SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

INITIATION/PARTICIPATION IN CROSS-SECTORAL DIALOGUES ABOUT SDGS INVOLVING GOVERNMENT & NGOS

Relationships with NGOs, Regional & National Government
The SDGs will be a major influencer on the strategies and actions of governments, businesses and organizations, as well as on development finance flows, over the next 15 years. Consequently, the Kingdom of Bahrain hosted the sixth meeting of the interagency and expert group on the sustainable development goals (SDGs) that will frame the economic and social policies from 2016 to 2030 [1] with the presence of International experts from dozens of countries and U.N. organizations. In response, the Kingdom of Bahrain has taken several steps to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 after building on its experience and expertise in achieving the Millennium Development Goals ahead of its schedule in 2015. Great attention has been paid to these goals with a strong commitment to diversify the economy in order to assist in increasing productivity, raising living standards and creating job opportunities for citizens. As a result, the Bahraini government has established multiple institutions for the sake of supporting the SDG 2030 vision through:

- Helping support the citizen.
- Providing systems for protection like social care and health care.
- Supporting development of education’s quality and its outputs.
- Addressing social inequality.
- Supporting vulnerable segments of the society.
- Providing opportunities for economic empowerment for the younger generation.
- Supporting political and economic participation of the Bahraini women.
- Supporting preservation of environmental resources.

Since the SDGs also have strong relevance to universities and the tertiary and academic sectors more broadly, so education, research, innovation and leadership will be essential in helping societies address these challenges. It should be noted here that the contribution of universities to the SDGs is much broader, as they can support the implementation of every one of the SDGs as well as the implementation of the SDG framework itself.

In this sense, and due to its broad remit around the creation and dissemination of knowledge and its unique position within the Bahraini society, Applied Science University or ASU, has a critical role to play in the achievement of the SDGs and consequently aligned its strategy, internal policies and governance to embrace and implement the SDGs with the collaboration of the Bahraini government and NGOs.

ASU has started this journey by aligning existing activities to SDGs, identifying pain areas & weaknesses, developing/updating policies and strategies to
empower SDGs, and maintain a close follow up on this overall process for the sake of continuous improvement.

The main areas of contribution of ASU would be “Learning & Teaching”, “Research”, “ASU Governance & Culture”, and “External Leadership”, which are depicted in the figure 1 that is captured from the “SDSN Australia/Pacific’s guide “Getting Started with the SDGs in Universities”.

As a result, ASU has defined its “Strategy Plan 2015-2020” in which the main strategic objectives are defined as seen in figure 2 below:
Figure 2- ASU Strategic Plan 2015-2020

It is clear from the University’s objectives that objective number 3, “Community Engagement”, and objective number 5, “Internationalization & Partnership”, are 2 major objectives in the direction of supporting relationships with the national government and NGOs for the sake of improving SDGs through conferences and cross-sectoral dialogues.

The major milestones, that are related to collaboration with the national government and NGOs for the sake of improving SDGs, and that have been achieved are:

1. Full confidence from Bahrain’s Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) for additional programmes, bringing the total number of programmes with Full Confidence to nine.
2. Collaboration agreement with the Higher Education Academy (UK) for pedagogic development of our faculty where 50% of ASU’s academic
staff are now HEA Fellows or Senior Fellows or in the process of achieving this qualification.

3. International partnership agreements with two leading British universities, London South Bank University and Cardiff Metropolitan University which led to having four new programmes to be in operation and recruited their first students in September 2017.

4. Institutional Listing for the University on Bahrain’s National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Register by the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA).

5. Successful application for HEC Institutional Accreditation where significant progress has been made on preparations for the Accreditation Panel Visit.

6. Increase of almost 70% in the number of research publications (42 in 2014/15 and 71 in 2016/17).

7. Participation in the “International Conference on Sustainable Futures (ICSF 2017)” which is an international research conference organized in collaboration with London South Bank University, with participants from over 20 countries.

8. Strengthened links with the business community via formal agreements with employers and organizations (including Flat 6 Labs, SMEs Bahrain, Bahrain Businesswomen’s Society, etc.).

ASU created the “Community Engagement Office” whose director is Dr. Mohammad Al-Hamami who states in his message to the community engagement annual report that: “Community Engagement is incorporated in all aspects of ASU. The university works in conjunction with many societies, NGOs and companies to give its services to the community. Deanships, departments and different organizational units contribute to serve this noble cause. The community Engagement members are driven to bridge our teaching and learning process with the community. The students are the creator of these events and our staff is keen to make the community a focal point for development and flourish. The strategic objective of the Community Engagement Office is to ensure that Office is committed to create impact on society. Recognize that it has a duty to its students, alumni, and staff to ensure that they understand their obligations as citizens in engaging and supporting and supporting the community which they are part of. The strategic objective of the office can be reached through achieving the following key priorities: Consultancy and Advisory and Knowledge Sharing, Community Support, Open Campus, and Public Outreach”.

