



National Education
For All Report

National Education For All Report The Sultanate of Oman

2014





Royal Speech

We devote great care and attention to the development and reform of education in Oman. Our aims include the raising of standards and updating the curriculum to make it richer and more relevant to the needs of an ever changing world.

Speech of HM 2005





His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said



H.E. Speech



H.E. Dr. Madina Ahmed Al Shaibania
Minister of Education
Chairperson of the Oman
National Commission for Education,
Culture and Science



HM Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the Sultan of Oman, has paid great attention and care to education since the early days of the blessed renaissance in 1970. Efforts were accelerated and the number of schools has reached more than 1040 schools covering all parts of the Sultanate and providing quality education that keeps pace with the finest education systems in the world. However, efforts are still directed to realize the desired goals and hoped ambitions in order to achieve sustainable development.

This national report in our hands was preceded by three reports issued by the Ministry of Education that monitored the achieved progress since the dawn of the blessed renaissance. The first was issued in 2005 as the Sultanate celebrated UNESCO's sixtieth anniversary, while the second was issued in 2007, entitled: Mid-Decade Report on Education for All in the Sultanate of Oman, and the third was issued in 2010 entitled: Education for All in Oman.

The historical context of this report by the Ministry demonstrates its importance. The indicators and outcomes it contains will form a roadmap. It also crowns the work of the International Movement of Education For All since confirmed by the Dakar 2000 conference. Therefore, it is considered a final assessment of this important stage in the education journey in the Sultanate on one hand, and serves as a compass that determines the features of education post-2015 on the other hand, since 2015 is the deadline of the International Movement for Education for All.

The report coincides with the Royal directives of HM the Sultan who directed to have a full assessment of the education system. It also coincides with the eighth five-year plan of development in the Sultanate (2011-2015). The results of the report should lead the Ministry to a new five-year plan. The report will be an essential reference for Strategic Planning in the Sultanate, especially, with the presence of many cultural, political, social and economic changes the world we live on is witnessing.

The observer of the previous educational strategies and development plans finds that they included a number of the Millennium Development Goals. In fact, many of these were realized in accordance with a clear vision within the education sector in the Sultanate years before they were enlisted on the international agenda, in particular, those considered acquired rights of individuals.

There is no doubt that the development of the education system in

the Sultanate of Oman, which is carried out in accordance with quality standards consistent with the educational goals and policies set out to achieve the goals of Education for All, is not immune to challenges that may face any education system in the world. However, the assessment of the progress toward the goals, according to the latest figures in this report, confirms the significant achievements in the various aspects. In relation to Early Childhood Education, several quality educational projects have been implemented starting from 2008/2009, including the National Campaign for Pre-School Education and the Advancement of Nurseries' Role project in collaboration with national and international institutions, represented by the AGFUND program, UNICEF and others, in addition to conducting several specialized studies in this regard.

The report also shows the progress in achieving universal primary education as the Sultanate strives to achieve an important goal which is to enroll all individuals, whether they are males or females, in primary education by 2015, by taking concrete steps. With regard to meeting the educational needs of the young and adults, as one of the Education For All goals, it has received great interest, directly or indirectly, although there are no specific indicators that allow the monitoring of the progress toward this goal. In this regard, it is encouraging to note the growing public awareness of the importance of lifelong learning, which has created actual belief among the diverse segments of the society in the need to continue public education through its different stages, including higher education, especially with the availability of many educational and training institutions in all fields in the various governorates of the Sultanate.

With regard to improving the level of adult literacy, in fulfillment of the international obligations of the Sultanate in the framework of the Dakar 2000 Conference, efforts have been continued in the field of literacy since the beginning of the blessed Renaissance. According to the 2013 population estimates of the National Center for Statistics and Information, literacy rate among Omanis for the age group of 15-75 years has reached more than 90%. The Ministry of Education works on a strategic plan to eradicate illiteracy by 2030.

Oman has made important steps in the field of vocational training as a key source for economic and social development. Therefore, the concerned authorities in the Sultanate benefited from the findings and recommendations of international conferences in this field such as the UNESCO Second International Conference for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, held in Korea in 1999, the revised UNESCO recommendation of 2001 on technical and vocational training and education, the Regional Conference for Technical Education and Vocational Training for the Arab States, held in Muscat in 2012, and the Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training, held in Shanghai in May 2012. The Sultanate utilized these events to set several foundations for the development of this type of education. The issuance of the Human Resources Development Strategy in 2012 was an important indicator of the implementation of several practical measures for the development of vocational education in the Sultanate. This was backed by a generous government support of more than OR 76 million in 2010.

As Oman makes serious steps toward improving the quality of education, in accordance with the international trends, believing that the success of any education system lies in developing educational curricula, educational evaluation and teacher professional development programs, the Ministry of Education has made several actions in this regard. The Ministry established the National Center for Educational Evaluation and Examinations and the Specialized Centre for Teachers' Vocational Training. The Ministry also set the principles for the application of a pioneering project for curricula standards. In addition to providing an attractive learning environment that makes advantage of the latest trends by deploying e-learning in highly efficient educational facilities.



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عاصمة الثقافة الإسلامية
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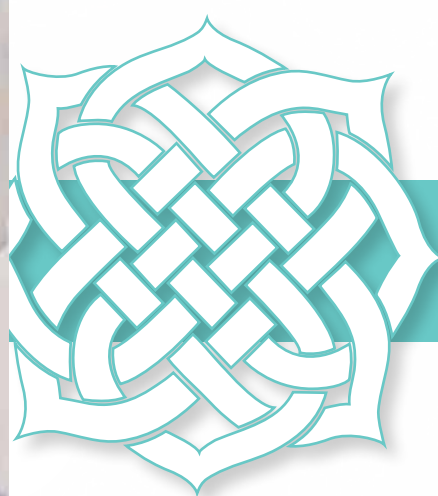
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Section 1

Introduction



1.1: Sultanate of Oman and Education for All

Oman is an Asian country. It is located in the farthest Southeastern part of the Arabian Peninsula between longitudes 51,50 east and 59,40 and latitudes 16,40 and 26,20 north of the Equator. It has a long coastline of over 3,165 km which extends from the farthest south on the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean to the Sea of Oman at Strait of Hormuz to the north.

Oman is bordered with the United Arab Emirates from the North, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from the West, and the Republic of Yemen from the South. Oman's overall area is about 309,500 square kilometers.

Oman is administratively composed of (11) Governorates divided into a number of wilayats and constituencies. The educational process in Oman is managed by (10) ten Directorates General of Education and one Educational Department.

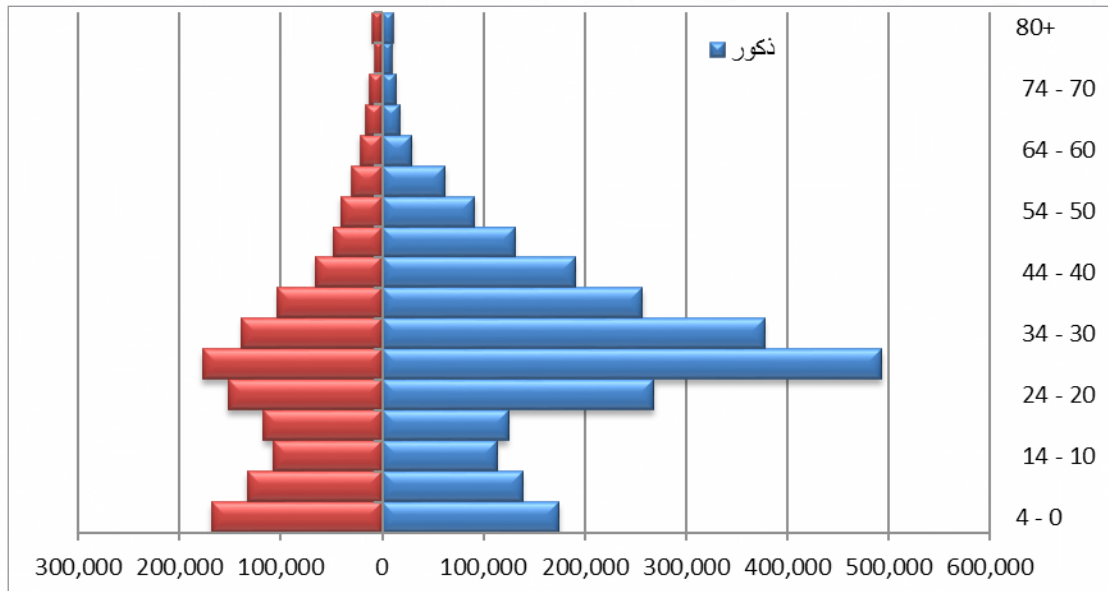
Oman is an arid hot country according to its location, and is characterized by the diversity of its topography including high mountains, fertile areas and sandy deserts. However, its location on the ancient and modern global trade routes and the existence of the Strait of Hormuz, a passage to over 40% of the world's oil, give it a strategic importance.

By mid-2013, Oman's population was 3.855 million distributed over 11 governorates. The population density is 12.5 people per km². The total fertility rate is 3.7 in 2012 while the crude mortality rate per 1,000 people is 3.2 in 2012 and the life expectancy at birth was 76.2 years during the same year.

During the past ten years, Oman's population increased by about 1.5 million, with an annual rate of 150 thousand. Omani nationals constituted about 56% of the total population while the percentage of expatriates was 44%. The latest statistics indicate the rise in the expatriates' percentage from 24% in 2003 to 44% in 2013 while the growth rate for Omanis was 17%, the growth rate for expatriates was 67% during the period from 2003 to 2013. During the last ten years, the increase in population was mostly for expatriates with a percentage amounting to 75% while the population's growth rate in Oman is 4.98 per year (National Center for Statistics and Information, 2013 A).



Figure (1): Oman's demographic composition for 2013



(National Center for Statistics and Information)

As regards the population distribution, 30% of Oman's population lives in Muscat Governorate (the capital) while the lowest population percentage exists in Musandam Governorate and Al Wusta Governorate, with about 1% each. Two thirds of the expatriates exist in three governorates: Muscat, Al Batinah North, and Dhofar. As regards the population's age and gender composition, the highest percentage of Oman's population exists in the age group between (25-29) years with 17.2%; the males' percentage of this age group was about 65% and 35% for females, as Oman's overall gender ratio amounted to 183 males per 100 females in 2013, due to the large number of male expatriates working in various sectors in Oman (National Center for Statistics and Information, 2013 A).

Throughout the years of its consecutive five-year plans, Oman managed to achieve economic, social, and human development in an integrated and balanced manner in all of its governorates, despite its challenging topography.

Education has witnessed a qualitative leap in terms of quantity and quality. While in 1970 there were only three public schools, now Oman has 1,040 public schools throughout its governorates, wilayats, and villages. Private education has also witnessed leaps in this area with the establishment of private and international schools and due to the attention to early childhood stage. The educational system has witnessed a continuous development in laws and regulations, curricula, evaluation methods and manpower, opening the opportunity for the private sector and developing partnerships with the various local stakeholders as well as with the international organizations working in this field, based on the



findings and recommendations of many evaluation studies conducted. The adoption of the basic education system and post-basic education system is one of the findings of such studies and partnerships.

Educational Structure:

Pre-school Education: Oman has given due care to early childhood stage by organizing the pre-school education, which includes nurseries from the age of three months to three and half years, and supervised by the Ministry of Social Development, followed by kindergartens and preliminary education which begins from the age of three years and two months to the age of five years and two months, and supervised by the Ministry of Education. This type of education is carried out by the private sector through supporting and facilitating its activities to establish nurseries and private schools for this stage, or through some public authorities providing private nurseries and schools, or some voluntary entities such as the Omani Woman Associations and some NGOs. The Ministry of Education began opening preparation classes at basic education schools from the age of four years and eight months.

Basic Education: It has been applied since the academic year of 1998/1999 for a period of ten years and comprises of two cycles: Cycle I which includes grades from 1 to 4 and Cycle II which includes grades from 5 to 10. Afterward, students move to the Post-Basic education stage.

Post-Basic Education: Extends to two academic years and includes grades 11 and 12.

General Education: Covers 12 academic years and includes grades 1 to 12. This system was applied before the basic education system, and began to decline with the expansion in universalizing basic education. The Ministry of Education has sought to get the two systems closer to each other through unifying the curricula, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods as well as unifying the educational environment with all its equipment and tools which assist the teachers to perform their task.

The Basic System of the State and the Future Vision of the Omani Economy (Oman 2020) indicate Oman's commitment to provide educational services for all, according to the foundations of justice and non-discrimination among citizens through providing free basic education for all citizens, which is characterized by efficiency and effectiveness.

Statistics of the Ministry of Education for the academic year 2011/2012 indicate that the adjusted net enrolment ratio in grade 1 was 96.1% while the average density in classes was (27 students). The average number of classes per teacher was (2.9 classes) and the average number of students per teacher was (9 students). The percentage of expenditure on school education from the public expenditure amounted to (20.37%) in 2011 (Ministry of Education, 2012 A).



In the area of higher education and as a result of the increasing demand, the consecutive five-year development plans in Oman were directed to achieve a number of strategic objectives for this sector, most notably; increasing the student capacity in higher education according to the requirements of economic and social development, developing the systems of higher education institutions and their academic curricula and programmes according to the requirements and needs of labor market, and improving the internal efficiency of the higher education system. The expenditure ratio on higher education amounted to (1.38%) of the Gross Domestic Product and (3.45%) of the public expenditure in 2011.

According to the statistics of the Unified Admission Center, the number of accepted students for the diploma and bachelor stage in the academic year 2012/2013 in various specializations was (28,774) students, which represents (74.2%) of the 39,501 successful students in the General Diploma (Ministry of Higher Education, 2012).



1.2: National Strategies, Policies, Plans and Targets for education:

In Article (13), the Basic Statute of the State indicates that education is a cornerstone for the progress of society, which the State fosters and endeavors to spread, and makes it accessible to all. Education aims to raise and develop the general cultural standard, promote scientific thinking, kindle the spirit of research, respond to the requirements of economic and social plans, build a generation that is physically and morally strong and proud of its nation and heritage and able to preserve its achievements. The State provides public education, works to combat illiteracy and encourages the establishment of private schools and institutes. In article (12), the State stresses justice and provision of equal opportunities among Omanis (Ministry of Legal Affairs, 1996)

Oman is one of the signatories of the 1990 UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Article (28) thereof stipulates that basic education shall be obligatory and freely available for all, encourage the provision of general or vocational post-basic education and shall be free with financial assistance made available if needed. Higher education shall be provided for all based on ability and efficiency. The educational and vocational information as well as counseling shall be provided to all students in addition to taking necessary actions to encourage school attendance and reduce dropout rates.

The Future Vision of the Omani Economy (Oman 2020) calls for action on the provision of basic education free for all citizens through an efficient and cost-effectiveness system, and work on improving the quality of basic education by increasing learning time of scientific subjects, such as mathematics, natural sciences, and computer, and work on teaching English language from the first grade. It also refers to provide and promote technical education and vocational training for graduates of public education to meet the needs of the labor market from various technical areas.

The vision of the Ministry of Education calls for improving the educational environment for management, teachers, and students at schools in a manner that ensures cooperation to build a good, working, and loyal generation capable of continuous learning, coexisting with others and fulfilling the labor market requirements with commitment and sense of responsibility, in order to accomplish its mission in preparing a generation that can achieve economic and social development for the society, through improving the teaching and learning processes in school management, providing physical and human resources, curricula, buildings, and quality evaluation tools as well as great care for the various segments of students during the academic years, employing technology well so as to keep pace with Oman's digital community, and stimulating the role of the private sector and local community in promoting the educational service.



With regard to the technical education and vocational training, the vision of the Ministry of Manpower calls for providing and developing the technical education and vocational training, expanding the educational and training programmes and specializations as well as linking them with the needs of the labor market, developing the training curricula according to the approved professional levels, awarding qualifications, encouraging on-the-job training and following up graduates to benefit from the available employment opportunities, contributing to national efforts to provide vocational guidance, spreading the awareness of work value and behaviors , and encouraging and developing the spirit of individual initiatives among citizens (Website of the Ministry of Manpower).

The vision of the Ministry of Higher Education gives due care to high quality education that meets the requirements of sustainable development, and seeks to accomplish its mission, which is to develop the system of higher education so as to keep pace with the latest developments and meet the needs of sustainable development in the knowledge society, while maintaining the identity of the Omani society and contributing to the development of human civilization.

The five-year plans in Oman focused greatly on education. For example, the Sixth Five-Year Plan focused more on the development of human resources and the Seventh Five-Year Plan sought to improve the learning outcomes of various stages (Supreme Council for Planning, 2012).

The objectives of the 8th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) include (Ministry of Education, 2011 A):

- Developing the education system according to quality standards consistent with the educational purposes and policies.
- Developing the study plan and its curricula to ensure producing educational outcomes suitable to the requirements of development and labor market.
- Raising the efficiency of student performance evaluation so as to contribute to the development of school attainment level.
- Raising the efficiency of human cadres and upgrade their skills.
- Expanding the employment of technology so as to keep pace with the strategy of E-Oman community.
- Raising the enrolment ratios in the Pre-school education to 50% for the age group (3.5 - 5.5).
- Reducing the illiteracy rate to (50%) of the current illiteracy rate.
- Raising the efficiency of the psychological, social, health, and professional student care programmes at schools.
- Expanding the provision of equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities and special needs as well as best-performing students.



Objectives of the Educational System in the Sultanate of Oman:

First: Objectives of the School Education:

The objectives of the school education can be summarized in building integrated personality for the Omani people able to positively interact with the present and the future in order to achieve comprehensive development for the Omani society, with the necessity to keep pace with the latest developments and participate in their making, adopt the scientific thinking approach in life, deal with contemporary sciences and technologies, and consider students' interests and attainment levels through providing them the opportunity to choose freely from several alternatives.

Second: Objectives of the Technical Education and Vocational Training:

The objectives of the technical education and vocational training can be summarized in disseminating technical education through preparing the technical manpower and reduce their shortage, as well as employing modern training methods and systems which link training with the requirements of the labor market.

Third: Objectives of Higher Education:

The objectives of higher education can be summarized in providing high quality higher education that meets the requirements of sustainable development through developing human resources that possess the skills required for work and life, which enable them to be productive in the knowledge world, qualified to adapt to the latest developments, loyal to their national identity and original values, and capable of contributing to the development of human civilization.

