a number of courses that needs to be delivered to fill the gaps across Bahrain Government. This need is an opportunity to create a structure that will be able to follow up on course development and delivery to the public sector at large.

The TNA exercise was so far the major delivery in this respect and will lead in its final phases to the identification of a portfolio of training programs and priorities on a per ministry basis. BIPA portfolio of training will be equally impacted by the TNA study results. Besides identifying training needs, the TNA study undertook a thorough evaluation of learning & development support processes in the different PSI, which will set the stage for further consultancies offered and/or brokered by BIPA.

Based on the TNA results and best practices in other public sectors, BIPA will endeavour to define a comprehensive agenda of consulting that will be developed and offered overtime both through in-house resources and outsourcing.

Policy framework (Political and Legislative)

Alignment with the Economic Vision

BIPA's action plan has been set in light of Bahrain's national strategy 2030. Four principal functions have been assigned to BIPA under the national strategy:

Designing an outstanding leadership programme tilted towards bettering the performance of the leaderships in charge of formulating public-sector policies and maintaining those leaderships in their top positions; delivering adequate training for government employees and enhancing the quality and availability of this training; providing opportunities for gaining further experience; increasing the focus on the ability to acquire skills in recruitment and promotion procedures. An additional function is cultivating a culture in which government employees become more customer-oriented.

BIPA is currently preparing the implementation programmes to realize the objectives of Bahrain's strategic vision. The Institute started with government leadership development programme to be followed by personal development programme. In particular, BIPA has targeted female personnel for its leadership development programme, in an effort to enhance the capacity and increase the number of female public sector employees employed in decision making positions. Other training programmes are to be introduced over the coming period. These efforts are exerted in tandem with the Civil Service Bureau's declaration of its intention to link career development in the government to BIPA-provided training.

ANNEX VI: PROJECT'S RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Intended Outcome as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:				
Enhanced transparency and accountability of public intuitions as well as participation of all constituencies in systematic national decision-making in Bahrain.				
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets.				
Indicator: Coordination system for inter-ministerial planning in place. National strategic planning with clear bench marks.				
Applicable Key Result Area (From 2008-11 Strategic Plan) Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs				
Partnership Strategy:				
Project title and ID (ATLAS Award ID):				
Establishing a Capacity Development Facility at BIPA in the Kingdom of Bahrain – Project I.D. 61812				
Intended Outputs	Output Targets	Indicative Activities	Responsible parties	Inputs in US \$
<p>1. Capacity Development Facility established, fully operational and mainstreamed among Public Sector Institutions</p> <p><i>Baseline:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>There's no Specialized unit and staff in the field and in BIPA</i> 2. <i>... (number) of consultancies' requested by government's institutions</i> 3. <i>...(number) of consultancies used by government's institutions and initiatives resulted.</i> 4. <i>.... (number) of trained staff in public administration</i> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Number of Staff based on concrete needs in the Unit</i> 2. <i>Number of Consultations conducted with government institutions</i> 3. <i>Number of CD response programmes published</i> 4. <i>Number of CD activities organized</i> 5. <i>Number of Women and men who participated in CD activities.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a clear framework for CDF establishment, and initiate inclusion of government institutions and asses needs for public administration development. 2. Establish CDF as a unit inside BIPA, and organize recruitment, staff trainings, etc 3. Set standards for BIPA's CDF as a centre of excellence providing value added support to governmental, and lead three pilot training. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Identify sectoral needs/gaps using TNA results and other assessments, and classify CDF priorities by sector. 1.2 Establish clear quality standards for developing CDF experts data base 2.1 Launch open call for experts to apply. Concerted efforts will be made to encourage diversity of candidates, including the promotion of women and persons with disabilities. 2.2 Recruit staff and organize trainings for CDF 3.1 Design Capacity Development Support programs, including experts/firms procurement procedures. 3.2 Conduct pilot training workshops for national public institutions on applying competence evaluation tools at all levels 3.3 Develop a self assessment system and management innovation to be introduced inside government institutions 	<p>BIPA</p> <p>UNDP</p> <p>EDB</p>	<p>Project team = 270,000</p> <p>Operation = 35,000</p> <p>CDT = 10,000</p> <p>Consultants = 150,000</p> <p>Workshops = 15,000</p> <p>Printing = 10,000</p> <p>Editing = 5,000</p>

<p>II. BIPA is Promoted as a reference point for Quality Assurance System of Capacity Development and qualified human resources put in place.</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. QAS does not exist 2. Specialised human resources 3. Performance evaluation at governments institutions exist on ad-hoc basis <p>Output Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CD experts database established at BIPA 2. Number of requests from government 's institutions 3. CD strategies applied in pilot institutions 4. Institutional competence and performance evaluation tools developed 5. Human resources at BIPA trained to handle quality assurance for competence evaluation at governments institutions Institutional self assessment systems developed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish CD as a reference centre for value added input to improve PA in Bahrain 2. CD is mainstreamed in government institutions with BIPA as a reference and TA centre 3. Establish a diverse pool of professional human resources available at BIPA as a reference center, in particular promoting the inclusion of women and persons with disabilities and public sector management innovation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Conduct intensive training of trainers workshops for BIPA staff on competence evaluation tools and analysis 1.2. Design and populate experts database through a transparent vetting system. 1.3. Design a professional communication strategy about BIPA as a reference CDF centre <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Provide Technical assistance to government institutions in introducing capacity development in their national plans and budgets 2.2. Organize events and workshops to promote BIPA strategy as a reference capacity development centre, focusing on the importance of CD within government institutions. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Procure professional services for the development of corporate competence evaluation tools 3.2. Launch BIPA total appropriation of Capacity Development Facility through adoption of its two years program in partnership with government institutions. 	<p>BIPA</p> <p>UNDP</p>	<p>Project team = 270,000</p> <p>Operation = 26,000</p> <p>Consultants = 50,000</p> <p>Workshops = 10,000</p> <p>Printing = 5,000</p> <p>Editing = 2,500</p>
				<p>TOTAL = 858,500</p>

ANNEX VII: PROJECT'S WORK PLAN

Output 1: Capacity Development Facility Established and Fully Operational												
Target Outputs	Y1				Y2				Y3			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Output 1.1: Establish a clear framework for CD responses												
Output 1.2: Initiate professional approach among government institutions												
Output 1.3: CD is mainstreamed in government institutions with BIPA as a reference and TA centre												
Output 1.4: Establish BIPA's CDF as a centre of excellence providing value added support												
Outcome 2: BIPA is Promoted as a reference centre through a well established Quality Assurance System of Capacity Development and qualified human resources												
Intended Outputs	2011				2012				2013			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Output 2.1.: Establish BIPA as a reference centre for value added input					ONGOING ACTIVITY							
Output 2.2.: Establish BIPA as a value added institution to improve PA in Bahrain												
Output 2.3.: Establish a diverse pool of professional human resources available at BIPA as a reference center, in particular promoting the inclusion of women and persons with disabilities				ONGOING ACTIVITY								