The key priorities of the Community Engagement Office are to:
Provide “Consultancy & Knowledge Sharing” to the Bahraini community by developing and delivering a broad portfolio of services that the University can offer to the community in order to provide advice, discussion and debate on SDGs. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of consultancy and advisory activities conducted by the University as well as the number of events/seminars/lectures/articles and discussion groups led by ASU’s staff and involving the wider community. ASU held 80 “Consultancy, Advisory and Knowledge Sharing” activities since 2016. Sample events are:

1. International Conference on Sustainable Futures (ICSF) [2]
   o Conference was held under the patronage of the Minister of Education of Bahrain, Dr. Al-Nuaimi and in association with London South Bank University and with sponsorships from the Chartered Institute of Building, Nass Group, the Higher Education Academy in the UK, and LSBU.
   o A speech was delivered by Dr. Abdul Ghani Al Shuwaikh, Secretary General of the Higher Education Council, on behalf of the Minister of Education who spoke at length about the importance of the topic in light of the National Research Strategy developed by the HEC.
   o The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of ASU and Honorary Chair of the Conference delivered a speech about the importance of sustainability from Universities’ perspective and how ASU is keen to embrace a sustainable approach. He stressed that this conference will undoubtedly contribute to the king’s vision 2030 to make the Kingdom of Bahrain a truly international knowledge hub. He then thanked the Minister of Education in Bahrain for his continuous support and for the patronage of this conference.
and added that the Ministry of Education, the Higher Education Council, and the Bahrain Quality Assurance Authority are doing a great job in transforming Education and Higher Education in the Kingdom, and ASU is committed to their vision and state of the art guiding strategies.

- ASU contributed to the summit with many papers.

2. THE ANNUAL DISTINGUISHED SEMINAR (ADS)
- In April 2017, and under the patronage of Professor Waheeb Alkhaja, Chairman of Board of Trustees, the Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies in cooperation with the College of Law organized the Annual Distinguished Seminar (ADS). The ADS seminar series aim to increase the exposure of staff to national and international research which is very important to the “Quality Education SDG”.
- This year, the speaker of the ADS was a world-leading scholar who helped in defining the research agenda in his field and continued to shape its development.

3. “Linkedin” Interactive Workshop
- In April 2017, Dr. Mohammad Al-Hamami, the Manager of the Community Engagement Office and Assistant Professor in the Management Information Systems Department, participated in the “LinkedIn” interactive workshop. The event has been organized by Tamkeen Bahrain.
- The aim of the workshop was to discuss the successful methods of how to enhance professional reputation on LinkedIn, challenges of labor market in the region, the advantages of using LinkedIn network, and how to create a professional profile on LinkedIn. This aim falls under SDG 8 “Decent Work & Economic Growth”.
4. **Productivity Congress**
   o Professor Saad Darwish participated and represented ASU in the **World Productivity Congress** on the 2nd of April 2017.
   o The World Productivity Congress has been hosted 17 times in several countries since the first congress took place in the United Kingdom in 1969. For the first time in the World Productivity Congress hosting history, the 18th Congress was hosted in the middle east and in particular in the **Kingdom of Bahrain**.
   o The Congress brings together a distinguished group of leading **businessmen, industrialists, scholars, politicians, administrators and productivity experts** from around the globe and from all sectors of **industry, commerce and public service**. It is this breadth of expertise and experience that makes the Congress an important event for **shaping future governmental approaches to productivity development, Sustainability Development and for shaping future organizational strategies.**
5. INQAAHE CONFERENCE 2017
- Applied Science University (ASU) participated in the INQAAHE Conference 2017 titled "Between Collaboration and Competition: The Promises and Challenges for Quality Assurance in Higher Education", which took place in the Gulf Hotel, Bahrain for the period 28 February to 1 March 2017.
- The conference was sponsored by the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) where 350 delegations from 57 nationalities participated.
6. MENA Industrial Summit 2016
   o Dr. Mohammed Al-Hamami, Director of ASU Community Engagement Office, was invited by “IEEE Bahrain branch” to participate in the MENA Industrial Summit 2016 on 20 September 2016. The Summit was organized by MENA Industry and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); and sponsored by Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) and many other Governmental and private organizations. The aim of the summit was to find the suitable ways to develop the industrial research, facing organizational industrial challenges in the MENA region, and how can the industry sector save the region from resource depletion, and what are the industries the region depends on.