1.3 Institutions Responsible for Implementing EFA and Coordination Mechanism:

First: Institutions responsible for implementing EFA:

There are several authorities responsible for implementing EFA:

Ministry of Education: Responsible for supervising the pre-school education (Kindergartens, preliminary education, and preparation classes), as well as providing school education for grades (1-12) through 1,040 public schools (academic year 2011/2012) throughout the governorates, wilayats and villages across Oman, in addition to 406 private schools and 37 international schools (academic year 2011/2012) managed by the private sector and supervised by the Ministry of Education.

Table (1): Number of schools

Number of schools	Type of schools
1,040	Public
406	Private
37	International

(Annual Book of Educational Statistics 2011/2012)





Ministry of Social Development: Supervises certain Pre-school education institutions such as (nurseries, kindergartens, and preliminary education) which are affiliated to public authorities, voluntary entities and NGOs, or the private sector. According to the statistics of the academic year 2012/2013, the number of nurseries is (105) nurseries which accommodate (6,100) children in addition to kids' corners affiliated to the Omani Women Associations. There are 63 kids' corners accommodating (7,573) children along with 12 children development houses accommodating (1,646) children.

Table (2): Pre-school education Institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Social Development

Type of Institution	Number	Number of Children
Nurseries	105	6,100
Kids' corners	63	7,573
Children Development Houses	12	1,646

(Ministry of Social Development)

Ministry of Higher Education: Responsible for higher education as it supervises public and private universities and colleges which include all specializations for the Diploma, Bachelor, Master, and PhD degrees. According to the 2012/2013 academic year statistics, there is only one public university in Oman, which is Sultan Qaboos University, in addition to (6) public colleges for applied sciences, (7) private universities, and (20) private colleges. The Oman University for Science and Technology project is being implemented.

Table (3) Higher Education Institutions 2012

Type of Institution	Public	Private	Total
Universities	1	7	8
Colleges	13	20	33
Institutes	12	0	12
Total	26	27	53

(Annual Report of the Ministry of Higher Education, 2012)



Ministry of Manpower: Responsible for technical education and vocational training. According to the 2012/2013 academic year statistics, the ministry is operating (7) public colleges for technology, (6) public institutes for vocational training, and (2) public institutes for fishermen's training. It also supervises 162 private training institutes, which provide short and intermediate training courses, as well as 19 corporate training centers. There are also (69) offices for training services.

Ministry of Health: Supervises 11 medical sciences institutes.

Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs: Supervises one institute for Sharia sciences.

The Central Bank of Oman: Supervises one college for banking studies.

Second: Coordination Mechanism among institutions responsible for implementing EFA:

The Education Council, established by virtue of Royal Decree No. (48/2012), plays a significant role in coordinating among the institutions responsible for implementing education. The Education Council is concerned with drawing up the general policy of education with its various types and stages, directing education according to the state public policy and the requirements of comprehensive development, so as to achieve the cultural, social, economic, and scientific objectives of Oman in collaboration with the competent councils, developing a strategy for education within the framework of the state public policy, following up and evaluating the level of education quality with its various types and stages, taking all necessary measures to ensure the quality of education outcomes, approving the establishment of educational institutions with their various types and stages, and approving strategies and plans of higher education institutions with their various types and following up their implementation in collaboration with the competent authorities. The Education Council's membership includes representatives of all entities responsible for education in the Sultanate. The Education Council holds regular meetings.

The Higher Education Admission Center also plays a pivotal role in the area of coordinating for admission in higher education institutions. It receives and examines the requests submitted by the qualified applicants according to the requirements of the programs provided by public higher education institutions, internal scholarships in private higher education institutions, and external scholarships in higher education institutions abroad. The admission requests are received via the Center's website, SMS, or the recently activated smart phone applications so as



to add another way for receiving admission requests via the latest technologies and following up all procedures of the registration and admission process.

1.4: Partnerships between the ministries, agencies, civil society organizations, and international funding partners

There is close cooperation between various entities concerned with education, including public institutions, the private sector, NGOs and regional and international organizations in order to develop education. As for the government authorities, there is permanent coordination between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development with regard to the Pre-school education and methods to develop, improve, and disseminate it, in addition to the cooperation with the Ministry of Health with regard to the general health of students at schools, with the Ministry of Manpower with regard to technical education and vocational training, and with the Ministry of Higher Education with regard to absorbing the general education outcomes. There is also partnership with the Research Council in the area of students' scientific innovations.

The civil society plays a very important role in developing the educational process. The civil society concept started with the emergence and development of the modern State, which means that one cannot think of the civil society without a State (Supreme Council for Planning, 2012). The civil society in Oman witnessed a qualitative leap in 2000 with the issuance of the Civil Associations Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. (14/2000). The Ministry of Education seeks to encourage the participation of parents in the development process of education through parents associations which are formed at the level of schools, wilayats, and governorates as well as at the national level. Parents associations have organizational structure with several committees concerned with the issues of education, students' affairs, and topics related to students' performance and their educational attainment, as well as topics of social development with relation to schools and local community, health and environmental education, and activities and programmes. The civil society organizations are also being involved in symposiums held by the ministries concerned with education, especially the Ministry of Education, as well as through opinion polls in some projects and programmes which contribute to the development of education. The Ministry of Education is currently working on encouraging teachers, supervisors, and educators to present their ideas and proposals through their educational governorates, and work on spreading good practices among educational governorates. They are also invited on a regular and continuous basis to attend events, symposiums, and conferences held by various ministries on education development.

The private sector also plays a significant role in developing the education sector on various levels, as it works to provide devices, tools, equipment, print some brochures, and build some facilities and buildings. The education stakeholders are always keen on participating with the private sector in various symposiums, conferences and meetings as a basic partner in this process, in addition to implementing some joint programmes as listed in section III of this report such as Ghaytuh, Takatuf Program, etc.



Oman cooperates with various regional and international organizations concerned with education, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States and Yemen, and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

Oman has broad participations in UNESCO programmes and projects, in addition to its membership in several institutions and bodies affiliated to UNESCO. In 2013, Oman was elected as a member of the International Bureau of Education in Geneva, a member of the Board of Directors of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and a member of the International Hydrological Programme. During the same year, there was cooperation with the UNESCO in applying the General Education System Quality Analysis/Diagnosis Framework (GEQAF) in Oman, in addition to participating in several meetings, conferences, and symposiums held by UNESCO. Oman also encourages ASPnet schools and implements several projects and events in collaboration with them. The roles of other organizations such as ALECSO and ISESCO integrate with Oman in the area of education through stepping up efforts to develop education, and achieve the desired goals sought by various organizations in the area of education, and to implement the noble principles and goals on which they were founded.

Oman also cooperates with the UNICEF which is concerned with childhood programmes and projects, and has its office in Muscat to support its efforts in Oman. The most notable projects implemented in collaboration with UNICEF in 2013 are Early Childhood Criteria and the National Campaign for Early Childhood.

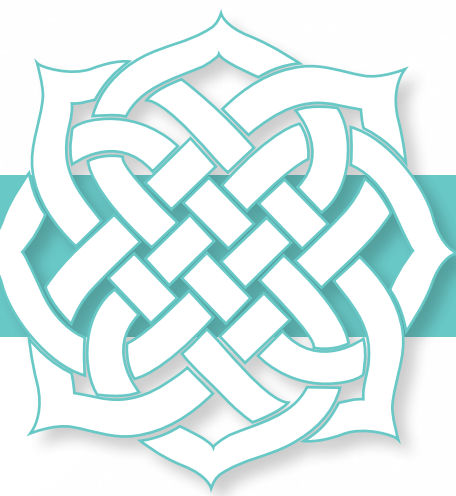
There are also projects and programmes implemented with cultural centers based in Oman, such as the British Cultural Center and the French Cultural Center, for the purpose of encouraging the international understanding and inter-cultural dialogue as well as supporting various educational projects and programmes through them.





مدرسة الإمام جابر بن زيد للبنين

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Section 2

Main EFA Challenges in 2000 and 2015 Goals



2.1: Main EFA Challenges in 2000 and 2015 Goals:

Since the onset of its renaissance in 1970, Oman has given due care to education and regarded it as one of the top priorities at that time, along with the health sector and its infrastructure. The qualitative leap of education in Oman since then and up to 2000 was recognized by the whole world and described as “huge, unprecedented, and unmatched in any other country” according to the 2001 World Bank Report, and Oman gained the first position in progress in the area of education and health on the global level in the 2010 Global Human Development Report. Analyses given in this report will highlight Oman’s commitment to providing good education for all through affirming the right of every child to free school education. The Omani laws also recognize the right of foreign communities to establish their own schools.

Looking at the first and second long-term development strategies, and the five-year development plans interpreting such strategies, one can see that they included a number of the Millennium Development Goals and all the EFA Goals, years before they were included in the international agenda, especially those deemed acquired rights of individuals. Such goals were achieved through specific and clear programmes whether in the area of dissemination and providing access to free education to both genders, dissemination of basic education, combatting illiteracy, technical and vocational education, and higher education, as well as the children’s right to enjoy a healthy disease free life.

When evaluating the progress made to achieve the goals, section III of the report points out the status and the circumstances in 2000, according to the latest statistics with regard to achieving the goals, which confirm significant achievements in Oman towards achieving EFA goals, along with some challenges or remaining steps in connection with early childhood education and education of persons with disabilities, according to the findings of the joint study conducted by the World Bank and the Ministry of Education in Oman in 2000, in addition to education quality which is considered one of the most important challenges not only in Oman but all over the world, according to the findings of the studies which measure the level of progress in this aspect.

Given the importance of early childhood education in developing the children’s skills, and preparing them to join schools and basic education, as well as the significant role of this stage in achieving better learning results in subsequent stages, Oman has paid attention to this stage, which has witnessed a large scale development. However, it is still limited and available only for those who can pay its expenses, as this type of education is mostly provided by the private sector, despite the efforts made by the Ministry of Education in applying the Preparation Classes Program for children before the school age in basic education schools, especially in remote rural areas. Since its beginning in the academic year 2005/2006, the programme is expanding, but considered insufficient and most children are not able to obtain free pre-school education in the near future. There are also efforts made by the Ministry of Social Development with regard to kindergartens, which are represented in Kids’ corners and children development houses, as detailed in section III of this report. However, these efforts are not considered up to the ambitions. All



this may lead to imbalance in providing equal opportunities to gain access to early childhood education, and contribute to increasing disparities in obtaining this type of education between urban and rural areas, and between rich and poor families.

As regards to education of persons with special needs, efforts made by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Development are making some progress in providing education for this segment, and the efforts and statistics are highlighted in section III. However, studies confirm that the support provided by the government to children with special needs is not sufficient, and there is still room to develop their teaching and learning process, and that the current system requires providing guidance to special education teachers, in addition to training programs (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012).

As regards to education quality and learning outcomes, which represent the greatest challenge facing the education sector, there is a need to increase the time spent by students in performing meaningful learning tasks so as to keep pace with the international standards. There is also a need to develop the culture of high standards of students' learning, and examine and deal with the low performance levels of male students, in addition to involving the parents and local community in education, and following up their children and the development of their performance levels (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012, pp. 233-234).

Despite the apparent successes achieved in the education sector, the march of educational development has no limits, and it is important for any educational system to identify the most difficult challenges facing the educational development plans. In the case of the educational system in Oman, there is a set of challenges facing this sector as determined by the Human Development Report

(Oman, 2012) issued by the Supreme Council of Planning (2013, P. 116):

- Topography of Oman which makes the delivery of educational services to some communities in the Sultanate costly. Such matter indicates the huge efforts made by the Ministry of Education to settle teaching and administrative staff in such areas.
- The need to review pre-employment teachers' preparation programs so as to make the teachers competent in their specializations and have the teaching skills and competencies according to international standards.
- The need to raise quality in all educational levels, especially after increasing calls to raise the level of learning outcomes so as to match the actual needs of the labor market on the local and international levels.
- Persistent dependencies on the government as the main source for education financing and the limited other alternatives to support this source.



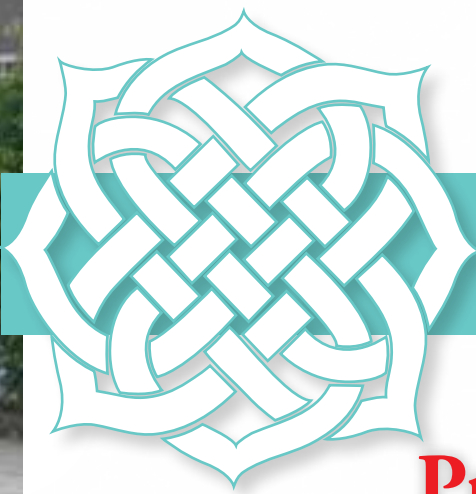
There are also a set of challenges facing education enhancement efforts, most notably:

- The big gender gap as female students outperform their male counterparts in educational attainment as 92% of female students passed the exams of Grade 12 for 2009 compared to 83% for male students. The findings of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 2011 indicate that the gender gap in educational attainment is big, noting that if the performance of male students is similar to their female counterparts in international tests Oman's ranking may have advanced by more than ten positions.
- Despite the higher academic performance of female students over their male counterparts, they have less representation and presence in the national workforce statistics.
- There is some concern about the suitability of education to the needs of youth and employment entities as some studies indicate that graduates of higher education lack basic skills such as teamwork, presentation skills, problem-solving, and critical thinking ([Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012](#)).









Section 3

Progress Made towards Achieving EFA Goals



Goal 1

3.1: Goal 1: Expanding Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

There is no doubt that early childhood stage is one of the most important stages in human life. Researches and studies stress its importance and positive effects in the short and long term (Early Childhood in the Arab World: Reality and Challenges, UNESCO, Beirut). The early childhood is a fast growth stage where the child goes through several physical, biological, and psychological changes. At the same time, the child's personality and behaviors begin to be shaped. The Oman long-term strategy until 2020 has placed early childhood care among its general objectives and confirmed that as a continuation of the efforts made by the Omani government, more measures should be taken not only to preserve such achievements, but also to promote and accelerate programmes related to protection and development of children. Oman has also focused on working to expand and improve care and education on a large scale in the early childhood stage along with the provision of health services and high quality pre-school education.

Within the context of its interest in the childhood stage, the Omani policy has set in its agenda a number of fields, which should be focused on so as to achieve the objectives of the sound childhood strategy. All such objectives aim to keep and protect children against potential risks through providing educational, preventive, diagnostic, and therapeutic services (Third and Fourth Reports on Child Rights).

In 2008, Oman prepared an initial draft of a comprehensive strategy for childhood. However, the work progress to complete such strategy was stopped when the Ministry of Social Development started to draw up a comprehensive national strategy for social work, which includes childhood strategy and other sectoral strategies, as part of the efforts made by the Supreme Council of Planning to prepare for the Social Policies Strategy. All such efforts integrate with the creation of what is known as the Social Observatory.

In 2013, the National Childhood Strategy was re-prepared, in collaboration with various public and civil entities, through conducting crucial studies which include various information and data on the childhood sector in Oman, highlighting the needs that require intervention, and developing programs and plans to develop the level of services, programs, and activities provided to children in Oman. In order to draw up such strategy (2015-2025) to coincide with the Ninth and Tenth Five-year Plans, several workshops were held so as to discuss the objectives and pivots of such strategy. The strategy's pivots were discussed during the 1st Childhood Conference held during the period from 11 to 13 February 2013 so as to examine and make remarks on them. It is noteworthy that the principle of children's participation and expressing



their opinions was mainly applied in the strategy methodology as (15) workshops were organized in various governorates of Oman in order to know their various needs and expectations from the strategy. This is for children and decision-makers who are competent in the areas of childhood.

3.1.1: Health Aspect of Early Childhood:

Oman achieved significant landmarks in the area of health development, which is reflected in the remarkable development of the health state of the Omani society, which is in line with the development of health services and care, in addition to the development of the economic, social, and environmental conditions. Many international organizations applauded such achievements as the health services provided in Oman became similar to those provided in the developed countries.

According to population estimates of the National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI) in 2012, the life expectancy was 76.2 years, and crude birth rate was estimated at 32.1 per 1,000 persons of the Omani society in 2012. During the past nineteen years, the birth rate decreased by 20.3% (in 1993, the birth rate was 40.3%). Such decrease was accompanied by a decrease in the crude mortality rate from 7.3 in 1993 to 3.2 per 1,000 persons of the Omani society in 2012, which means that the mortality rate decreased by 56.2% during the last twenty years (Ministry of Health, 2012).

The Omani society is young with population pyramid, characterized by a broad and wide base, with 13.9% of children aged less than 5 years and 33.7% aged less than 15 years, while 6% of the population aged 60 years.

The infant mortality rate was 9.5 per 1,000 live births, while the mortality rate of children aged less than 5 years is 11.5 per 1,000 live births (Ministry of Health, 2012).

Based on the concept of providing health for all and focusing on delivery of outstanding health care, Oman started implementing qualitative programmes as of 1986, in order to develop child health within the framework of the National Plan for Childhood Care, and in 1988 the plan was expanded to include women and the title changed to the National Plan for Woman and Child Care. Since then, child health in Oman has policies and objectives which are formulated especially for the Ministry of Health in the consecutive five-year plans, in line with corresponding international commitments. Based on such



policies, work objectives and strategies as well as application activities and mechanisms of implementation, monitoring, and evaluation were set. Oman is working on developing and implementing the qualitative programs which target important health problems and sensitive segments along with following advanced strategies, based on scientific and international foundations and evidences of a holistic nature.

During the past four decades, Oman witnessed huge achievements in the area of establishing and spreading primary health care network, which assisted in delivering health services to children in the Sultanate.

The quality and quantity of services provided to children in Oman has improved to cover all aspects of the promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative care through the network of primary health care institutions which supports the secondary and referral hospitals.

Text frame (1): Women health and child health seek to achieve the following objectives:

1. Expand in providing the reproductive health package at the institutions of the Ministry of Health.
2. Improve the reproductive behavior of the society.
3. Reduce children morbidity rate and mortality rate with emphasis on newborns, infants, and children aged less than 5 years.
4. Improve the quality of health services provided to children with emphasis on the following segments: Children with special needs, children with chronic diseases, and battered children.
5. Promote coordination among various fields related to child health at the central level

3.1.2: Supporting Mother Care Services

In the area of health care provided to pregnant mothers before and after delivery, in August 1987 the Motherhood and Childhood Care Program was applied on the national level, in order to reduce morbidity rate and mortality rate among newborns and mothers, through providing various medical supervision and comprehensive care. Such program was integrated in the primary health care for all communities in order to make such care holistic in its promotive, preventive, and curative dimensions. The statistics of 2012 indicated that the coverage percentage of mothers who received medical care during their pregnancy reached over 99%.

