



غرفة البحرين
BAHRAIN CHAMBER

Bahrain Gate Forum

Day One Sectoral Sessions Recommendations

الاثنين 28 إبريل 2025 – فورسيزونز المنامة
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Preliminary statistics: Classification of recommendations according to importance and level of impact on the sector



Classification of recommendations according to importance and level of impact on the sector

 **High Impact**

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
1	Supporting the existence of an integrated strategy for national food security	Food Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching national investment initiatives through the Bahrain Development Bank and relevant authorities, and opening them to investors from the public and private sectors to support food security projects. • Providing fully equipped central strategic food warehouses, with cooperation between the public and private sectors, in order to enhance food security and reduce costs for traders. • Coordinating with importing countries regarding changes to decisions on imported and exported goods, and granting a grace period before the decision comes into effect.
2	Poor preferential access for Bahraini manufactured food products upon export	Food Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing greater facilities for exporting food products manufactured in Bahrain, in support of national industries and in line with the principles of the Gulf Common Market.
3	Limited infrastructure of central food markets	Food Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a partnership model between the government and the private sector to establish and operate modern central markets with integrated infrastructure (refrigeration, regulation, health, and oversight). • Allocating approved sites for local food producers.

Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
4	Supporting the establishment of an integrated national strategy with the participation of partners from the public and private sectors	<p>Health Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forming a higher national committee for sustainable health policies with the participation of relevant ministries, public and private health institutions, and health insurance representatives, with the aim of developing a comprehensive health strategy based on integration between the two sectors, ensuring sustainable financing and quality of services, and strengthening Bahrain's position as a regional center for advanced medical care.
5	The call for international accreditation of health institutions and services "global"	<p>Health Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launching an international health accreditation initiative for medical institutions, which includes a national roadmap to achieve accreditation such as JCI (international accreditation for hospitals) and ISO for healthcare facilities, with financial and technical support for interested institutions, and linking accreditation to incentives, to raise confidence in the quality of healthcare services and increase the competitiveness of the healthcare sector in Bahrain.
6	Activating cooperation between the public and private sectors by providing a supportive environment for the establishment of high-quality pharmaceutical factories.	<p>Health Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing partnerships between the public, private and individual sectors through IPO – Initial Public Offering (stock market)
7	Activating the renewable energy adoption strategy and activating energy efficiency tools	<p>Industry and Energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing solar and wind energy projects within industrial zones, in partnership with the private sector and international expertise, and establishing a specialized fund to support industrial energy efficiency, in partnerships with European green funds. Combining factories to distribute energy in factories involved in energy production. Developing laws that allow the use of vacant land for renewable energy production. Working with large-scale industries to increase efficiency and reduce waste. Establishing a renewable energy law. Establishing an independent sustainable energy authority, separate from the Electricity and Water Authority, to oversee energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives and work to raise awareness of energy efficiency. Incentivizing factories committed to green energy.
8	Lack of incentives to develop the transport sector's infrastructure and provide competitive, quality logistics services.	<p>Transport and Logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting investment in the infrastructure of the Transport Sector By launching a strategic incentive package, including financing facilities, tax incentives, and operational support, with a focus on digital innovation and sustainability, which will contribute to transforming Bahrain into a competitive regional logistics hub. Redesigning the regulatory framework for transport fees and permits to be more fair and flexible, stimulating competitiveness rather than burdening operators, while linking it to the Bahrain Logistics Vision 2030. Establishing a unified point with a unified system to facilitate procedures, reduce burdens and costs, and save time. Establishing service facilities for the region/ inspection companies/ labor housing/ truck garages, and defining free zones in the Kingdom of Bahrain, with the existence of a law related to such areas.