7. Solid Waste Management
   o Prof Saad Darwish, President’s Advisor for Special Projects participated in a seminar about the risks facing Bahrain regarding solid waste management.
   o Mrs. Eman Salman from the Urban Planning Department /Ministry of Municipalities and Urban Planning Affairs said that Bahrain generates more than 1.2 million tons of solid wastes
every year. Daily garbage production across the tiny Gulf nation exceeds 4,500 tons. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) is characterized by high percentage of organic material (around 60%) which is mainly composed of food wastes. The government is trying hard to improve waste management scenarios by launching recycling initiatives, waste-to-energy project and public awareness campaign. However more efforts, in the form of effective legislations, largescale investments, modern SWM technology deployment and environmental awareness, are required from all stakeholders to implement a sustainable waste management system in Bahrain.

- Professor Saad gave some suggestions on how to create systems that lead to a greener environment.

8. Bahrain Business Environment Forum
- Dr. Hussein Khasharmeh participated in Bahrain Business Environment Forum held on Wednesday the 5th of October 2017. This event was organized by the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry Business Women Committee in cooperation with Public Affairs Committee in Bahrain.
- The main theme of the Forum was the future plans of the ministries to improve the business environment in Bahrain and to activate the cooperation between public and private sectors.
- The president of Economic Development Board in Bahrain, and three ministers were involved in the Forum as keynote speakers.
- Dr. Khasharmeh explained to the audience that ASU approaches the consultation of the industries for any program development
via the practice of having advisory boards and feedback from stakeholders to raise the employability rate.

9. Professional Certificate In Teaching And Learning In Higher Education Program
   o The Secretariat General of the Higher Education Council conducted a workshop on “Professional Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Programme” as part of its strategy to promote the professional level of the academic staff in the Higher education institutes in Bahrain, and to prepare them to achieve the rank of professional Fellowship from the Higher Education Academy UK, based on the agreement between the Government of Bahrain and the Higher Education Academy in the UK.
   o ASU nominated 7 staff members to attend the workshop to qualify them to apply for the Fellowship certificate from The Higher Education Academy in UK.
10. WASD 15th International Annual Conference

- Professor Saad Darwish and Professor Sideeq Ameen attended the WASD 15th International Annual Conference at Ahlia University which was held under the patronage of the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain from 16 – 18 May 2017.
- This event provided a forum for academics, government and industry to discuss the various challenges facing the world particularly the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries in their efforts to achieve a sustainable knowledge-based inclusive development. It was an opportunity for all scholars, government representatives, and policy makers to get an external, unbiased point of view on the matters relating to their fields of practice.

✓ Provide “Community Support” through arranging and participating in community engagement activities (ASU and external) that provide opportunities for students, alumni, and staff to engage with and serve the community. The goal is to increase the number of all types of participants. ASU held 96 “Community Support” activities since 2016. Sample events are:

1. Orphans and Widows Campaign
   - In July 2017, Dr. Murad Abdulla Al-Junabi, a member of the teaching staff at the College of Law, in ASU, participated as an educational advisor in the Orphans and Widows campaign as part of ASU’s support for “Good Health & Wellbeing”.
   - The number of the participants reached 340 orphan and widow from the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2. Students Celebration on Labor Day
   - On Labor Day, ASU students, who are studying human rights in General Studies Department, a celebration to recognize our
cleaners, drivers and security personnel who contribute to making ASU safe, secured, and clean. Their contributions are vital in providing a good image of our University. The good gesture and initiative by our students demonstrate their kindness and willingness to apply what they have learned in the classrooms and as part of SDG8 “Decent Work & Economic Growth”.

- The celebration was attended by the President, Dean of Arts and Science, and 30 colleagues who are cleaners, drivers and security personnel, in addition to over 100 students.
- In a recent report about happiness, results have clearly shown that expatriates enjoy happy experiences while living in Bahrain. This is a testimony to the generosity, kindness and hospitality of Bahraini who make all of expats feel very welcomed. The event took place in ASU cafeteria on Monday, 17 April, 2017.