Services provided to women during pregnancy include early diagnosis of pregnancy, regular care of pregnant women according to applicable rules, promoting healthy pregnancy and adequate nutrition of



mothers, providing iron tablets and specialized care for high-risk pregnancy mothers, and basic laboratory tests in all primary health care centers. All pregnant women are immunized against tetanus according to their immunization level by following the National Immunization System. The abortion rate decreased from 20.8 abortion cases per 1,000 women at reproductive age in 1990 to 10.8 cases in 2012 (Ministry of Health, 2012). The challenge to mother health care is faced by the periodic examination during pregnancy so as to avoid complications of diseases associated with pregnancy such as diabetes, anemia, and high blood pressure.

3.1.3 Supporting Childhood Care Services:

The services include aspects of health care in hospitals and health care centers, including periodic checkups of newborns, to check for congenital diseases and genetic abnormalities, training health workers on care of newborn babies, care for premature babies, and how to handle acute cases such as: neonatal resuscitation, low blood sugar levels and jaundice, inflammations and anemia, etc. so as to reduce the complications accompanying such cases. Since 2004, the Ministry of Health has started to apply two programmes to check on newborns: hearing and thyroid checkups.

3.1.4: Expanded Immunization Strategy:

Through the Department of Communicable Diseases Control, the Ministry of Health is working to continue achieving the highest possible levels of early detection of diseases, maintaining the lowest rates of communicable diseases incidents, and committed to an accurate system of supervision and follow-up that is characterized by high coverage rates (more than 99%), including childhood vaccinations during the first two years of age as well as school vaccinations. Standard indicators are in place to monitor and control communicable diseases for the age group of less than 5 years old, in addition to vaccines side-effect complications. Some new vaccines were introduced to the age group targeted in the Expanded Immunization Program such as pneumococcal vaccine in May 2009, polio vaccine in 2009, and varicella vaccine in 2011.



Table (1): Immunization Indicators

Indicators	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012
Health Care Indicators					
Vaccines for children aged less than one year, coverage ratio %, vaccination against tuberculosis (BCG)	98.1%	98%	99%	99%	100%
Third dose against polio	99.9%	99.1%	99%	99%	98%
Third dose of triple vaccine	99.9%	99.9%	99%	99%	98%
Measles	99.8%	97.8%	99%	99.9%	100%
Hepatitis B (3) vaccine	99.9%	99.9%	99%	99%	98%

(Ministry of Health (2012). Annual Health Report)

Data indicate that immunization indicators in Oman are witnessing remarkable improvement in the area of providing children's vaccines. In 2012, the percentage reached 99% as an average of all types of vaccines and the remaining percentage of children who did not receive vaccines may be attributed to several reasons including the child's area such as remote areas or the family's culture with regard to being interested in their children receiving vaccines despite all education efforts made by the Ministry of Health in this field.

3.1.5: Diarrheal and Respiratory Diseases Control:

The Ministry of Health also takes measures to combat diseases not covered in vaccines, with the purpose of early detection of communicable diseases and maintaining the lowest rates of outbreak of infections and epidemics. In this context, the Ministry of Health took some measures including:

- The Diarrhea Control Program started in Oman in 1985 due to the great effect of diarrheal diseases in increasing morbidity and mortality rates among children of all ages, especially children aged 5 years old. This program seeks to spread awareness in the society and correct some wrong practices in health care centers and among individuals, such as the use of anti-diarrheal medications, abuse of antibiotics in treating diarrheal diseases in hospitals, and not taking care of breastfeeding and personal hygiene rules such as washing hands before preparing the child's food and boiling water before using it.



- The Diarrhea Control Program also contributed to encouraging mothers and health care providers to use oral rehydration solution, and getting health workers and mothers trained on the correct ways to use it. The morbidity burden of priority communicable diseases such as diarrhea disease known as Rota Virus is evaluated so as to reduce diarrheal diseases. In 2012, 81,926 diarrhea cases were recorded compared to 89,620 cases in 2000, while severe cases of such diseases did not exceed 0.2% and no deaths were recorded. Serological research was conducted in Dhofar Governorate so as to detect schistosomiasis among school students through collecting blood and stool samples from students and providing qualitative treatment for those who contracted the disease.

Table (2): Number of cases of diarrheal diseases among children aged less than 5 years in the health institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Health

Year	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012
Total cases of diarrhea	89,620	65,553	70,637	84,123	81,926
Average per 1,000 children aged less than 5 years	322	263	239	263	254
Case of severe diarrhea (% of total cases)	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2
Premature deaths due to diarrhea	0	0	0	0	0

(Ministry of Health (2012). Annual Health Report)

In 1987, Oman started applying the Control of Acute Respiratory Infections Program so as to reduce the morbidity and mortality rates of children aged less than 5 years due to the diseases of the respiratory system in addition to the proper use of antibiotics in treating such diseases. This program adopted several strategies including, unifying the treatment methods of respiratory diseases, raising the society's awareness level on how to prevent such diseases, and getting familiar with the symptoms so as to prevent complications. Considering that smoking is one of the main factors which increases the possibility of causing respiratory diseases to the smokers and people around them, especially children, the program aimed to reduce the ratio of smokers in collaboration with several governmental and non-governmental entities. The Ministry of Health is collaborating with the Ministry of Education so as to educate students on this program through participating in preparing pamphlets and booklets, in addition to devoting a chapter about communicable diseases and vaccines in *Facts of Life* Book within the school curriculum.



Table (3): Number of cases of acute communicable respiratory diseases among children aged less than 5 years in the health institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Health

Year	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012
Total cases of acute communicable respiratory diseases	455,290	376,774	366,230	400,070	393,423
Average per 1,000 children aged less than 5 years	1,635	1,513	1,239	1,249	1,219
Severe cases (% of total cases)	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3
Premature deaths due to acute communicable respiratory diseases	0	2	0	0	0

(Ministry of Health (2012). Annual Health Report)

3.1.6: Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses:

In light of the qualitative development of the Ministry of Health programs, and in order to have more holistic approach to children, the Diarrhea Control Program and the Control of Acute Respiratory Infections Program were integrated with other childhood services, under the name of “Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)” in 2001. The IMCI is a preventive and curative working strategy for children aged less than five years, aimed to improve child health care at the community level, as well as primary health care services. Through IMCI, primary health care programs directed for children, including care services, immunization, nutrition and health education are coordinated with other programs so as to reduce the mortality, morbidity and disability rates among children, and to promote their growth and development, through current and future focus on providing competent health workers to handle critical cases of newborns, and providing them with necessary training to take care of newborns and deal with various cases based on global criteria, expanding the training centers across Oman to fulfill the necessary needs, and expanding in the Newborns’ Checkup Program for the early detection of some genetic diseases among children, and working to improve the health status of such cases. The Ministry of Health seeks to expand the implementation of the community element of IMCI to include all primary health care centers.



Table (4): Nutrition Indicators and certain morbidity and mortality indicators

Indicators	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012
Nutrition indicators and certain morbidity indicators					
% of children whose weight is less than normal birth weight	8.1	8.3	10	9.6	9.5
Acute respiratory infections (per children aged less than 5 in a year)	1.6	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.2
Diarrheal diseases (per children aged less than 5 in a year)	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3
Mortality Indicators					
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)	16.7	10.28	10.2	9.5	9.5
Mortality Rate for children aged less than 5 years old (per 1,000 live births)	21.7	11.05	12.3	11.9	11.5
Stillbirth Rate (Dead fetuses) (per 1,000 births)	10	9.1	7.9	8	8.3
Maternal Mortality Rate (per 100,000 live births)	16.1	15.4	26.4	15.9	17.8

(Ministry of Health (2012). Annual Health Report)

3.1.7: Children Periodic Health Checkup:

The Child Health Card witnessed a great development in line with the development of child health services. In 2007, the Child Health Card was developed into Child Health Register based on providing integrated care for children, and evaluating their physical growth and mental development, in addition to evaluating the feeding method. The Child Health Register focuses on getting parents involved in taking care of their children's health, by providing information throughout various age groups about the child's growth, proper nutrition, and mental and physical skills acquired by the child in each age group. In 2007, the WHO Child Development Curve was applied to replace the old development curve to monitor the implementation of the infants' nutrition policy (infants and children under-five).





3.1.8 Reduction of Child Malnutrition:

The Ministry of Health is embarking on combating malnutrition problems especially among children under-five, encouraging proper nutritional practices for all, combating bad eating habits along with reducing the problem of micronutrient deficiency for all persons and preventing nutrition-related diseases, and supporting food safety in collaboration with other sectors, whereas flour was enriched with iron and folic since 1988. Nutrition services are provided in all health institutions as well as training of health workers, production of new media materials about malnutrition for all segments of the society, and educating students about healthy food. The malnutrition diseases resulting from protein and energy deficiency recorded a remarkable decline from 15 cases per 1,000 under-five children in 2000 to 4.6 children in 2012.

Table (5): Protein Energy Malnutrition in under-five children

Year	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012
Protein Energy Malnutrition in under-five children					
Total new cases of Protein Energy Malnutrition	4,161	5,388	2,033	1,664	1,478
Average per 1,000 under-five children	15	22	6.9	5.2	4.6
(%) of serious cases	6.8	7.1	8.6	10.5	10.1
% of hospitalized cases to total cases					
For treating malnutrition	4.8	5.7	3.7	0.6	0.6
For treating accompanying diseases	18.2	10.3	10.5	4.2	2.8
Malnutrition mortalities	0	3	0	3	1

(Ministry of Health (2012). Annual Health Report)



Malnutrition continues to be a serious health problem, especially during the early years of age. The Ministry of Health and relevant authorities are working to activate the National Strategy on Infants and Young Children Nutrition, extend the maternity leave so as to allow working mothers to extend the period of breastfeeding, and raise mothers' awareness with regard to child care and proper nutrition, particularly complementary food.

3.1.9: Promoting Breastfeeding:

This strategy aims to develop and apply policies which promote breastfeeding, such as proper healthy feeding until the age of six months, continue breastfeeding until the child reaches two years of age, supervise the implementation of the programs on control of micronutrient deficiency, supervise the implementation of the annual National Plan for Baby Friendly Institutions Initiative, and supervise the implementation of the decision to market Breast-milk substitutes in Oman in collaboration with the competent authorities and international organizations.

Table (6): Breastfeeding Indicators

Year	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012
Breastfeeding for infants recorded in child health register					
At birth					
Exclusive Breastfeeding (%)	n/a	97.5	95.4	94.5	94.9
Predominant Breastfeeding (%)	n/a	1.5	0.6	0.6	0.8
Formula and Others (%)	n/a	1.5	4.0	4.9	4.3
At 6 months of age	n/a				
Exclusive Breastfeeding (%)	n/a	31.3	16.2	16.9	9.1
Predominant Breastfeeding (%)	n/a	7.1	1.5	1.5	0.8
Formula and Others (%)	n/a	60.7	82.3	81.6	90.1
At 18 months of age	n/a				
Exclusive Breastfeeding (%)	n/a	1.2	0.5	0.3	0.2
Predominant Breastfeeding (%)	n/a	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Formula and Others (%)	n/a	98.6	99.5	99.7	99.8

(Ministry of Health (2012). Annual Health Report)



Figure 1

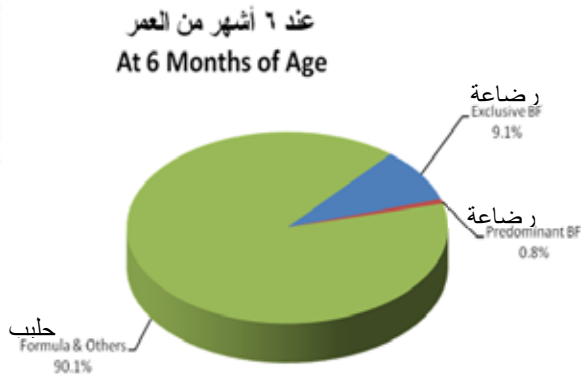


Figure 2



3.1.10: School Health Services:

The Ministry of Health gives attention and priority to school children in the age group of 16-18 years old, and provides them with health services and programs through the activities and programs of the Department of School Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, through the Joint Committee for School Health at the central and governorate level. Such services include provision of vaccines to students, conducting awareness sessions, and comprehensive medical checkups for children joining grades 1, 7 and 10, with the purpose of early detection of health problems and handling them at schools and health institutions. Eye test is performed on children in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10 in order to know cases of visual impairment, with its various types, and prescribe eyeglasses for such students and ensure that they wear it. Hearing test is also performed on students of grade 1 so as to detect cases of hearing loss and handle them. The annual coverage percentage of hearing test was about 98.7% in 2012 while vaccine coverage among school students was almost 100% (Health Report, 2012).

Oral and dental checkups are also provided to students in grade 1 and 2 to determine the level of tooth decay in the dens lacteus and apply fluoride on all lacteus and permanent teeth for students with medium and high risk factors of tooth decay, in addition to applying preventive treatment of decayed teeth (Refer to Child Health Statistics provided at schools via attached tables).



Text frame (2): Visual health activities are conducted at schools through:

- A. Follow up and treatment of common eye diseases among Grade 1 students and family members of students suffering from Active Trachoma
- B. Measurement and treatment of visual acuity among students of Grades 1, 4, 7, and 10.
- C. Health education on the sound practice of eye health and hygiene for school students and their families.

During the academic year 2011/2012, checkups were provided for 39,040 grade 1 students, 39,177 grade 7 students, and 41,212 grade 10 students. The coverage percentage of examined students was 99.5%, 95.4%, and 94.6% respectively, noting that the average coverage in all governorates was 99.0% except for Muscat Governorate which was 79.4% (Ministry of Health, 2012).

The environment health activities are important and basic in the School Health Program, whereas sound healthy environment is created by ensuring that:

- All school buildings are properly illuminated in addition to providing necessary ventilation.
- Schools are provided with necessary clean water as well as providing necessary sanitary means for waste and sewage disposal.
- Foodstuffs are properly stored and the place where foods are prepared and sold is clean.
- Schools are free from insects and rodents.

To ensure providing the appropriate environment for students inside schools, the environment is checked during the health team school visits and the school environment reports are submitted twice a year. A sample of the drinking water at schools is also sent for bacteriological and chemical testing twice a year.



Text frame (3): School Oral and Dental Health Preventive Program

This program consists of the following:

1. Examining all students of Grades 1 and 2 so as to determine the level of tooth decay in dentures.
2. Applying fluoride (varnish) on all dentures and permanent surfaces of teeth for students with medium and high risk factors of tooth decay.
3. Applying hole-filling substance (silant) on permanent molar teeth for students with high risk factors of tooth decay.
4. Applying preventive treatment for decayed teeth.
5. Getting teachers and students well trained on proper use of tooth brush and paste.

The School Health Program also aims to change the students' concepts, attitudes, and practices through providing them with correct and sufficient health information so as to enable them to affect their families and local communities. This is done through an integrated program for health education to all students in various age groups. Such program is implemented via *Facts of Life* Book.

Continued reduction of mortality of under-15 children, particularly as a result of accidents:

The Ministry of Health seeks to get families and society familiar with children accident preventive methods at homes, schools and vehicles, educate families and schools on first aid, increase the efficiency of health workers in the area of handling children accidents, and cooperate with the competent committees to reduce risk factors in the environment surrounding children so as to provide them with safe environment.

Improvement of quality of health services provided to children with chronic diseases and disabilities:

The Ministry of Health strives to provide accurate statistics on disabled persons in Oman, determine the reality and reasons of disability, and raise the ability of health and other services providers for early discovery of disability for treatment and rehabilitation, and integrate children health care services for chronic diseases and some disabilities in primary health care services along with providing work manuals and train health workers on handling such cases, provide household health services for some disabled segments which cannot reach the health institutions, and expand pre-pregnancy care services for newly married .



Provision of integrated services for at-risk children to meet their health, psychological, and rehabilitative needs:

The Ministry of Health will work to develop mechanisms to know the numbers of abused children who do not go to health care centers, conduct analytical studies to discover reasons leading to child abuse in the Omani society, introduce a system in health care centers to properly handle abuse cases, get health workers trained on providing treatment and health services to at-risk children, get the society familiar with short and long term health, psychological, and social effects resulting from abuse, cooperate with the competent committees in developing a comprehensive framework to reduce child abuse, and enact laws to reduce the spread of some traditional practices in the Omani society such as branding and female circumcision along with educating the society about the adverse effects of such practices.

Complementing the Ministry of Health efforts in the area of child health, the current plan aims to promote programs targeting certain segments of children including, children with special needs, children with chronic diseases and battered children. In the Seventh Five-Year Plan, a database was created for cases of violence against children reaching the health care centers. The current five-year plan aims to improve the level of service provided to children at hospitals, particularly in remote areas. As there are many departments and programs which serve children at the Ministry of Health, the current plan aims to find a mechanism to coordinate among such programs on the national level in order to promote child health in Oman.

3.1.11: Educational Aspect of Early Childhood:

The attention paid to child education affairs in the pre-school stage dates back to early 1970s, as the Omani women began to get involved in work. The idea of nurseries and kindergartens was new to the government then. Therefore, no laws or regulations were enacted at such time to make such institutions under governmental supervision or indicate how such nurseries perform their activities. As a result, the educational and psychological interest in the pre-school stage for children came as a natural outcome of women's work, in addition to the increasing understanding of the importance of such stage by the state.

Oman development plans reflected the interest in childhood in various fields related to child development at this stage, and subsequent stages, particularly in the areas of education, health, and social development. Oman achieved advanced levels, particularly in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and "World fit for children" plan. The duty of providing pre-school educational services was assigned to the private sector and some public and voluntary entities, so as to provide children with knowledge, skills, and behaviors that facilitate their transition to formal basic education, increase their aptitudes and abilities to learn, and increase their educational attainment rates.