Tracks “Challenges”		Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
9	The expected consequences of the tax policy to impose revenues on the profits of local companies	Finance, Insurance and Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax-exemption for companies with annual income under 1 million Bahraini dinars. • Signing bilateral tax agreements with major trading partners, starting with Saudi Arabia and the GCC countries. • Gradually implementing fees (large companies, SMEs, and small businesses with exemptions). • Enhancing accounting governance; enforcing audited bookkeeping and financial reporting in individual enterprises. • Maintaining the Kingdom of Bahrain's competitiveness by imposing lower taxes than neighboring countries. • Full clarity on the tax framework and scope, with private sector engagement. • Implementing a progressive rate or a moderate flat rate. • Adding a tax incentive/credit program. • Implementing e-invoicing. • Establishing a clear mechanism for financial support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
10	The decline in the sustainability and competitiveness of financial institutions, especially with the imminent introduction of carbon emissions fees and the implementation of local corporate profits.	Finance, Insurance and Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradual implementation of fees, with a focus on the largest emitting sectors: electricity, oil, and petrochemicals during the first phase . • Establish policies and regulatory frameworks for carbon emissions taxes, while aggregating data sources. • The need to have full clarity on implementation details. • Improving data infrastructure, including the creation of a national emissions registry that includes major factories and power plants. • Establishing a national carbon policy unit or integrating it within a government agency. • Integrating it within the National Bureau For Revenue. • Aligning proposed policies with corporate tax and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).
11	Lack of clarity regarding the financial support mechanism for small and medium enterprises	Finance, Insurance and Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a guarantee registry through the adoption of the Secured Transactions Law • Enabling banks to access more data, including electronic invoicing data, through the National Bureau for Revenue • Raising the guarantee/insurance ceiling for small businesses and individual enterprises by Tamkeen • Promoting innovation in banking product development by improving collaboration with financial technology (Fintech) companies, in partnership with the Central Bank of Bahrain, banks, and open banking companies • Studying the insurance sector to launch credit insurance products targeting SMEs. • Increasing awareness of available financing opportunities among individual enterprises. • The need for a greater role for the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry in promoting financial literacy, by creating a mandatory orientation program to register enterprises as SMEs.

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
12	Implementing the basic principles of educational tourism	Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a national body with a specific budget for scientific research and innovation. • Facilitate admission and visa procedures for international students. • Strive to operationalize the accreditation of Bahraini degrees in Gulf countries. • Pursuing the achievement of balance in demand between private and public universities. • Provide a supportive legislative system for students from outside Bahrain, such as facilitating housing contracts/ providing health insurance/ the possibility of part-time training. • Establish a comprehensive system that facilitates transportation across the King Fahd Causeway for a nominal fee (for students). • Promote local universities by holding and participating in regional education and training exhibitions in Bahrain, in addition to promoting them through the cultural offices of the Kingdom's embassies abroad. • Add educational tourism as a key component of the Ministry of Tourism's strategy for the period 2026-2030.
13	Supporting the independence of educational institutions in making decisions and implementing programs that link them to the labor market	Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granting educational and training institutions greater autonomy in developing curricula and programs based on labor market needs, and establishing a periodic system for assessing skills gaps in cooperation with the private sector and administrative authorities.
14	Supporting the early education sector and people with special needs	Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing government and private sector support to train early education specialists, and providing logistical and financial support. • Directing support for the establishment of private educational institutions for people with special needs and increasing financial support for guardians.
15	Supporting the existence of qualified national competencies to meet the needs of the labor market	Hospitality and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching a specialized national qualification program for tourism and hospitality professions, with cooperation between universities, the Tourism Authority, and the private sector, which shall include practical training, scholarships abroad, and the recruitment of qualified personnel within clear career paths to ensure that outcomes align with labor market needs. • Educating the community on the importance of the tourism sector. • Prioritizing having Bahraini hiring managers, with benefits if implemented. • Having Bahraini personnel as the face of tourism facilities is mandatory. • Developing school curricula to include tourism and hospitality as a core subject in the English-language curriculum from the foundational levels, highlighting its importance. • Launch a tourism development fund focused on providing financing options and suitable support programs for micro, small, and medium-sized tourism establishments • Involving INJAZ Bahrain programs that focus on tourism.