3. ASU Ramadan Football Championship For The Voluntary Community

- The Community Engagement Office, in collaboration with “Fazaat Shabab” Society and “Future Leaders” voluntary team, organized the ASU Ramadan Football Championship for the voluntary community as a contribution to “Good Health & Wellbeing”.
- The championship lasted for three days; kick off on Wednesday 14 June 2017 with the participation of ten teams that presented the local community, voluntary groups, and ASU. More than 120 players participated in the championship.
4. Turn8 Pre–Accelerator Demo Day
   o The Director of Community Engagement Office participated in “TURN 8 –Pre–Accelerator –Demo Day”. The event was the last phase of a program where the selected batch of technology startups in the Kingdom of Bahrain presented their ideas to a panel of investors and attendees from the startup community and experts.
o The event was powered by **Bahrain Economic Development Board** in collaboration with Startup MGZN, and in partnership with Tamkeen, Bahrain Development Bank, Zain Bahrain, and CH 9.

5. **ASU Sponsored Manama Week**
   o On the 30th of October 2016, the Chairman of the BOT, the President, some colleagues, and a large number of our students attended the opening ceremony of Manama Week on **Entrepreneurship and Youth Empowerment** that was organized by the **Capital Governorate**, under the patronage of the **Capital Governor**.
   o ASU is a gold sponsor of this event and we received a trophy as recognition of this support from Sheikh Hicham. The President appeared on Bahrain TV to talk about the event.
6. **7th Effective Partnerships Annual Conference**
   - Miss Hana Dowaisan, a member of the Community Engagement Office with a number of ASU students participated in the “Seventh Annual Conference for Effective Partnerships and Information Sharing for Better Humanitarian Action” on Monday, 31 October 2016.
   - The event was held under the patronage of His Majesty King in collaboration with United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation’s Humanitarian Funds and the Royal Charity Organization (RCO).
   - More than 250 officials working in the humanitarian field and charity and relief organizations from various countries of the world participated in the event.
7. **Business Support and Career Performance Development Workshop**

- A group of students from the Management Information Systems Department participated in “Business Support and Career Performance Development” workshop that was organized by Al-Muharraq Governorate and Tamkeen at the Muharraq Model Centre in Busaiteen on 5 March 2017.
8. Honoring Ceremony The 3rd National Skills Competition

- Under the patronage of the Undersecretary for General and Technical Education in Ministry of Education, Mrs. Latifa Albonodha, the National Skills Committee organized on Tuesday 25 April, 2017, an Honoring Ceremony for organizers, experts and volunteers/participants who played a major role in the success of the competition over five days.

- During the event, Mrs. Latifa honored a number of ASU staff from Marketing and Public Affairs and students who participated in organizing the competition. She acknowledged ASU for their support and hosting the 2 day event.

Transform ASU’s campus into an “Open Campus” through enabling appropriate use of the campus, facilities and services by the public, schools, academic institutions and charitable organizations for free or at a nominal cost. ASU held 22 “Open Campus” activities since 2016. Sample events are:

1. Methods of Success Course

- On the 1st of April 2017, the Community Engagement Office in collaboration with “Fazaat Shabab” organization hosted “Methods of Success” course.

- The course has been conducted by Doctor Ahmed Mamoon who is an expert trainer in human resource development.

- Different subjects related to the course have been discussed such as the success concept, killing success, features of failure, flame of success, the equation of creativity in success, characteristics of successful people and how to think positively and being responsible and how to develop skills.

- Different participants from the local community and ASU students attended the course.
2. Engineer Your Life Forum
   o The Community Engagement Office in Applied Science University, with the collaboration of Etqan Voluntary Team, organized “Engineer Your Life” Forum on Saturday the 19th of November 2016.
   o The event included many activities such as a workshop titled “The Effective Change”, a song about aspirant, a second workshop entitled “Life skills”, drawing of a historical figure, submitting questions to the audience, setting up a number of competitions, giving awards to speakers, distributing prizes to the audience and giving them attendance certificates.
   o The interaction from participants was very significant with the activities and events of the forum.

3. AIESEC Youth Speak Forum
   o AIESEC is a global, independent, non-profit organization run by students and graduates who aim to enable the youths to
convert their ideas into actions in issues mainly related to leadership and management.

- ASU President, Professor Ghassan Aouad, also a member of the board of AISEC, hosted at ASU, AIESEC forum that was held on 21 and 22 October 2016. The forum was under the patronage of the **Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**.
- An inspirational speech was made by HE the Patron of the conference, Sheikh Abdulla, where he spoke about **climate change, quality of education and gender issues**.

![Image](image.jpg)

- Another inspirational speech by Mr Amin El-Sharqawi, **UNDP Resident representative in Bahrain**, who spoke about the 17 **sustainable development goals of the UN**.