Text frame (4): Objectives of the Pre-school education are as follows:

- Develop sense of belonging and pride as well as instill good citizenship.
- Consolidate the Muslim creed and values as well as good manners.
- Develop the children's feelings and mental abilities as well as develop the spirit of curiosity in them along with accurate observation and inclination for creativity.
- Develop the sense of belonging to the group and learn cooperation, independence, and self-reliance.
- Develop the ability of self-control and provide the appropriate environment that helps the children to have emotional and healthy development.
- Prepare children for school life (Ministry of Education, 1987)

A special pre-school section was established at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) and other private universities in Oman. Persons enrolled in this field are trained on how to handle children and increase their abilities and potential. The Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Education have assumed the main roles in various aspects of child education, in addition to the basic role of the family. The fields and efforts of these two ministries differ in terms of focusing on children according to their age groups.

The Ministry of Social Development attends directly to children aged from six months to three and half years, and provides them with care in nurseries as well as children aged from three and half years to six years and provides them the services through the Kids' corners and child development houses. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education devotes its efforts to children aged from three years and two months to five years and two months in kindergartens and Quran teaching schools. There are also some pre-school education institutions which are supervised by the Armed Forces and Royal Oman Police within the framework of caring for their personnel and their families (Ministry of Social Development, 2010).

3.1.12: Nurseries:

Educational and social institutions provide care services for children from three months to three and half years.

According to the bylaws regulating the nurseries, there are (3) types of nurseries in Oman:

- Public Nurseries: Nurseries established by certain public authorities.





- Private Nurseries: Nurseries established or managed by Omanis whether they are individuals, groups, companies, or institutions.

Communities Nurseries: Nurseries established, owned, or managed by foreign communities and companies in Oman for their children or children of other nationalities other than Omanis. For example, there are 6 nurseries for the Indian community in Oman accommodating 603 children.

The first nursery established in Oman was in 1986, and was followed by the establishment of several nurseries in subsequent years, particularly after the issuance of the regulating bylaws. While in 2001 there were 31 nurseries accommodating approximately 1,340 children, the number increased to 105 nurseries in 2013, distributed throughout the governorates of Oman, and the number of children in such nurseries was (6,100) boys and girls.

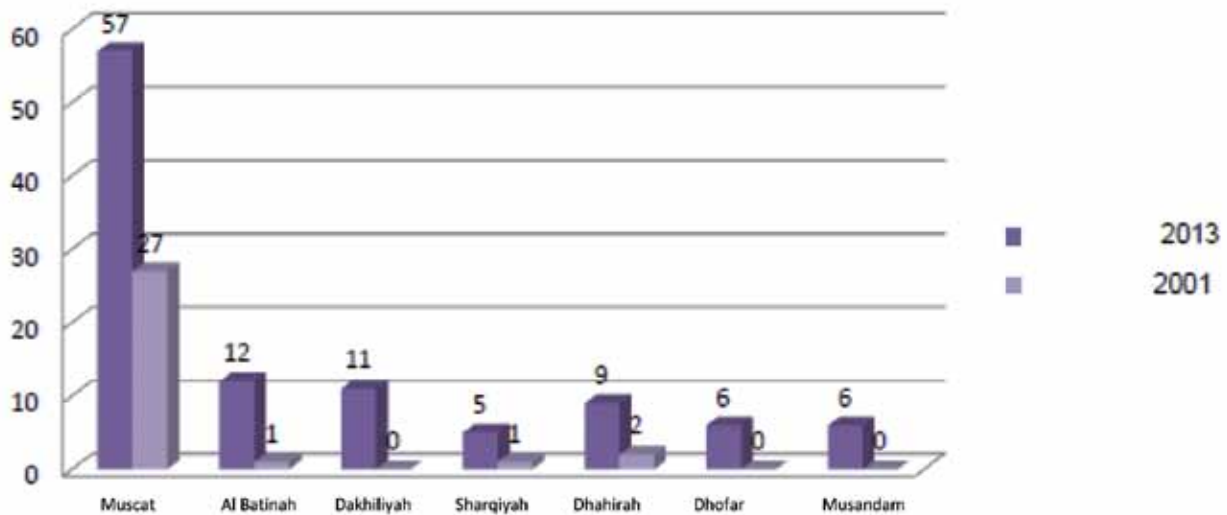
Table (7): Nurseries across the governorates of Oman

2001					2013				
Governorate	No. of Nurseries	Number of Children			Governorate	No. of Nurseries	Number of Children		
		M	F	Total			M	F	Total
Muscat	27	680	600	1280	Muscat	57	1894	1789	3683
Al Batinah	1	15	10	25	Al Batinah	12	172	170	342
Dakhiliyah	-	-	-	-	Dakhiliyah	11	269	180	449
Sharqiyah	1	1	4	5	Sharqiyah	5	61	78	159
Dhahirah	2	15	15	30	Dhahirah	9	201	223	424
Dhofar	-	-	-	-	Dhofar	6	264	314	578
Musandam	-	-	-	-	Musandam	6	219	246	465
Total	31	711	629	1340	Total	105	3100	3000	6100

(Department of Child Affairs, Ministry of Social Development)



Figure (3): Comparison in number of nurseries between 2001 & 2013



**Text frame (5): Objectives of Nurseries (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, 1990):
(Currently Ministry of Social Development):**

- To create the emotional atmosphere for children, meet their emotional needs, and make them feel secure, kindness, and tenderness.
- To bring up children with sound health and get them used to cleanliness and necessary hygienic habits.
- To take care of development of children's language and prepare their linguistic abilities through providing opportunities and ways which encourage them to talk and use appropriate words and sentences in their daily talks via their continuous talks during activities.
- To develop children's perceptions and senses through providing sufficient fields to help them develop simplified scientific concepts and satisfy their curiosity.
- To educate children about themselves and their surroundings in the cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions.
- To instill the spiritual and religious values in children.

According to the data of 2010 census, the number of children in Oman from birth to (3) years old was (242,695) male and female children, from whom (4,276) male and female children joined nurseries. This indicates a low ratio of children joining nurseries, which confirms the importance of increasing their numbers, in addition to developing appropriate mechanisms to follow up and regulate such important educational and social institutions, in order to accommodate the greatest possible number of children at this stage, as well as educating citizens and families about the importance of children's enrollment in pre-school education.



3.1.13: Children Development Houses:

This is a civil activity which assists in developing the children personality in rural areas, and providing them with the necessary educational, social, cultural, and leisure services. Such houses are managed by civil committees which are supervised by the directorates of Social Development in various governorates. The children development houses, supervised by civil committees and chaired by deputy Walis or local officials, are important educational tributaries for the enrolled children, and by late 2001 there were 32 houses, while the number of enrolled children was (2,808) boys and girls. In 2012, there were 12 houses with 1,520 enrolled boys and girls. Such houses provide various activities and programs for children who are admitted from the age of three and half years to less than (6) years. These houses apply the Ministry of Education Curriculum (Instructional Units) (Ministry of Social Development, 2009). The prevalence of nurseries and pre-school education institutions in the Wilayats and governorates has led to reducing the number of such houses.

Table (8): Numbers of children development houses and classes as well as numbers of children by Governorate

2001							2013				
Governorate	Number of houses	Number of classes		Number of children			Governorate	Number of houses	Number of children		
		KG	Preschool	M	F	Total			M	F	Total
Muscat	0	-	-	-	-	-	Al- Batinah	6	478	511	989
Al-Batinah	10	10	21	461	508	969					
Dakhiliyah	11	14	29	708	544	1252	Dakhiliyah	1	102	109	211
Sharqiyah	3	2	5	101	101	202					
Dhahirah	5	5	10	133	95	228	Dhahirah	5	128	192	320
Dhofar	-	-	-	-	-	-					
Musandam	3	3	5	78	79	157					
Total	32	34	70	1549	1449	2808	Total	12	708	812	1520

(Department of Child Affairs, Ministry of Social Development)





3.1.14: Kid's Corner:

It is an activity conducted by the Omani Women Associations. The kids' corners provide their services to all children of the local community in cities and provincial centers of wilayats in general. They apply the Ministry of Education Curriculum (Instructional Units).

Table (9) indicates the distribution of kids' corners by governorate and the number of enrolled children by late 2001 which amounted to (3,252) boys and girls. In 2013, the number of enrolled children was (7,573) boys and girls.

Table (9): Development in the distribution of kids' corners and numbers of children by governorate 2001-2013

Governorate	2001				2013				
	Kids' corners	Number of children			Governorate	Kids' corners	Number of children		
		M	F	Total			M	F	Total
Muscat	3	109	124	233	Muscat	2	110	89	199
Al Batinah	8	723	682	1405	Al Batinah	13	955	1074	2029
Dakhiliyah	4	260	229	1389	Dakhiliyah	21	1507	1523	3030
Sharqiyah	4	365	255	620	Sharqiyah	9	415	448	863
Dhahirah	5	225	210	435	Dhahirah	1	25	22	47
Musandam	1	40	30	70	Musandam	4	108	95	203
Al Buraimi	-	-	-	-	Al Buraimi	8	407	423	830
Dhofar	-	-	-	-	Dhofar	4	167	184	351
Al Wusta	-	-	-	-	Al Wusta	1	8	13	21
Total	25	1722	1530	3252	Total	63	3702	3871	7573

(Department of Child Affairs, Ministry of Social Development)



3-1-15: Kindergarten:

It is a preparatory stage. It is not compulsory and consists of two levels in private schools: kindergarten for children aged from 3 years and two months to 4 years and two months, and pre-primary for children aged from 4 years and two months to 5 years and two months. Kindergartens are administratively and technically supervised by the Ministry of Education, and are inherent within the educational stages of private schools, aimed at achieving integrated physical, mental, social, and emotional growth for children. The Ministry of Education issued a regulation for private schools under the Ministerial Decision No. 26/2006.

There are also initiation classes affiliated to basic education schools, Cycle I, operating in remote areas where no type of pre-school education is provided. Children aged 4.8 years are admitted to such initiation classes where female graduates of Sultan Qaboos University majoring in pre-school children are employed to teach in them (Please refer to numbers of students in the Appendices).

Through the Directorate General of Public Schools, the Ministry of Education focuses on the professional development of Pre-school female teachers, and organizes workshops to train kindergarten female teachers with a technical support from UNICEF, UNESCO and SQU, so as to provide them with professional knowledge and skills. The Oman main team was trained and mandated to train the training teams at the educational governorates so as to train Pre-school female teachers. In academic year 2006/2007, SQU introduced Bachelor Program, majoring in pre-school as part of the specialization of the College of Education to qualify Omani kindergarten female teachers. In the academic year 2005/2006, one private university also introduced such specialization.

Accordingly, enrollment ratios in kindergartens at the age of (4-5) years increased. We can also notice that the net enrollment ratios of pre-school education students from the academic year 2000/2001 to academic year 2005/2006 ranged from 6.5% to 8.2%. These are the percentages of students enrolled in private schools supervised by the Ministry of Education, which indicate a gradual rise in students' enrollment ratios. However, there are also students enrolled in other centers such as Women's associations, children development houses, kindergartens affiliated to Royal Oman Police and Royal Air Force of Oman, etc. The data of such centers were not available during such years unless in general, but they became available in detail starting from the academic year 2006/2007, as can be noticed that the net enrollment ratio of students increased from 26.6% in the academic year 2006/2007 to 41.6% in the academic year 2011/2012.



Table (10): Development of enrollment ratios among Pre-school education students at the age of (4-5) years

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio			Net Enrollment Ratio		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
2000 /2001	7.8	7.0	7.4	6.9	6.2	6.5
2005 /2006	11.2	10.4	10.8	8.5	7.9	8.2
2006 /2007	39.1	41.4	40.2	19.4	24.6	21.9
2010 /2011	54.2	54.7	54.4	41.2	40.9	41.0
2011 /2012	54.0	54.0	54.0	42.0	41.4	41.7

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

Figure (4): Net and gross ratios of kindergartens enrollment

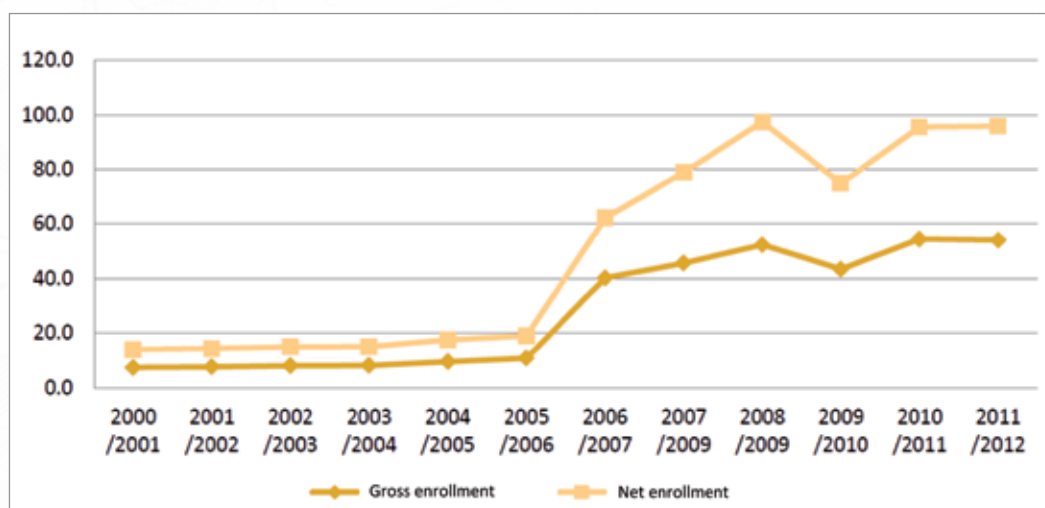


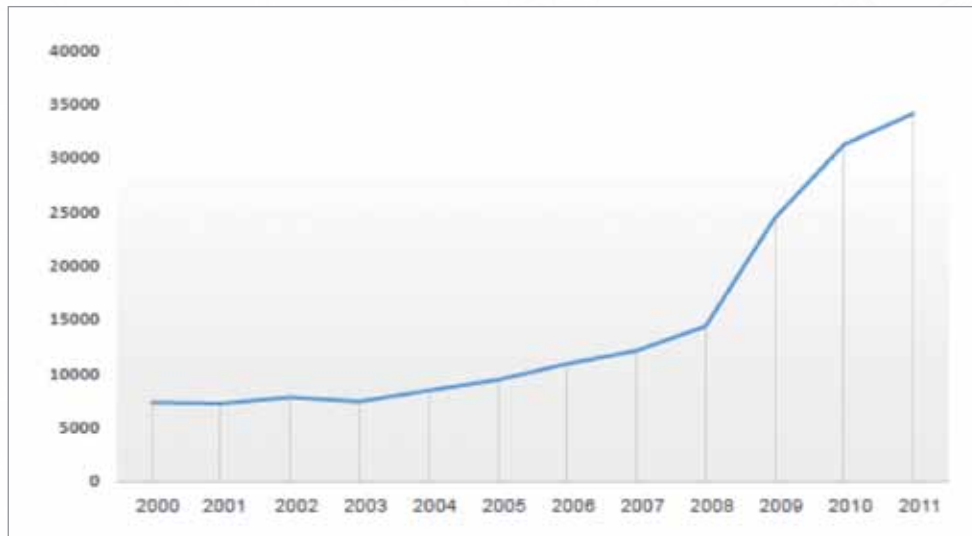
Table (11): Development of per-school enrollment ratio in private schools from total pre-school students

Academic Year	Private Schools	Total	Students' enrollment ratio in Pre-school education at private schools
2000	7310	15271	47.9
2005	9429	18589	50.7
2010	31251	56469	55.3
2011	34150	56679	60.3

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Figure (5): Development curve of pre-school enrollment at private schools



Kindergartens for children aged from 3 to 5 years are one of the most growing educational sectors in Oman between 2000 and 2011. In 2000, there were 15,271 children, and this number increased to 56,679 children benefiting from education in kindergartens. Despite such growth and expansion, provision of early childhood education is still limited and available only for families that can pay for it (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012). This type of education is mostly provided by the private sector having 60.3% of the total students enrolled in Pre-school education.

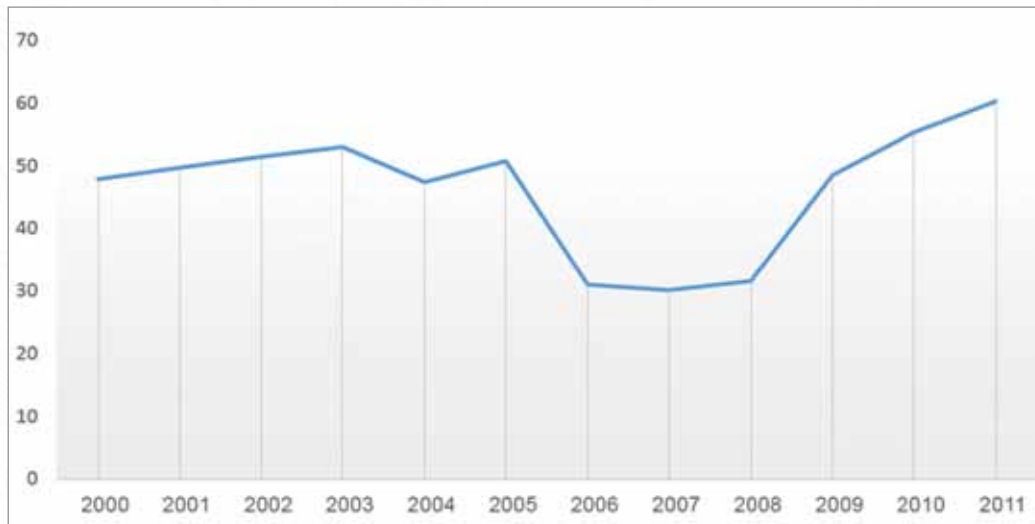
The joint study conducted by the Ministry of Education and the World Bank confirmed that although the private sector is dynamic, it is unlikely that it will be able to provide a national program for education in the early childhood stage that is inclusive and sustainable.

In November 2008, the Ministry of Education launched a national awareness campaign on education in the early childhood stage (in collaboration with UNICEF and the private sector), which lasted for a whole year so as to raise awareness about the importance of education in the early childhood stage, and increase children's enrollment to educational institutions of such stage, in collaboration with various relevant authorities in Oman.

In 2013, the Ministry of Education issued a ministerial decision No. 771 forming joint teams to carry out the activities of the National Campaign for Early Childhood (0-8), in collaboration with UNICEF and other entities in Oman, and through this campaign will seek to develop the strategic plan to launch the National Campaign for Pre-school Education, supervise it in general, cooperate with a think tank



Figure (6): Ratio of Pre-school enrollment in private schools from total students



(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

to execute the campaign, prepare academic and media materials of the campaign, and supervise the preparation of the information packages of preschool education.