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
16	The need to review policies and update laws to meet the needs of startups.	Commercial Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listing laws and decisions that need updating or proposed amendments to guarantee the interests of all stakeholders, in preparation for submitting them to the government. • Launching appropriate rental payment packages based on the classification of commercial establishments, taking into account that government rents are paid in installments for SMEs
17	Decrease of cash flow and lack of flexibility in implementing VAT and custom duties	Commercial Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postponing the collection of value-added tax due on imported goods arriving at customs to be after the sale process, from 90 to 60 days after arrival.
18	Tech startups having difficulty obtaining funding	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a fund/platform managed by an existing or new entity, with support from the government and banks/investors (local and international), dedicated to investing solely in technology companies, separate from the existing SME fund of the Bahrain Development Bank. • Organize awareness sessions and provide templates to assist technology companies in presenting their financing proposals to banks and equity investors.
19	Establishing an authority to regulate the construction sector	Real estate and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefiting from international experiences: Examining the experiences of other countries in regulating the construction sector and benefiting from best practices. • Adding the regulation of the construction sector to the Engineering Regulatory Authority to provide financial and administrative support by allocating a sufficient budget and providing the necessary competencies to operate the authority effectively. • A representative from the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry to be a member of the Engineering Regulatory Authority's Board of Directors.
20	Scarcity of basic building materials, backfilling and landfilling materials from quarries	Real estate and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a public company to supply basic materials in partnership between the government and the private sector. • Focusing on recycling materials used in landfilling.

Classification of recommendations according to importance and level of impact on the sector

 **Medium Impact**

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
1	The need for an integrated program to support local food industries aiming to achieve linkage with global markets in the food industry	Food Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with BTEA to organize annual international B2B events for the food sector, such as Gulf Food and Saudi Food, bringing together all elements of the local food value chain—food, packaging, hospitality, and modern equipment—which supports collaboration and provides opportunities for international promotion. Providing workshops to enhance knowledge and build business partnerships, particularly attracting Saudi investors..
2	The limited infrastructure of central food markets	Food Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a partnership model between the government and the private sector to establish and operate modern central markets with integrated infrastructure (refrigeration, regulation, health, and oversight). Allocating approved sites for local food producers.
3	Promoting comprehensive treatment packages at competitive prices, with cooperation between the public and private sectors.	Health Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a national center for medical tourism that works to design and promote integrated treatment packages with cooperation between private and government hospitals, including treatment, accommodation, and transportation, at competitive prices, while providing visa facilitation and regional and international promotion based on Bahrain’s national brand in healthcare.
4	Activating the comprehensive national strategy for industrial energy security and involving the private sector	Industry and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activating the partnership between the public and private sectors to establish projects that support waste-to-energy conversion. Activating the Gulf Energy Market platform and allowing industries to purchase directly.
5	The limited competitiveness of the national product and the lack of alternative export markets	Industry and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a unified Gulf-Arab platform to connect industries, supporting the standardization of technical specifications, activating industrial exchanges between countries, and working to develop national products to suit global markets. Developing financing products for exports in coordination with relevant authorities. Creating a communication network between the committees of the Chambers of Commerce of the GCC countries (to explore trade and investment opportunities, capitalize on opportunities in the industrial sector, and develop local industries). Adopting global industrial standards to increase the competitiveness and productivity of national products. Implementing a protective tax on goods exported to Bahrain that practice a dumping policy and limit the competitiveness of national products
6	Stimulating industrial investment	Industry and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the possibility of exempting emerging national industries from direct competition in the local market, and the impact of this on the industrial sector. Explore the possibility of extending the repayment period for financing industrial projects with the aim of expanding production, based on a comprehensive assessment of the industrial facility based on performance standards and indicators. Enhance industrial production capacity by providing facilitation for procedures related to establishing factories. Provide industrial land at preferential prices. Create partnerships with existing local or international factories to cover regional consumption of their products. Incentivize investment by government investment agencies (Mumtalakat) in local factories.