4. **ASU Job Fair 2017**

- The Career Development and Alumni Affairs Office in the Deanship of Student Affairs organized an extremely successful “**Job Fair**” on Wednesday 12 April 2017, that was under the patronage of the **Minister of Labor and Social Development**.
- The **Under Secretary of the Ministry** opened the fair and honored the **governmental institutions** and the 25 companies that participated from both the public and private sectors.
5. The Opening Ceremony Of Skills Bahrain
   o On the 26th of March 2017, and under the patronage of HE, the Minister for Education, ASU hosted the opening ceremony of Skills Bahrain Competition in the presence of HE the Secretary General of the HEC, Chairman of the BOTs and many dignitaries.
   o The College of Arts and Science showcased many skills including graphic design and IT systems.

Enhance “Public Outreach” by developing relationships with all sectors of society (including government, policy-making bodies, charities, distinguished figures, institutions, schools, media and other NGOs) to promote outreach through dialogue, engagement and collaboration. ASU held 88 “Public Outreach” activities since 2016. Sample activities are:

1. Going Global
   o Part of the Strategic marketing plan to improve the overseas student recruitment and raise the awareness of the University international programmes and as a part of cross-sectoral dialogues, the Directorate of Marketing and Public Affairs Acting office Manager Mr. Abdulhameed Baqi visited the Atlas Agency for Educational Consultancy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Dammam area to introduce the University specialties and the new Programmes of the College of Engineering in collaboration with the London South Bank University in addition to the Business Studies, Accounting and Finance Programmes in cooperation with Cardiff Metropolitan University.
   o The meeting was held on the 2nd of August, 2017.
2. Meeting With BAPCO
   o On the 1st of August 2017, the Chairman of the BOTs, Professor Waheeb Al-Khaja and the President of the University Professor Ghassan Aouad, hosted an introductory meeting with the General Manager of Human Resources Administration affairs of Bahrain Petrochemical Company (BAPCO), Mr. Abdul Raouf Almehza and Mr. Mohammed Hussain Haji Ali, in order to strengthen the partnership.
   o The meeting included ways of enhancing joint cooperation and extending bridges of communication between ASU and BAPCO, particularly with the new internationally hosted programmes, constructively with the company activities, as well as to discuss opportunities for collaboration between Students and the company.
3. President Of Bahrain Business Women Society
   o On the 13\textsuperscript{th} of October 2016, the President, the President’s Advisor for Special Projects, and the Dean of Student Affairs and Evening Studies organized a meeting with Ms. Feryal Nass, the President of Bahrain Business Women Society, and Mr, Mohamed Fakhro Board member of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry to discuss further opportunities for SDGs collaboration.

4. Royal Court’s Third Session Of The Legislature
   o Applied Science University was invited by the Royal Court to attend the opening of the third session of the legislature in the presence of HRH the Crown Prince and other dignitaries, on the 16\textsuperscript{th} of October 2016.
   o His Majesty King Hamid hailed Bahrain Landmarks strides since the inception of its reform project and saluted the loyal people of
Bahrain for their crucial contribution to the reform milestone. He promised to continue build the state that **protects the basic rights, balanced liberties and honest democratic work**, hailing the National Assembly members for assuming their legislative duties. Bahrain derives its strength from the **spirit of fraternity, coexistence and moderation**, stressing the importance of transmitting the inspiring message to coming generations.

5. **A Memorandum Of Cooperation Between ASU & BBS**
   - On the 26th of October 2016, a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Bahrain Businesswomen’s Society (BBS) was signed.
   - The President and Board members of the society attended together with a large number of staff and in the presence of Professor Waheeb Akhaja, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.
   - ASU President gave an overview of the University, followed by a speech by Ms Feryal Nass, President of BBS and the event was concluded with a presentation by Ms. Monia Mensi of the BBS’s new Strategy which is the first outcome of the collaboration between the two organizations.
   - Since June 2016 several workshops and meetings have taken place between ASU and Bahrain Businesswomen’s Society (BBS) board members, with the contribution of the **Supreme Council for Women, Economic Development Board, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization**, and individual experts in the field of women’s economic development to build a new strategy of the BBS.
With regards to objective number 5, “Internationalization & Partnership” and its contribution to the partnership with the national government, the University’s key priorities are to:

✓ Expand the “Partner Networks” by creating a network of high value partners that share the University’s ambitions and values and can help develop SDGs.

✓ Enhance the “External Profile” through building relationships and embarking upon joint projects with partners that support the implementation of ASU’s priority objectives that focus mainly on SDGs development and improvement.

✓ Liaise with “National Government” by playing a key role in partnership with the Bahraini government to support the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain which focuses on SDGs.