The Ministry of Education is currently preparing development criteria for the early childhood stage, as part of its comprehensive initiative in collaboration with the UNICEF. The first stage of such initiative started by a comprehensive review of the available documents related to education, health, care, and growth of Omani children, as such documents include regulations and policies of early childhood, accepted standards, studies and reviews of the health of the current population, educational level of children, and early childhood initiatives and curricula.

3.1.16: Kindergarten Curricula:

In the academic year 2002/2003, Oman started implementing the kindergarten curriculum, developed and prepared by the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF. The curriculum started in kindergartens affiliated to private schools supervised by the Ministry of Education, and kindergartens supervised by the Armed Forces Units and Royal Oman Police.

The Omani curriculum is based on self-education, which includes the essence of contemporary thought as confirmed by the findings of scientific researches about children's growth, characteristics, abilities, how they learn, and the nature of their needs and interests in this stage. When selecting such principles, the Omani curriculum takes into account expanded capacity to enable the children to become good and



competent citizens, who bear their full responsibilities in their small communities and large nation as Arab, Muslim, and Gulf citizens who belong to humanity as a whole.

Text frame (6): Tools of developed kindergartens Omani curriculum from teacher's guide consist of six parts:



- **Self-education curriculum for kindergartens.**
- **Curriculum of processes, strands, and their outcomes.**
- **Guiding the children's behavior.**
- **Organization of the rural environment.**
- **Implementation of children's program.**
- **Increasing interaction between kindergarten and home.**

The kindergarten's curriculum includes (12) instructional units entitled as follows: My kindergarten, I and my body, My family, Clothes, Housing, Book, Animals, Sand, Food, Environment, Water, and Communication and Transportation.

The Ministry of Education continuously seeks to develop and update the preschool education curricula to keep pace with the latest developments, and fulfill the requirements of this stage, including the skills which must be acquired, and working to expand in this regard. Accordingly, the public preparation classes in remote areas have increased, public supervision of private kindergartens have been generalized, and working continuously to spread kindergartens in rural areas in addition to urban areas. There is no doubt that the permanent review of kindergartens' curricula ensures the development of creative thought, innovation, and environmental awareness among children.

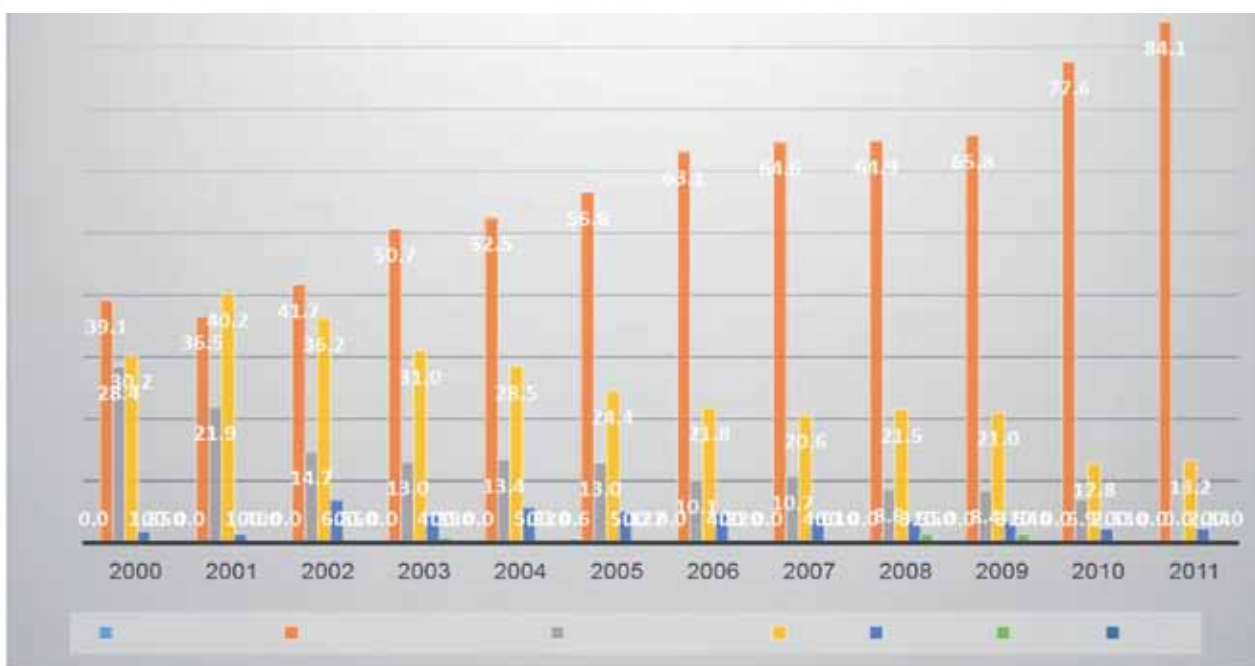
3.1.17: Kindergarten Teachers

The competent authorities pay attention to the teachers of this stage through preparing and qualifying them on a permanent basis, particularly the Ministry of Education and its continuous endeavor in cooperating with teachers' preparation institutions so as to develop and update their programs. The preparation of kindergartens' teachers focuses on the holders of General Certificate Qualification and equivalents, and



they are offered training courses organized by the Ministry of Education and Sultan Qaboos University so as to qualify them for teaching children at this stage. The highest percentage achieved in this regard was in the academic year 2011-2012 with 84.1% of the total number of kindergarten teachers, compared with 36.5% in the academic year 2001-2002.

Figure (7): Development of teacher ratios in kindergartens by academic qualification



(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

Teachers with university degrees come in the second place, and the largest number of such teachers was in the academic year 2001-2002, at 40.2% of the total number of teachers while the lowest ratio of teachers with university degree was in the academic year 2010-2011 at 12.8%. SQU introduced Bachelor Program, majoring in pre-school education, as part of the specializations of the College of Education so as to qualify kindergarten female teachers. A private university also introduced such major in the academic year 2005-2006. There are also teachers holding higher education degrees including higher diplomas and PhDs, but they are less than 6.8% for the higher diplomas in the academic year 2002-2003 and 1.5% for PhDs in the academic year 2008-2009. A number of female graduates from Sultan Qaboos University are employed as kindergarten teachers for the initiation classes.

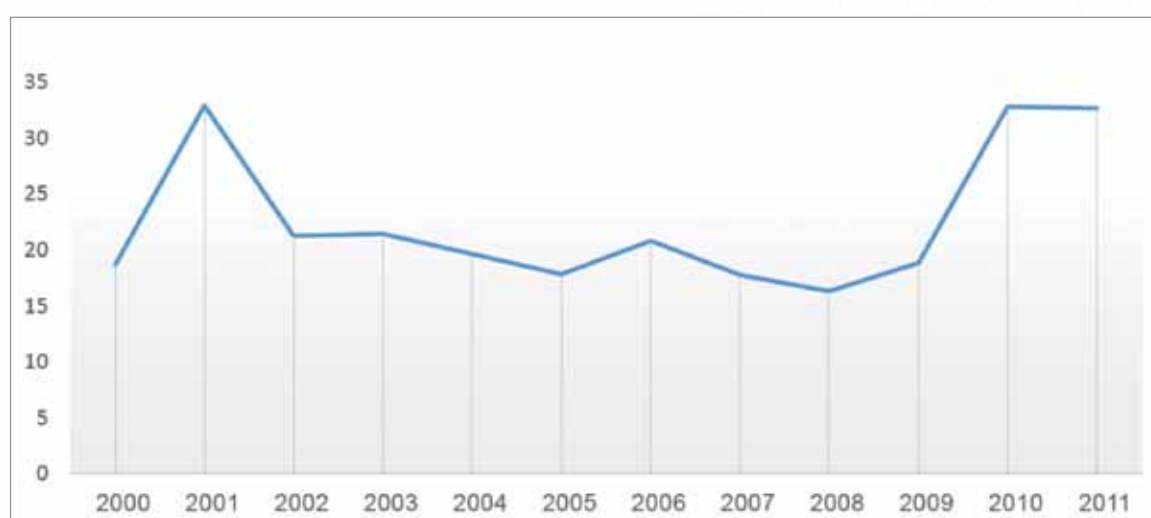


Table (12): Child/Teacher Ratio for Preschool education in private schools from the academic year 2000/2001 to the academic year 2011/2012

Academic Year	Number of students	Number of teachers	Student/Teacher Ratio
2000	7310	391	19
2005	9429	529	18
2010	31251	952	33
2011	34150	1045	33

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Figure (8): Development of child/teacher ratio for preschool education in private schools



As regards the teacher/student ratio for this stage, there is a need to increase the number of teachers to accommodate the increasing number of enrolled students, and to get closer to the international supervision ratios. With the availability of some data of preschool education at private schools, which are supervised by other entities, we find that the student/teacher ratio in the academic year 2011-2012 was 26 students per teacher, while the lowest rate exists in initiation classes with 6 students per teacher, followed by 15 students per teacher in the academic year 2011-2012. The highest rate exists at private schools with 33 students per teacher in the two academic years, which is due to the flow of large number of children, and the number of teachers is not keeping pace with such flow.



Table (13): Child/Teacher ratio for preschool education in the academic years 2010/2011 and 2011/2012

Academic Year	Description	Police	*Social Development	Air Force+ Navy	Preparation Classes	Special Education	Qur'an (Ministry of Awqaf)	Private Schools	International Schools	**Total
2010	students	651	5719	455	1350	15	9277	31251	5970	47172
	Teachers	39	319	22	141	n/a	n/a	952	215	1700
	Student/Teacher	17	18	21	10			33	28	28
2011	students	622	6872	432	1422	28	5208	34150	6282	51443
	Teachers	42	321	23	232	n/a	238	1045	231	1997
	Student/Teacher	15	21	19	6		22	33	27	26

* Without nurseries ** The statement of the Ministry of Awqaf and Special Education was excluded in the total (Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

3.1.18: Preschool Education Projects:

Preschool Education National Campaign Project: The project was carried out during 2008/2009, with the aim to educate the local community in general, and families in particular, about the importance of kindergartens, increase the number of children in nurseries and kindergartens, spread the culture of kindergartens in the Omani society, promote the level of kindergartens to produce outcomes that support the basic process of education, and include kindergartens within (national) long-term programme. This campaign is in collaboration with UNICEF and private schools, and it mainly targets the local community. The second phase of this campaign was completed during 2013 by recruiting the campaign activities team.

Pre and post campaign study on parents awareness of the importance of early childhood stage: The study was carried out in 2008/2009 for various purposes including: preparing a pre study to know parents' awareness of the importance of getting their children enrolled in kindergartens, prior to implementing the awareness plan, post campaign study to examine the development in the awareness of parents and local community of the importance of getting their children enrolled in kindergartens after implementing the awareness plan, and a comparative study to examine the importance of getting the local community and parents exposed to permanent and consecutive awareness programmes.

Omani kindergartens curriculum evaluation study: The study seeks to generalize the application of the advanced curriculum in all kindergartens in Oman, develop the skills of kindergarten teachers through specialized and continuous training programmes, work on providing teacher preparation programmes in universities and colleges, and improve the conditions of educational physical environments, including appropriate buildings and equipment. Through this study, the Ministry of Education aims to evaluate the educational environment, where the advanced curriculum for kindergartens in Oman is implemented,





in light of quality standards, analyze the content of the advanced curriculum for kindergartens which includes teachers' manual and instructional units with regard to the development standards of an effective educational practice in the kindergarten stage, and submit proposals and recommendations to develop such curriculum.

Preschool training package project: Started in 2011 to prepare a training package with training materials related to courses which are developed to qualify preschool teachers. Such package includes activities, programmes, and audio and video tapes which serve the training objectives and teaching-learning process, and contribute to unify current training methods in educational governorates.

Preschool reading package project: It was carried out in 2011 in collaboration with the Oman National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science. This package aims to instill the love of reading in children since early childhood, by providing them with the opportunity to sit with their parents or guardians in a quiet and close atmosphere, so as to enrich the children's linguistic and mental aspects, develop their imagination, and enrich the art of dialogue and discussion among them.

Preparation of early childhood standards with UNICEF: It was carried out during the academic year 2012-2013 to determine childhood criteria in development aspects (physical, social, mental, emotional and linguistic), considering the importance of such criteria in redeveloping the "Self-learning" kindergarten curricula as they are the basic foundation of the development process and formulation of strategies.



Nurseries Development Project in collaboration with the Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development (AGFUND):

Recognizing the importance of this stage, as well as the educational role played by pre-basic education institutions, particularly nurseries, and in order to promote the role of working women and continue the efforts to develop the conditions of nurseries, the Childhood Sector experts, Ministry of Social Development, are working on implementing the Nurseries' Development Project. This is a vital project representing sustainable development, and comes within the framework of reviewing previous efforts and their outcomes in this direction, as well as developing programmes to promote the conditions of nurseries in Oman.

This project mainly aims to develop the conditions of preschool institutions (nurseries) in Oman, as well as evaluate their programmes and activities, review their curriculum after two years of its implementation, enact regulations and bylaws to regulate work in such nurseries, get academic institutions (universities and higher institutes) involved in evaluating and developing such institutions, increase coordination with the relevant ministries, and exchange expertise with officials concerned with nurseries in the GCC countries.



Goal 2

3.2: Goal 2: Universalization of Basic Education:

Since the onset of its renaissance in 1970, Oman sought to spread education for all. Earlier there were only three schools providing education to 909 male students in primary education. As the government of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said – the Sultan of Oman- regarded development of human resources as one of its top priorities for the country's development and advancement, thus the first commitment of the new government was to develop free public education across Oman, accessible for all segments of the Omani society irrespective of their gender, social status, cultural background, or place of residence. Through such system, the State seeks to make education available for all, in order to raise and develop the general cultural level, develop scientific thinking, promote the spirit of research, meet the requirements of socioeconomic plans, and create physically and morally strong generation, proud of its nation, country, and heritage as well as preserve its achievements (Ministry of Education, 2006). The statistics of the Ministry of Education revealed the extent of progress achieved during the last four decades in this field, despite all obstacles and challenges which confronted the development process in Oman in general and the education sector in particular.

In the area of universalization of basic education, the Ministry of Education took significant steps so as to provide all persons within the Omani society with educational opportunities at all levels by 2015, thus achieving the objectives sought by Oman and UNESCO, which are to provide basic education to all persons whether they are males or females by 2015.

3.2.1: Numbers of Students Enrolled in General Education Schools

Table (14): Number of students enrolled in public schools in the five-year plans (First – Seventh)

Five-Year Plan	Start of Plan	End of Plan	Percentage of increase between the start and end of the plan
First (76/80)	64975	106032	63.2
Second (81/85)	120718	218914	81.3
Third (86/90)	244657	355986	45.5
Fourth (91/95)	387289	488797	26.2
Fifth (96/2000)	502674	554845	10.4
Sixth (2001/2005)	567997	568074	0.014
Seventh(2006/2010)	563602	522520	-3.7

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Since the onset of the renaissance and the five-year development plans, the government of Oman has made great efforts to spread education, and allocated substantial funds to achieve equality in giving access to the right of education for all segments of the society and focusing on inclusiveness. Statistical data indicate that there is disparity in the education enrollment ratio in public schools, according to the five-year plans from 1976 to 2010. The highest enrollment ratio was achieved in the first and second five-year plans, and this may be attributed to the rapid expansion in spreading education in all regions of Oman, following many decades of deprivation from formal education. These two plans and the third plan accommodated students who were at school age in that period and those who missed education and were at an age beyond the school stage, but they were given opportunities through adult education and illiteracy eradication. The school education continued attracting students to join until the fourth five-year plan, and is still attracting persons who missed education.

However, the increasing numbers between the start and end of the plan began to decline greatly in the fifth and sixth five-year plans, and radically in the seventh five-year plan, which shown a decline in numbers between the start and end of the plan. The reasons for such reduction were the effects of the birth spacing policy adopted by Oman in the nineties of the last century, which had a clear effect on the fertility rate in Oman as well as on the numbers of children enrolled in education. The birth rate per 1,000 declined from 44.7 in 1990 to 24.0 in 2004. The effect of such decline in birth rate can be noticed in the Figure (1) of the demographic composition, as well as the spread of private education which attracted large numbers of students from public schools, particularly in the cities. With the spread of private education in rural areas, it attracted a reasonable number of students, as some families believe that private education may provide better education than public education. Also, many families enrolled their children in private education during the Basic Education stage from the beginning and let them continue for the following stages. Oman is currently implementing the 8th five-year plan until 2015, and the number of enrolled students in 2011 was (517,053) students, and (514,667) students in 2012 (Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education).

3.2.2: Enrollment Ratio in Grade 1:

The Ministry of Education focuses and directs its efforts to provide education for all children and promote the provision of educational services. Efforts are continued for larger investments in building schools to accommodate the increasing numbers of students. The bylaws on student affairs issued by ministerial decisions regulate work at public and private schools, as well enrollment conditions. Hence, the legal age adopted in Oman to enter basic education schools is (6) six years old while the enrollment age in private schools can be less by about (4) months.