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
7	Support the development of maritime transport to make Bahrain a "major maritime transport hub"	Transport and Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing an integrated electronic platform + electronic payment Establishing advanced logistics zones near ports (storage areas, logistics services, maintenance, shelter yards). Simplifying customs procedures and facilitating ship registration and operating licenses. Adopting a smart port system to facilitate loading and unloading operations and container tracking, such as the Dubai Trading App.
8	The necessity of updating the apprenticeship system in accordance with international standards.	Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a school-based apprenticeship system modeled after international models, in cooperation with private sector training institutes and with joint financial support. Allowing universities to provide training in their fields of specialization, with the possibility of cooperating with training institutes and the private sector. Enabling institutes and training centers to conduct accredited vocational skills tests for citizens and expatriates under the Bahrain Skills program.
9	The need to develop scientific research and university projects and link them to direct applications in society.	Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a national body affiliated with the Council of Ministers with a specific budget for scientific research and innovation in partnership between the government and the private sector, developing an innovation incubator system based on successful global models (such as the tripartite model between universities, industry, and government), and providing tax incentives for companies that invest in research and innovation.
10	Limited market access for technology companies and weak investment opportunities	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a partnership network to support technology companies in distributing their products and services regionally and internationally. Encouraging government agencies and private companies to adopt technological solutions developed in Bahrain and ensuring a minimum level of Bahraini content as a mandatory requirement (either directly or through local partnerships) as part of the terms of project implementation or tender awards. Issuing a guide containing basic information on attractive regional and international markets to support companies' expansion into markets outside Bahrain.
11	The need for systems and legislation that support the technology sector	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressuring regulators to adopt a more attractive regulatory environment that allows for different types of share classes, diverse corporate ownership structures, convertible bonds, and recognition of intellectual property. Commissioning a comparative study to highlight the regulatory environment in key markets such as the Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), the SGIA, and the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC).

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
12	The proposed strategies to activate sustainable tourism	Hospitality and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating the approved National Tourism Strategy to include sustainable tourism programs. • Launching a smart seasonal promotion program aimed at redistributing demand throughout the year by linking local and regional events with international tourism deals and exhibitions. <p>Proposed Initiatives:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focusing the national carrier's efforts on promoting tourism in Bahrain by offering competitive prices that attract incoming tourists. - Providing continuous tourism facilities and programs in Bahrain throughout the year, such as international children's cities (family-friendly and appropriate for individuals). - Marketing tourism in Bahrain through tourist seasons held in Gulf countries. - Setting green requirements for tourism facilities and stimulating investments in low-impact destinations, with Bahrain classified as a "responsible tourism destination" according to international indicators such as the GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council). - Hiring industry experts to help identify the sector's needs. - Reconsidering target markets. - Developing a mobile app or platform for tourism programs in Bahrain, which should be well-marketed across the three ports (following the example of Saudi Arabia). - Activating a tourism guide and establishing a hotline for tourists.
13	The legal framework for the tourism and hospitality sector is unattractive to investors, and there is an urgent need for updating and amendment to enhance ease of business and stimulate investment.	Hospitality and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the requirements imposed on tourism establishments and tourists • To impose gradual penalties for tourism establishments • Facilitating access to tourist visas for certain nationalities • Launching a project to reengineer tourism laws and legislation through a comprehensive review with cooperation between the public and private sectors, comparing tourism laws in Bahrain with those in Gulf countries to produce an updated law. • The inclusion of attractive elements such as rapid licensing, digital portals, and stimulating foreign investment in hospitality and entertainment services facilities • Introducing a specialized project to support the investor experience, similar to the one launched by the Tourism Development Fund in Saudi Arabia, which aims to attract investors in the tourism sector, provide advisors with experience in the sector, provide market information, and connect them with all relevant parties to ensure the success of commercial and investment activities (not just by raising funds, but also by opening global projects in Bahrain and activating and creating a tourism experience).
14	Economic factors that constrain commercial markets, such as rising rents, changing consumer behavior, and declining purchasing power.	Commercial Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase purchasing power by increasing the repayment percentage ceiling from 50% to 60% for those with monthly salaries up to BD 3,000, and extending the maximum repayment period from 7 years to 12 years to reduce deductible monthly installments and increase purchasing power. • Request to grant an extension period of 60 to 90 days for the payment of customs duties on imports • Develop the capital market and enhance liquidity options for investors by improving securitization, sukuk, and bonds, as the development of the debt capital market is directly linked to increased attraction of foreign direct investment and economic growth. • Privatize certain projects to expand the role of the private sector by allowing investment in projects exclusively owned by the government. • Coordination with official bodies regarding improving the infrastructure of traditional/old markets and other areas (Manama Souq, Muharraq, Salmabad, Isa Town).