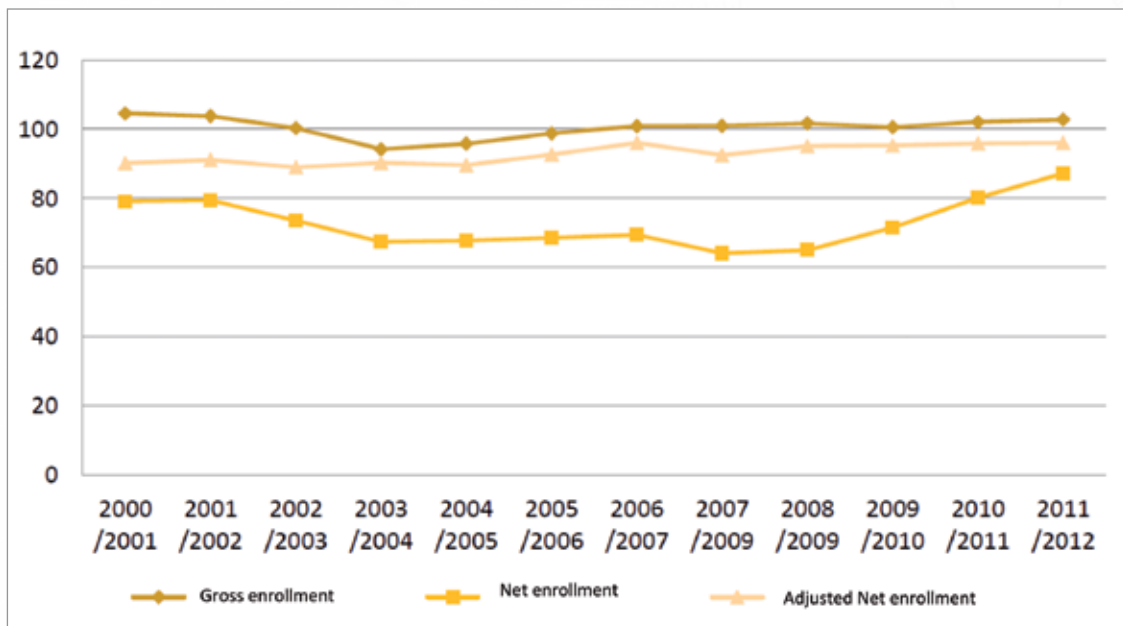


Table (15) Development of enrollment rate in Grade 1

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio			Net Enrollment Ratio			Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
2000	105.1	104.0	104.6	79.1	79.1	79.1	90.1	90.2	90.2
2005	98.9	98.6	98.8	68.2	68.9	68.6	92.3	93.1	92.7
2010	102.4	101.7	102.1	80.4	80.0	80.2	96.3	95.4	95.9
2011	103.0	102.6	102.8	86.2	88.3	87.2	96.5	95.6	96.1

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Figure (9): Development of gross, net and adjusted net ratios for Grade 1 students



Since 2000, the enrollment ratios in Grade 1 have increased, and the adjusted net enrollment ratio was 90.2 in 2000 and reached 96.1 in the academic year 2011/2012.

Results indicate that Oman has achieved a great progress in the area of students' enrollment for Grade 1 in Basic Education, considering that the enrollment ratio of age 6 year group (adjusted net) exceeded 96% of the total number of Omani and Non-Omani students at such age. Such ratio is at par with the ratio of the advanced countries, which is 96%, and is higher than the total enrollment ratio all over the world



which is 90%. The difference between the number of population aged 6 years and the enrollment ratio in Grade 1 (96.1%) is attributed to the existence of children enrolled in some neighboring countries, or countries where the children of the diplomatic corps reside, or children enrolled in Social Wafaa Centers or Early Intervention Associations, who are children with disabilities. There is no enrollment gap between males and females, due to Oman's policies and investments in providing inclusive and free education for all, and to provide all the requirements for the success of the educational process, including knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes so as to assist students in continuing the learning process, facing challenges, and adapting with the present and future.

3.2.3: Enrollment Ratio in Basic Education and Grades (1-6):

Over the last four decades, the enrollment ratios have increased remarkably in Oman, and since its commitment to the six EFA goals, the Ministry of Education made great efforts as can be seen in the progress of the adjusted net enrollment ratio from 91.7% in 2000 to 98.1% in the academic year 2011/2012, which means that there is a vast expansion in providing educational services and building of schools in the rural areas.

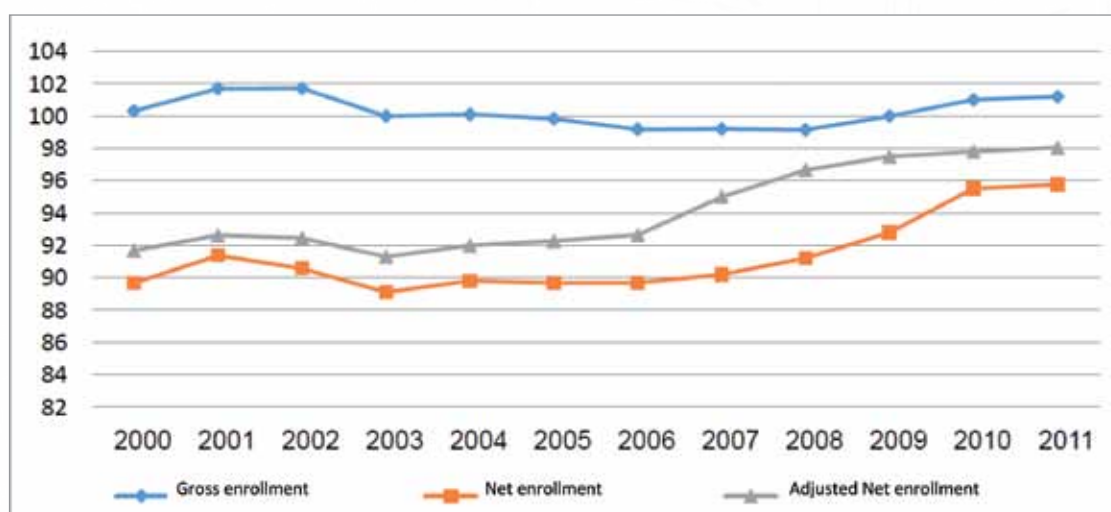


Table (16): Enrollment Ratios in Basic Education and Grades (1-6)

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio			Net Enrollment Ratio			Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
2000	102.6	98.0	100.3	90.2	89.2	89.7	92.0	91.3	91.7
2005	100.1	99.5	99.8	89.3	90.2	89.7	91.7	92.9	92.3
2010	101.0	101.0	101.0	95.9	95.1	95.5	98.4	97.2	97.8
2011	101.1	101.3	101.2	96.1	95.4	95.8	98.6	97.5	98.1

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Figure (10): Development of enrollment ratios in Grades (1-6)



(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

The coverage of basic education is almost complete for the Omani citizens, and the enrollment ratios of Omani citizens are high compared to middle-income countries (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012). Expanding the universalization of high quality basic education requires increasing efforts to establish and open new schools, in order to keep pace with the population growth and the requirements of educational development at the same time. The close cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and the Civil Status Department at Royal Oman Police (Numbers of births and deaths) contributed to establishing an important and accurate statistical base on the numbers of births and deaths, which led to promoting the accuracy of educational planning and the ability of the educational system to accommodate the increasing numbers of children enrolled in the educational system in various educational governorates.

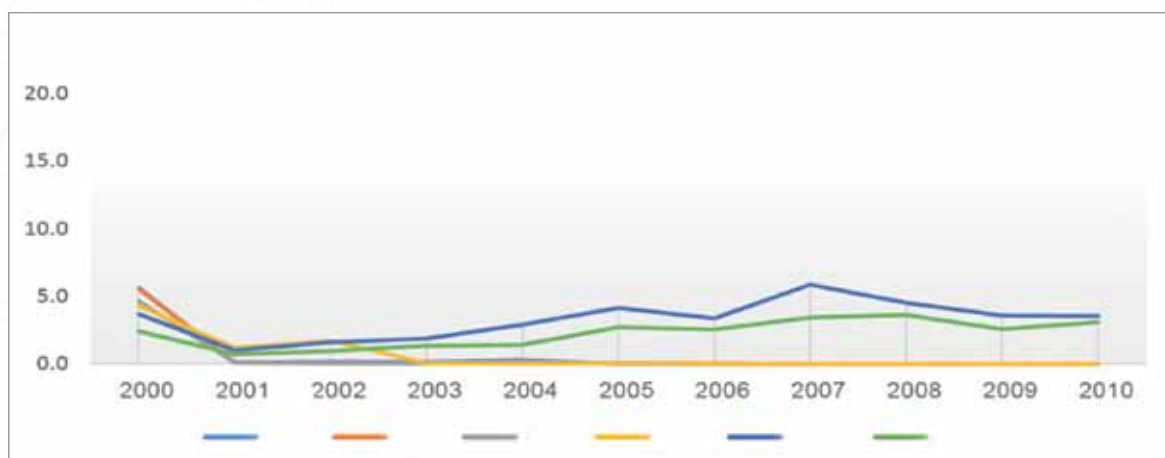


3.2.4: Repetition and Dropout Rates in Basic Education, Grades (1-6):

Thanks to the great and concentrated efforts by the government, the repetition and dropout rates have remarkably declined over the last few years. The Ministry of Education sought to make certain changes in policies so as to reduce repetition rates, as the new passing and failure rules and regulations stipulated that all students from Grade 1 to Grade 4 shall be promoted to higher grade. However, from Grade 5 to Grade 11, there are committees to follow up the educational achievement in schools, and determine students facing learning difficulties and falling behind in their school activities, and provide support to such students, and at the end of the academic year the committees decide whether it is better for the student to move to higher grade or repeat the grade.

Since 2006, such policies and initiatives have reduced the repetition rate to zero in grades 1 to 4, as indicated in figure (11). As for grades 5 to 6, the repetition rates range from 3% to 3.5%. The difference is clear in the reduction of repetition rate in general in grades 1 to 6 as it was 4.4% in 2000 and declined to 1.1% in 2010, due to the policies adopted by the Ministry of Education in the area of evaluation development.

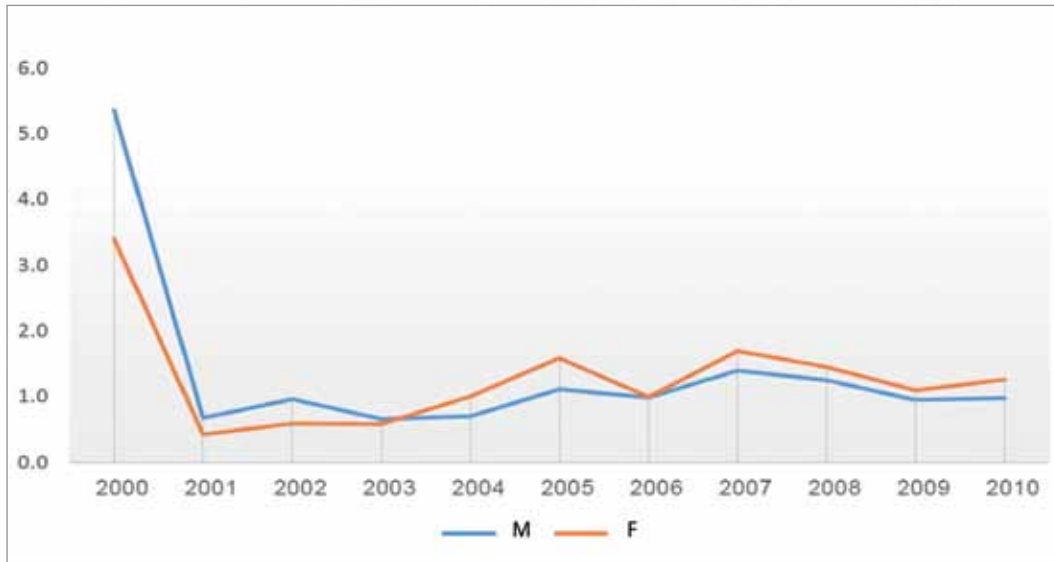
Figure (11): Development of repetition rate by grade



(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Figure (12): Development of total repetition rate in Basic Education, Grades (1-6) by gender

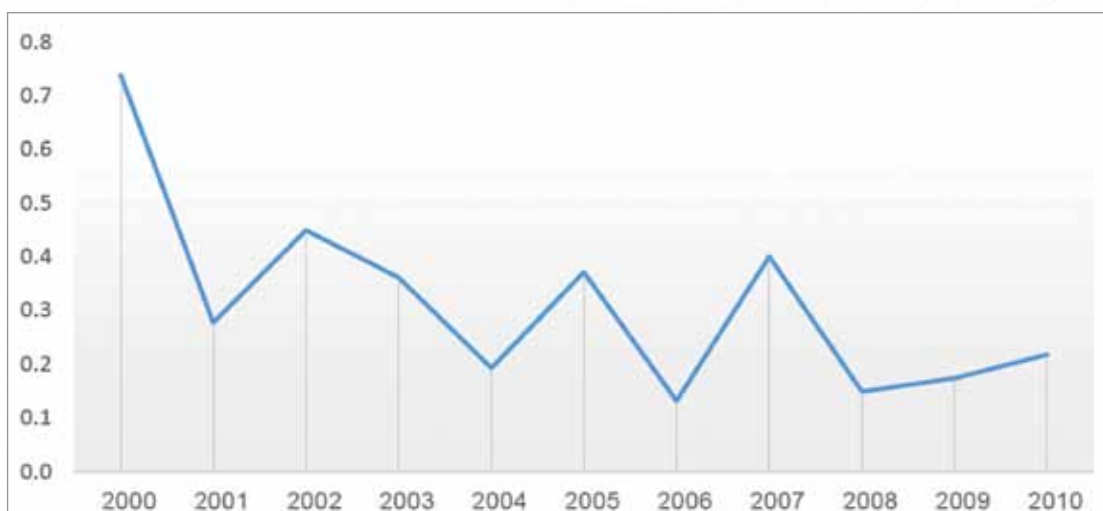


(Department of Statistics and Indicator, Ministry of Education)

The repetition rate by gender is higher in males than females, and the highest repetition rate was 5.4% for males and 3.4% for females in the academic year 2000/2001, while the lowest repetition rate was 0.9% for males in the academic year 2009/2010 and 0.4% for females in the academic year 2001/2002.

As regards the dropout rates, the Ministry of Education realizes the negative effect of students' dropout whether on the individual or the society. Therefore, it sought to develop the educational system so as to keep the most number of enrolled students and make them move to higher grades. Figure (13) shows the development of dropout rates from 2000-2001 to 2010-2011.

Figure (13): Development of total dropout rates in Basic Education Grades (1-6)



As for grades (1-6), the dropout rates dropped to 0.2% in 2010 compared to 0.7% in 2000, which confirms the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system, reduces educational costs, and prevents relapsing to illiteracy, and the success of the Ministry of Education's efforts, including the implementation of a programme for students having learning difficulties that may cause them to repeat the grade or dropout. The Ministry of Education developed programmes to deal with such difficulties, and trained teachers on how to identify students having learning difficulties. It also developed methods to measure and evaluate students' performance according to the policies adopted for students' measurement, evaluation, and transition (Ministry of Education, 2006)

3.2.5: Promotion rate in Grades (1-6):

This indicator measures the strength and efficiency of the education system, and the ability of most students to move to a certain higher grade. The rise in the number of students capable of moving to higher grades, particularly in early grades, allows such students to acquire sufficient knowledge base which protects them relapsing back to illiteracy.

To measure the promotion rate, the Ministry of Education introduced a set of evaluation tools in basic education, in addition to the existence of continuous formative evaluation and its prominent role in measurement and evaluation through various ways, such as written or short oral quizzes, short questions, projects, student portfolios, self-evaluation and classroom activities. Accordingly, certain mechanisms were introduced so as to measure the level of students' promotion or otherwise.



Table (17): Development of promotion rates in basic education for Grades (1-6) by grade and gender

Grades	Gender	2000	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2010
1	Males	92.7	98.9	98.6	98.2	99.2	99.5	99.5
	Females	93.7	99.0	98.8	99.4	99.5	99.5	99.6
	Total	93.2	99.0	98.7	98.8	99.4	99.5	99.5
2	Males	93.2	99.7	99.6	99.5	100.0	99.9	99.9
	Females	94.6	99.7	99.9	100.0	99.1	99.9	99.9
	Total	93.9	99.7	99.8	99.8	99.8	99.9	99.9
3	Males	94.4	99.9	99.6	100.2	99.9	99.9	99.8
	Females	95.4	99.7	99.6	99.9	99.4	99.9	99.9
	Total	94.9	99.8	99.6	100.0	99.6	99.9	99.9
4	Males	92.6	97.6	100.0	100.0	97.5	99.9	99.8
	Females	96.1	98.5	99.8	100.0	98.1	99.9	99.9
	Total	94.3	98.1	100.0	100.0	97.8	99.9	99.9
5	Males	93.6	98.0	97.9	96.3	96.3	96.9	96.5
	Females	96.9	98.6	97.4	94.0	94.7	95.9	95.9
	Total	95.3	98.3	97.7	95.2	95.5	96.4	96.2
6	Males	97.3	100.0	98.5	96.8	96.6	97.4	97.1
	Females	98.6	99.7	98.6	96.6	95.5	97.3	96.3
	Total	97.9	100.0	98.5	96.7	96.1	97.3	96.7
Total (1-6)	Males	93.9	99.2	99.1	98.4	98.3	98.9	98.8
	Females	95.8	99.2	99.0	98.1	97.7	98.7	98.6
	Total	94.9	99.1	99.0	98.3	98.1	98.8	98.7

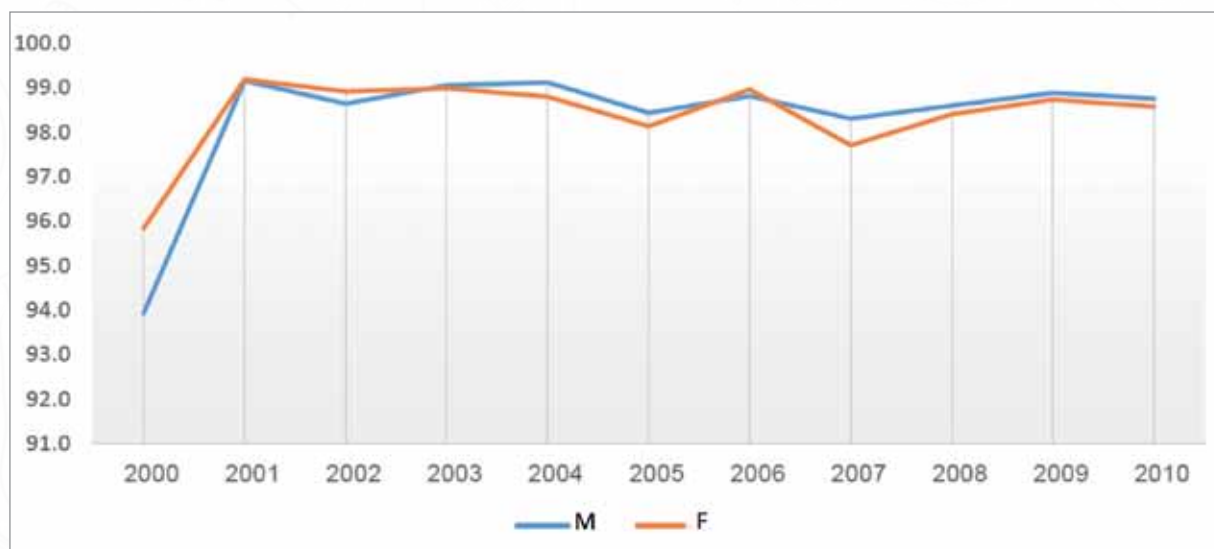
(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

In general, the promotion rate exceeds 94% in all years. Figure (14) shows that the promotion rate increased from 94.9% in 2000 to about 99% in 2010 due to the low repetition rate in grades (1-4), as the promotion rate in such grades is almost 100% due to the above movement policies and initiatives. In grades 5 and 6, the promotion rates fluctuate up and down reaching its lowest level of 95.2% in grade 5 in the academic year 2005-2006, and the highest level of 98.3% in the academic year 2001-2002. As for grade 6, the lowest promotion rate was 96.1% in the academic year 2007-2008 while the highest rate of 100% was in the academic year 2001-2002.

There is no difference between promotion rates for males and for females. We find that the promotion rate for males is higher than for females in some grades. In some other grades, it is the contrary and this matter applies for various years.



Figure (14): Development of promotion rate by gender, Grades (1-6)



(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

3.2.6: Duration Rate in Basic Education:

The duration rate in schools is a topic of special interest so as to monitor and follow up the universalization of basic education, which is the main objective of EFA, as this indicator evaluates the internal efficiency of the education system in terms of its ability to maintain the students.

First: Duration Rate to Grade 5:

Table (18): Development of students' duration rate to Grade 5 by gender

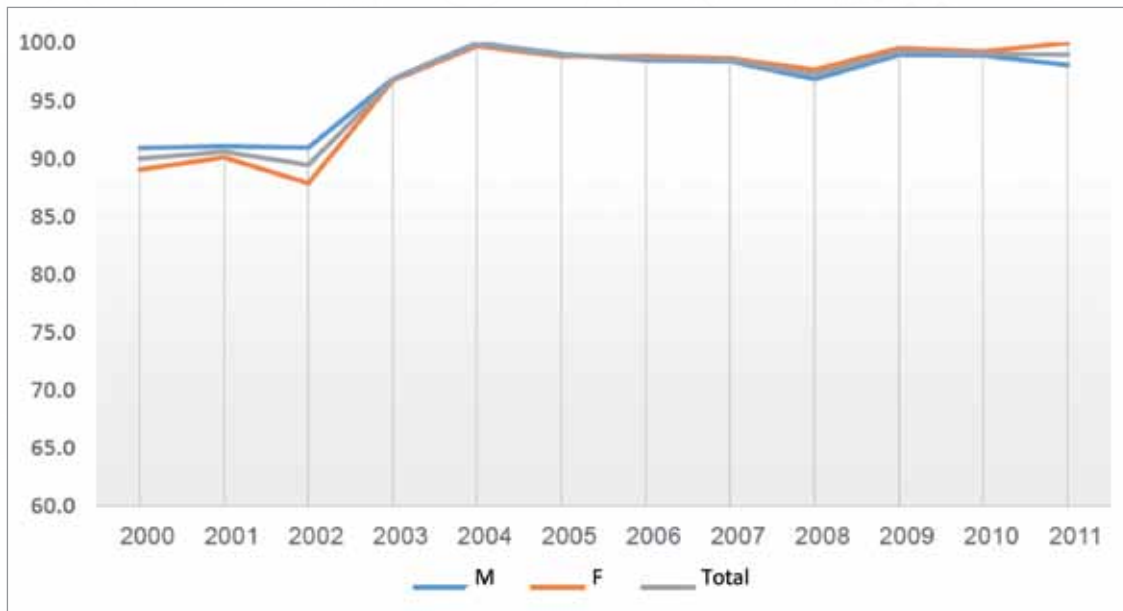
Academic year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Males	90.9	91.1	90.9	96.9	100.0	99.0	98.5	98.4	96.9	99.0	98.9	98.1
Females	89.0	90.1	87.9	96.7	99.7	98.8	98.9	98.7	97.7	99.6	99.3	100.0
Total	90.0	90.6	89.5	96.8	99.9	98.9	98.7	98.5	97.3	99.3	99.1	99.0

Department of Statistics and Indicator, Ministry of Education

The table and chart indicate the development in the students' duration rate to grade 5 in basic and general education, reaching 99% in 2011 compared to 90% in 2000, without a big difference between males and females.



Figure (15): Development of duration rate to Grade 5



Department of Statistics and Indicator, Ministry of Education

Second: Duration Rate to Grade 6:

There is a significant development in the students' duration rate to grade 6 as it reached 98.5% in 2011 compared to 88.9% in 2000. By gender, in 2011 the duration rate reached 98% for males and 99.1% for females.

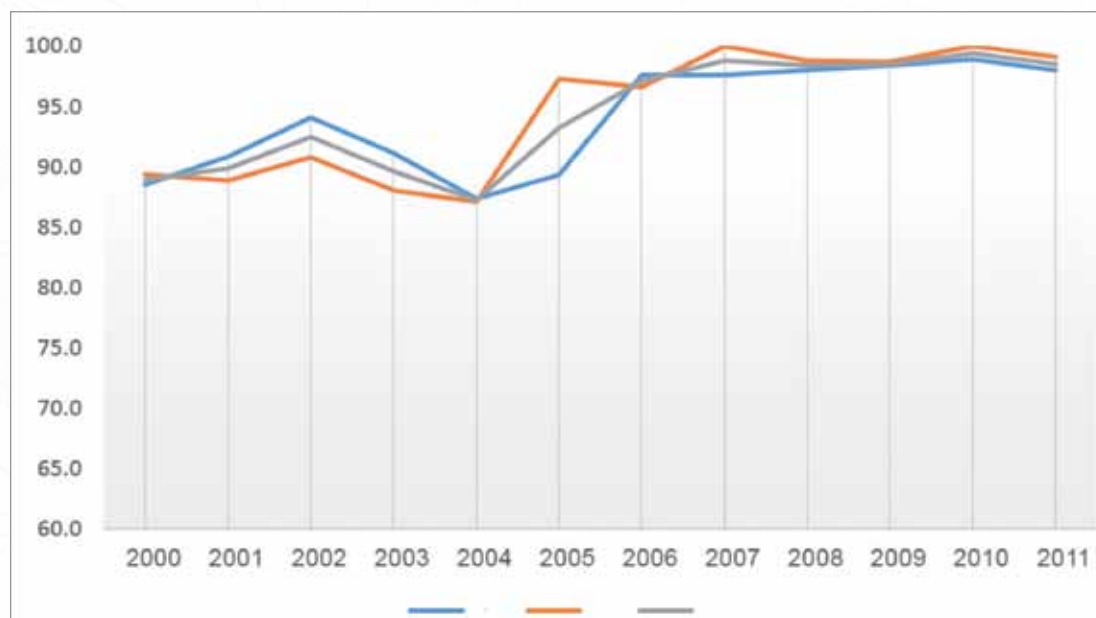
Table (19): Development of students' duration rates to Grade 6 by gender

Academic Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Males	88.5	90.8	94.1	91.1	87.4	89.3	97.6	97.6	98.0	98.4	98.9	98.0
Females	89.3	88.9	90.8	88.0	87.1	97.3	96.6	100.0	98.8	98.7	100.0	99.1
Total	88.9	89.9	92.5	89.6	87.2	93.2	97.1	98.8	98.4	98.5	99.4	98.5

(Department of Statistics and Indicator, Ministry of Education)



Figure (16): Development of duration rate to Grade 6



(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

3.2.7: Transition rate from Basic Education to Post-Basic Education:

The basic education stage in the Omani education system extends from grades (1-10), followed by post-basic education from grades (11-12). The following table and figure show the fluctuation of transition rates from 2000 to 2011. The transition rate was 89.3% in 2000 and reached 96% in 2004 and then began declining down to 84.1% in 2011. This decline may be attributed to the students' early entry into the labor market after completing the basic education stage, or joining vocational training institutes which accept students from grade 10, or for any other reason including focusing on summative evaluation.

Table (20): Development of transition rate from Basic Education to Post-Basic Education by gender

Academic Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Males	85.9	82.5	86.0	87.5	94.5	93.1	92.8	90.0	91.4	90.9	89.3	78.6
Females	92.5	90.8	92.5	95.1	97.6	96.9	96.6	94.3	95.9	95.8	95.6	90.1
Total	89.3	86.8	89.4	91.3	96.0	95.0	94.6	92.1	93.5	93.2	92.4	84.1

Department of Statistics and Indicator, Ministry of Education

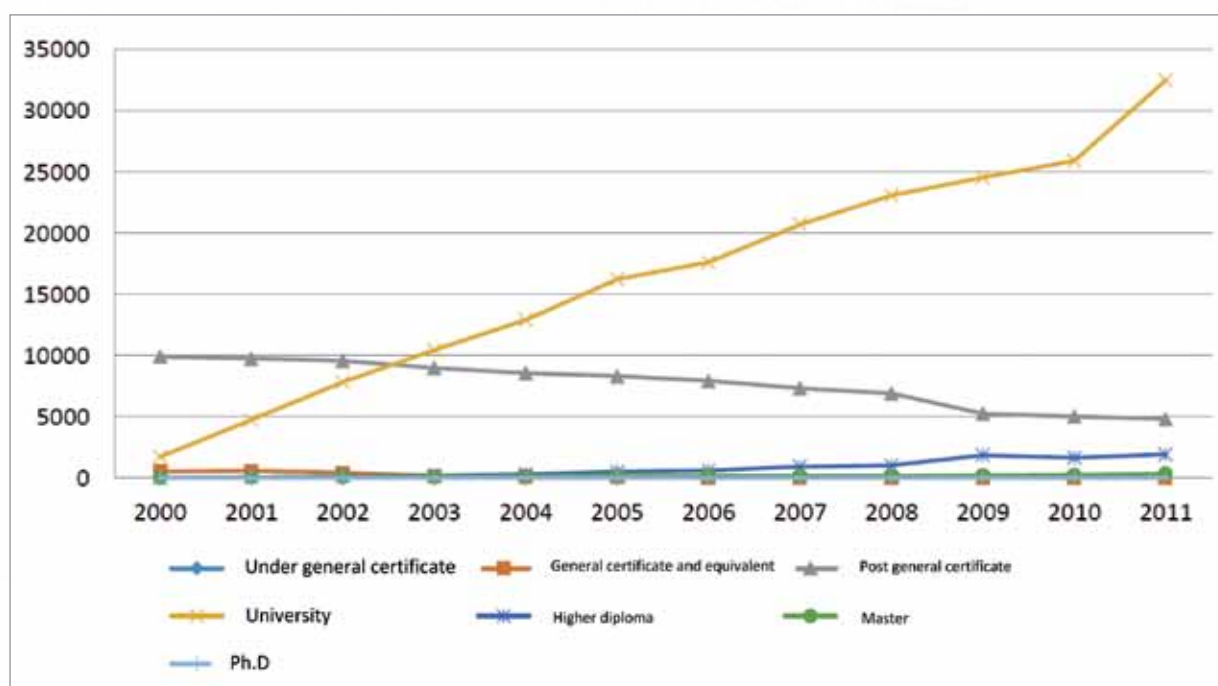




3-2-8: Number and Percentage of Teachers in Basic Education (Primary) for Grades (1-6):

The teacher is the key to quality education, and has a great impact on the learning quality of students. The educational studies continuously confirm the connection between quality education and teacher performance, and associated training and qualification. Studies also indicate a positive relation between the student performance on one hand, and measurable teacher characteristics such as teaching qualifications, academic abilities, and subject content knowledge (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012).

Figure (17): Development of number of teachers by academic qualification in Grades (1-6) and Basic Education



Seeking to provide quality education requires great efforts in providing sufficient number of teachers who have sufficient knowledge and teaching skills, and passion for their profession. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education is working to provide sufficient numbers of teachers through the implementation of Omanisation policy. In the past, at the beginning of the modern education system, Oman was dependent on employing large numbers of Non-Omani teachers, and in 1980 the percentage of expatriate teachers was 92% of the total number of teachers in Omani schools. In recent times, following the establishment of teacher preparation institutions in Oman, the percentage of the Omani teachers is about 90% of the total number of teachers in the Omani schools.

In general, the number of teachers for grades (1-6) in the academic year 2011-2012 was 39,699 teachers including 27,728 females, considering that female teachers teach male and female students in grades (1-4), compared with 12,265 male and female teachers in 2000.

Table (21): Development of teachers' ratio in Grades (1-6) from the general education and teachers of basic education by gender and academic qualification

Academic Qualification	Gender	2000	2005	2010	2011
Below General Certificate	M	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00
	F	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
General Certificate and equivalent	M	2.93	0.37	0.00	0.00
	F	5.45	0.31	0.00	0.00
	Total	4.32	0.33	0.00	0.00
Diploma after General Certificate	M	91.52	41.99	17.73	15.47
	F	72.41	27.41	14.21	10.78
	Total	80.97	32.83	15.34	12.19
Academic degree	M	5.33	55.90	78.02	80.04
	F	21.52	68.71	79.12	82.74
	Total	14.27	63.94	78.77	81.93
Higher Diploma	M	0.09	0.84	3.07	3.01
	F	0.37	2.77	6.05	5.71
	Total	0.24	2.05	5.10	4.89
MA	M	0.07	0.90	1.15	1.44
	F	0.25	0.80	0.61	0.77
	Total	0.17	0.84	0.78	0.97
PhD	M	0.00	0.01	0.04	0.04
	F	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
	Total	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02

Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



The Ministry of Education is continuously coordinating with teacher preparation institutions in Oman concerning the quality of the teachers practicing the profession, in terms of academic and educational qualification, personal traits and basis of selection, provided that the teacher's qualification shall not be less than a Bachelor's degree.

The Ministry of Education is working on training and qualifying teachers so as to keep pace with all developments in the educational aspect.

Based on the total number of teachers teaching grades (1-10) in basic education and grades (1-6) in general education, and their academic qualifications, one can notice from table (21) that the numbers of teachers holding university degree have increased from academic year 2000-2001 to academic year 2010-2011 by (30%), and the percentage of university qualified teachers increased from 14.3% in the academic year 2000-2001 to 81.9%, and there is also increase in the category of higher qualifications, such as higher diploma, MA, and PhD. On the other hand, there is a decline in qualifications below the academic degree as we find 100% decline in the under General Certificate qualification and General Certificate qualification. There is also 81% decline in the number of teachers holding the Diploma after General Certificate in the academic year 2000-2001, down to 12.2%, due to the keenness of the Ministry of Education to develop and train its employees to raise their efficiency, by awarding them scholarships and providing them with the opportunity to complete higher education.

3-2-9: Student-Teacher Ratio in Grades (1-6):

In general, the student-teacher ratio is low in all educational stages in Oman, and witnessing continuing decline in public schools, as the number of employed teachers is higher than the growth in the number of enrolled students (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012). The student-teacher ratio declined from 25 in the academic year 2000-2001 to 10 in the academic year 2011-2012. This decline is attributed to the employment policies adopted by the government in the teaching profession in particular, as it seeks to provide competent teachers to various governorates in Oman.



Table (22): Development of Student-Teacher Ratio in Basic Education for Grades (1-6)

Academic Year	Basic Education		Grades (1-6)		Total		Student per Teacher
	Total Teachers	Total Students	Total Teachers	Total Students	Total Teachers	Total Students	
2000	3027	49216	9238	253430	12265	302646	25
2005	21141	212842	4283	97877	25424	310719	12
2010	31802	347445	1111	23020	32913	370465	11
2011	38650	366273	1049	15853	39699	382126	10

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

3.2.10: Public Expenditure on Education:

Oman is keen to provide free for all public education, and the required resources, to be in harmony with the society's needs, in addition to its focus on the quality provided, whereas the government allocated a large share of its budget to the education sector in general, which is supervised by several public authorities along with the Ministry of Education, including the vocational and technical education which is supervised by the Ministry of Manpower, the Ministry of Higher Education with regard to higher education, and Sultan Qaboos University allocations.

Statistical data also indicate that the education budget receives the largest share of the total public expenditure. According to the statistical data of 2009, the Ministry of Education received 26.1% of the total public expenditure allocated for civil service sector. The statistical data also indicate that the provision of education sector rose from OMR 451,775,445 in the academic year 2005-2006 to reach OMR 822,450,170 in the academic year 2010-2011, and up to approximately one billion Omani Rial in 2013. This enormous rise in education provisions reflects an increasing public commitment to develop education and achieve the quality objectives aspired by the education system in Oman (Educational Indicators, 2012).



Table (23): Development of the average cost of student in Basic and General Education in OMR

Academic Year	Basic Education		General Education and Post-Basic Education		
	Cycle I	Cycle II	Grades (1-6)	Grades (7-9)	Grades (10-12)
2001	465	398	281	357	528
2005	914	933	653	675	911
2007	1225	1079	Grades (1-4)	Grades (5-10)	Grades (11-12)*
			1011	1041	1467
2011	1667	1532	1407	1949	2054
2012	1845	1721	1697	2092	2376

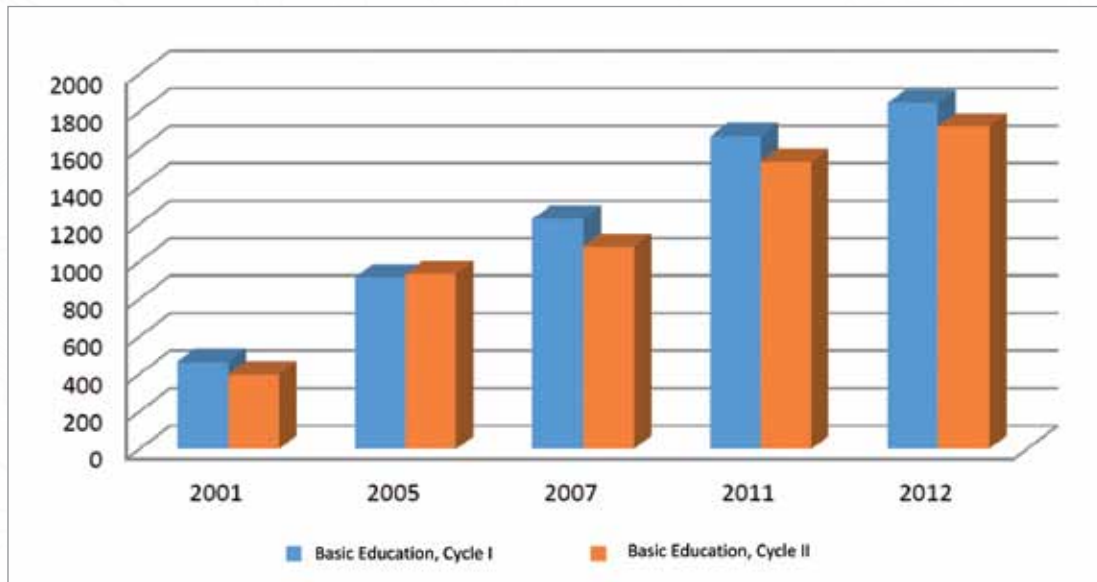
*Post-Basic Education

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

The student cost in basic and general education in Oman is increasing every year, and in all stages of the public education. The annual average growth rate in the student cost in Cycle I of the Basic Education from 2001 to 2011 was more than (3.5%). This is made clear in figure (18), as the student cost in Cycle I of the Basic Education was OMR 465 in 2000 and increased to OMR 1,845 in 2012, as well as in other stages of education. The joint study of the World Bank and Ministry of Education attributed the increase in student cost to the fact that the total enrollment ratio declined when the budget's provisions were rising. Such matter reflects the policy adopted by the Ministry of Education in providing various educational sources, and creating learning friendly environment, through the full commitment shown by the government in allocating resources for school buildings and providing teachers and faculty and administrative members, and all services related to the educational process.