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
15	Foreign (non-resident) investors having difficulty obtaining real estate financing (mortgages) promotion	Real estate and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing the opening of temporary (conditional) bank accounts, allowing foreign investors to transfer funds from abroad to such account in Bahrain solely for the purpose of purchasing real estate. These funds shall be frozen and can only be used for approved real estate purchases, to ensure transparency and combat money laundering. After completing the property purchase procedures and activating the real estate investment residency, the account shall be converted from a temporary and conditional account to an active, fully functional bank account that can be used normally. • The ownership of real estate exceeding a certain value (determined by the relevant authorities) is linked to the granting of a temporary residency to the investor, enabling them to benefit from banking services and apply for real estate financing under conditions that protect the rights of financing entities. A financial guarantee mechanism or insurance fund could also be created to reduce risks for banks, thus encouraging them to finance this type of investment. • Exempting GCC citizens from certain requirements, such as security approvals, and reducing ownership procedures could contribute to facilitating their entry into the real estate market and increasing the volume of Gulf investments. • Meeting with the Central Bank of Bahrain regarding financing requirements and addressing challenges, reviewing the experiences of neighboring countries. • Exempting GCC citizens from security approvals. • Replacing the term "security approvals" with a more attractive term for investors.
16	Difficulty of real estate financing procedures and the high interest rates on such financing	Real estate and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation between all banking entities to find solutions that contribute to facilitating and accelerating the procedures for obtaining real estate financing, and increasing the percentage of financing provided to beneficiaries, while working to reduce interest rates, thus enhancing individuals' purchasing power, driving the wheel of real estate development, and contributing to supporting sustainable economic growth.

Classification of recommendations according to importance and level of impact on the sector

 **Low Impact**

	Tracks “Challenges”	Sector	Recommendations / Proposed Implementation Mechanism
1	Weak empowerment of small and medium-sized industries	Industry and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing small production lines, financial and technical support, and advisory guidance to establish local consumer factories, forming a permanent committee of representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Export Bahrain, and government and private bodies to monitor tariffs and trade barriers, and coordinating with key markets through periodic meetings. • Urging banks to facilitate access to banking instruments for small and medium-sized industries (SMEs), based on legal provisions supporting these industries.
2	Difficulty adapting to limited demand in the tourism, hospitality and exhibitions sector	Hospitality and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A government plan to identify local market needs regarding the quality and classification of hotels and tourism offices, linking them to new license approvals. • Conducting a study to attract new segments of Gulf and international tourists, using predictive analysis tools to understand demand patterns and adapt to them dynamically. • Preparing a study to identify the obstacles facing the sector, based on which a plan should be developed to address limited demand in the sector.
3	Challenges of the "Benayat" system	Real estate and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amending the approval procedures for obtaining a building permit • Adding all relevant entities to the "Benayat" system, including Civil Defense • Making the building permit a final document that cannot be changed at the time of construction, including approvals issued by Civil Defense
4	Establishing a system to identify those with rent default	Real estate and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is difficult to implement on those with rent default, especially for foreigners, the solution is to amend the law and create a system similar to the Benefit system for defaulting tenants. • We recommend highlighting the importance of reviewing and amending the current rental law, in preparation for the adoption of a digital platform and system like "Ejari" in Dubai. This step will contribute to regulating the relationship between real estate developers, municipalities, and tenants by enhancing transparency, controlling rents, facilitating payment processes, and documenting legal obligations between all parties, thus enhancing confidence and stability in the current rental market.