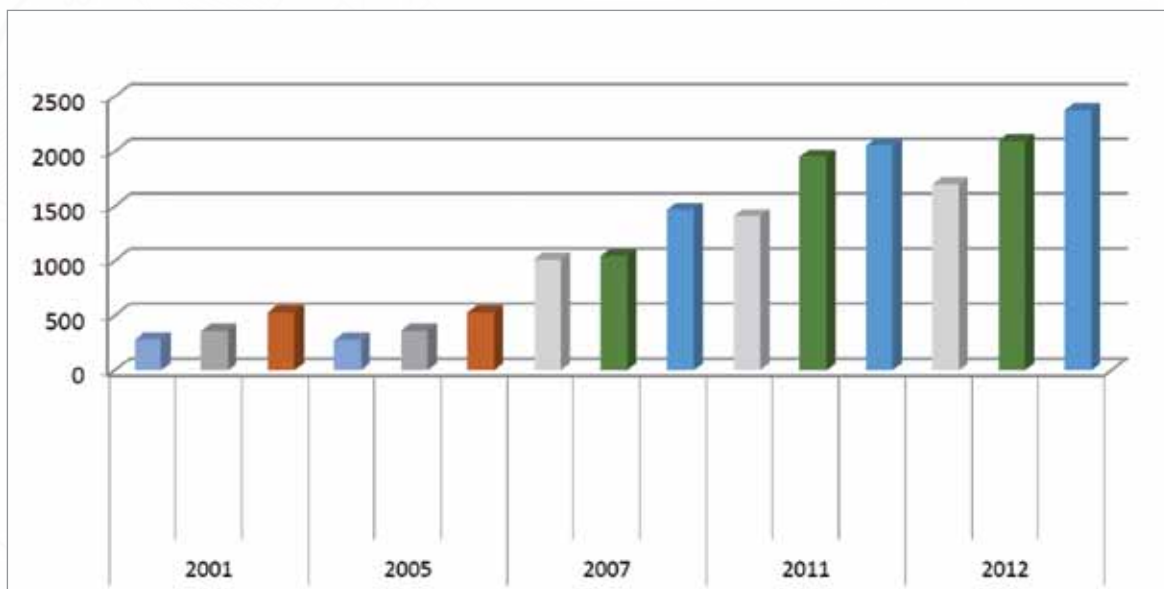


Figure (18): Development of the average cost of student in Basic Education by Cycle in OMR



(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Figure (19): average cost of student in General Education by grades in OMR



(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



3.2.11: Percentage of Basic Education Schools Providing Full Basic Education:

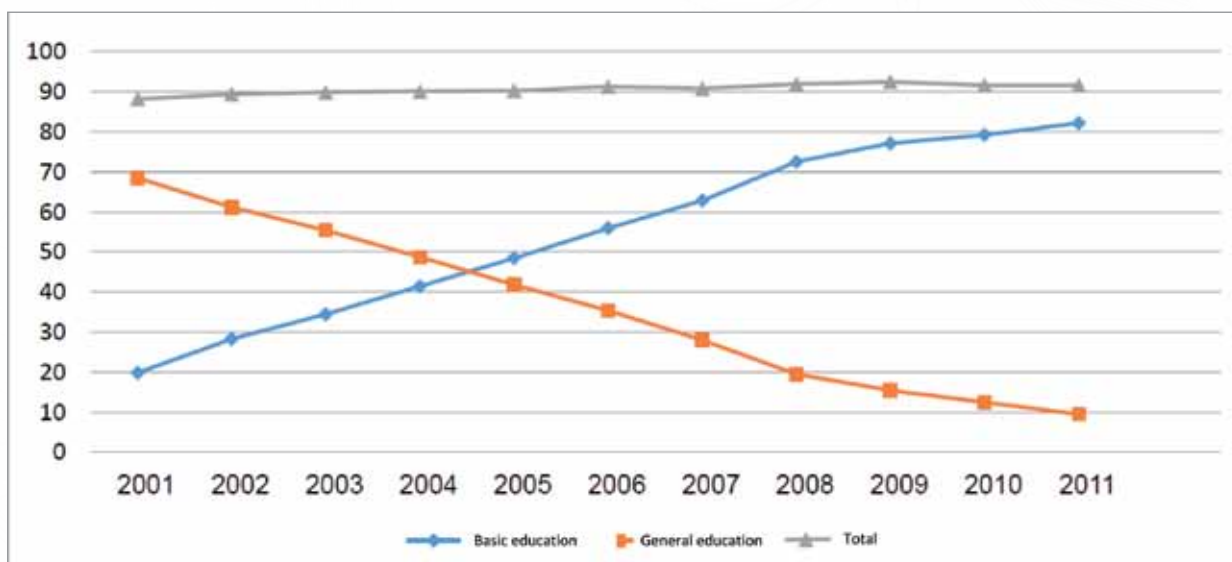
In the academic year 1998-1999, the Omani Ministry of Education initiated a major educational development process in its education system, with the application of the basic education system, which continues for ten years (1-10), and divided into two cycles: Cycle I (grades 1-4) and Cycle II (grades 5-10). The Ministry of Education gradually started this system in certain schools across a number of governorates. Following its success in providing a unified education, based on fulfilling basic educational and scientific requirements, including skills, principles and tendencies which qualify students to face the current challenges, the Ministry of Education worked on generalizing full basic education in all the schools of Oman.

Table (24): Development of the percentage of basic education schools and grades (1-6) of the general education which provide basic/primary education out of the total number of public schools

Academic Year	Basic Education	General Education	Total
2000	10.2	76.4	86.6
2005	48.5	41.8	90.2
2010	79.2	12.4	91.6
2011	82.2	9.4	91.6

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Figure (20): Development of the percentage of basic education schools and Grades (1-6) of the general education which provide basic/primary education out of the total number of public schools



(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)




There is a significant development in the total number of schools providing full basic or primary education for grades (1-6), considering that the percentage of basic education schools increased from 10.2% in the academic year 2000-2001 to 82.2% in the academic year 2011-2012, with an annual growth rate of 25.8%. On the other hand, the number of general education schools decreased from 76.4% in the academic year 2000-2001 to 9.4% in the academic year 2011-2012, with an annual decline rate of 20.6%. This is attributed to the continued expansion in implementing basic education with an annual increase in the number of schools in addition to the expansion through graduation in basic education grades.

3.2.12: Percentage Distribution of Basic Education Students by Distance Travelled between Home and School:

The Ministry of Education is committed to the principle of providing free education for all students irrespective of their gender, social status, cultural background, or place of residence. Schools were built in various areas and governorates of Oman, even in areas of low population density, such as Al Wusta Governorate. This is of Oman's belief in the right of education. The Ministry of Education also provides free transportation for all to the nearest school to students' residence, which costs the Ministry considerable amount of its recurrent annual budget, i.e. OMR 64 million in 2013 which is equal to 6% of the budget. Such amount comes second after payroll.

Table (25): Relative Distribution of Omani families by distance in kilometers and time taken to reach a primary school

Variables		 Primary School
Distance in kilometers	Less than 1 km	56.0
	1 – 5 km	33.6
	More than 5 km	10.4
Time taken	Less than 10 minutes	85.5
	10 – 14 minutes	8.9
	15 – 19 minutes	3.8
	+20 minutes	1.9

Family Expenses and Income Survey Project 2010/2011, National Center for Statistics and Information



Unlike other reports prepared by the Ministry of Education, this report refers to the percentage distribution of basic education students by distance travelled or transportation between home and school, relying on the family expenses and income survey to identify this indicator. The family expenses and income survey for 2010/2011, prepared by the National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI), did not clarify if families had children for primary schools or not. But data in general pointed out that over half of the Omani families can reach primary schools in less than (1) one kilometer, while one third of families travel (1-5) kilometers to reach primary schools. 85.5% of families can reach primary schools in less than 10 minutes (NCSI, 2011)

Recently the Ministry of Education formed a competent working group to conduct a survey of school tributaries, translating the 13th goal of the 8th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), “Improve the statistical work and its outcomes in support of the educational decisions”. The working group will update the school tributaries (villages, lanes, and various population communities, etc.), indicate the road linking the schools with such tributaries on the satellite maps, and specify its type (tarmac/paved) and specify its length, and determine the tributaries covered with students public transportation and number of students transported. After collecting all the data, it will be entered in electronic forms that will allow extracting indicators, ratios, aggregates, reports, and photos in various formats on the level of each tributary, wilayat, and educational directorate. This is conducted through the School Map Project.

3.2.13: Special Education Schools

Oman’s emphasis on providing inclusive education accessible for all does not neglect education of persons with disabilities. The provision of good education for this segment requires specialized teachers, equipment and purposely designed schools and classrooms. The inclusive education, in its broad concept, means the accommodation of all children irrespective of their physical, mental, social, and linguistic condition, in addition to talented children and children in remote areas. The Ministry of Education is making great efforts in this area through three educational services for persons with special needs: (1) Three special education schools, (2) Program on integrating children with disabilities into basic education schools, and (3) Program on handling learning difficulties in basic/general education schools.

The three special education schools are located in Muscat Governorate, the School of Mentally-Impaired Students, Al-Amal School for Hearing-Impaired Students, and Omar Ibn Al-Khattab Institute for the blind. In the academic year 2012-2013, there were



558 students enrolled in these three schools. The number of enrolled students in such schools declined due to the increasing awareness of parents as they seek to integrate their children in basic education schools with their healthy counterparts.

The second service is the program on integrating children with disabilities into basic/general education schools, whereas the Ministry started implementing it in the academic year 2005-2006. This program provides separate classrooms for students with hearing and mental disabilities in such schools. It was initially implemented in two basic education schools in two educational governorates, i.e. Al Batinah North and Dakhiliyah and then extended to four educational governorates in the following academic year 2006-2007, followed by ten governorates in the academic year 2008-2009. The number of enrolled students in the academic year 2012-2013 was (1,194) students in 152 schools in all educational governorates, with the largest number of students in Al Batinah South Governorate.

The third service of special education programmes is the program on handling learning difficulties in basic/general education schools. This program assists teachers in determining students who need additional assistance in learning reading, writing and arithmetic. It was initially implemented in the academic year 2002-2003 with only 15 students in two basic education schools, and was fully implemented in all governorates of Oman in the academic year 2008-2009 to accommodate around (11,577) students in 635 schools in the academic year 2012-2013 (Department of Special Education, Ministry of Education).

3.2.14: Private Schools:

The Directorate General of Private Schools, Ministry of Education, supervises private schools in terms of technical and administrative aspects. In order to increase investment in education, the state supported and encouraged the private sector with several incentives such as providing assistance in obtaining plots of land to build private schools, providing 50% of books free of charge, and providing free supervision and training of private schools' teachers.

Certain private schools play a significant role in developing education in Oman, by implementing curricula that enable their students to obtain several internationally-recognized certificates, such as the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), A Level Certificate, and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Certificate (Ministry of Education, 2006).



Table (26): Number of private schools and students therein

Academic Year	Number of schools	Number of students	Number of teachers
2000	132	23850	1801
2005	158	28183	2250
2010	387	65326	5241
2013	444	79382 *	6248

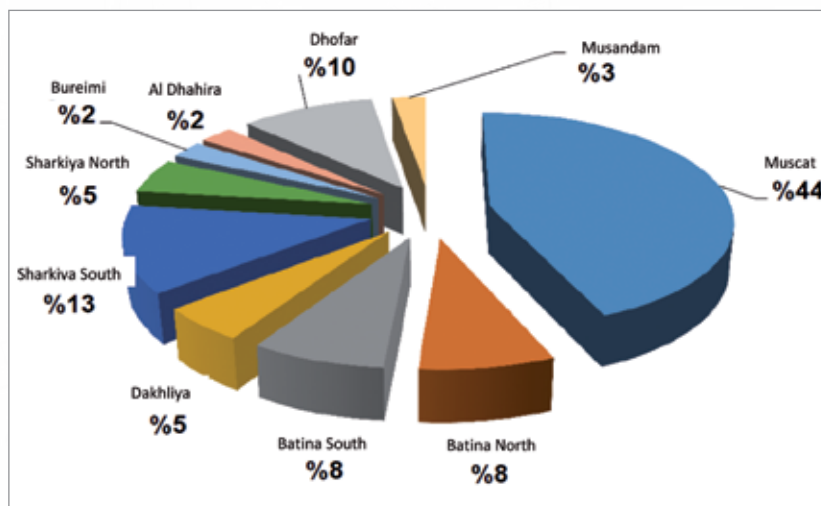
*Including preschool education students

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Through the incentives provided by the government to the private schools, and the belief that private education is better than public education, the number of private schools doubled and increased greatly in all educational governorates in Oman to reach 444 schools in 2013 compared to 132 schools in 2000.

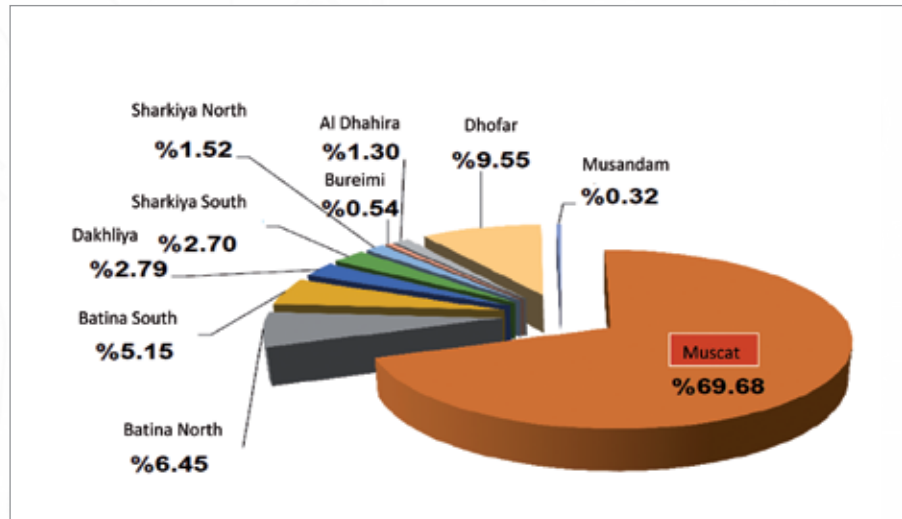
3.2.15: International Schools:

Foreign communities are permitted to open their own schools, according to the rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Education, in terms of procedures to establish such international schools, employment of teaching and administrative staff, students' enrollment, and their curricula. There is a special office for such schools at the Ministry of Education, International Schools Office, which supervises the work of such schools according to the Ministry's rules and regulations, follows up the employment of teachers and administrative staff, and monitors the cultural activities conducted by such schools. International schools are free to choose their curricula (Ministry of Education, 2006).

Figure (21): Percentage of international schools by governorate

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Figure (22): Percentage of international schools' students by governorate



During the academic year 2012-2013, there were 39 international schools in 10 governorates in Oman, except for Al Wusta Governorate, providing education from preschool stage to grade 12 for approximately 49,948 students. Most of international schools are located in Muscat Governorate.



Goal 3

3-3: Goal 3: Fulfilling the Learning Needs of Youth and Adults

According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/2014, this goal is one of the six EFA goals which received the least attention, due to the lack of specific indicators which allow for monitoring the progress made towards it. However, this goal in Oman is attended to directly or indirectly by the people themselves and the public policies. There is more understanding that education does not stop at certain age or stage, and it is important for all persons throughout their lives. The results of the 2010 Oman's General Census indicated a qualitative leap in the area of lifelong education, clearly manifested in the increasing enrollment in educational institutions, whether to complete pre-academic or academic studies, or to attend short courses to develop their knowledge and improve their life skills in general. This was assisted by the existence of several educational and training institutions in all fields in most governorates of Oman. Such institutions are different in terms of qualifications awarded to their students, duration of their programs and the teaching language, which create the appropriate conditions for those interested in learning to select according to their desires and abilities.

Table (27) Youth Literacy Rate (15-24 years) by gender for 2003 and 2013

Year	2003	2013
Males	98.7	99.28
Females	96.9	99.26
Total	98	99.27

(National Center for Statistics and Information)

Oman sought to provide education for all individuals of the society according to the provisions of the Omani Basic Statute (Constitution), in Part II (Article 135), which stipulates that education is a cornerstone for the progress of state, and Oman seeks to spread and universalize it, provide free education, eradicate illiteracy, and encourage the establishment of private schools and institutes as well as colleges and universities. The third objective of Oman's Economy Vision (Oman 2020) also stresses on the importance of spreading and encouraging knowledge, eradication of illiteracy, and development of education by creating an atmosphere that seeks to achieve such objective, and make education accessible for all via a cost-effective and efficient system, so as to provide opportunities for citizens and expatriates.



Table (28): Percentage Distribution of youth (15-24 years) by educational status according to 2010 Census data

Educational Status	(15-24)		
	Males	Females	Total
Illiterate	0.9	1.3	1.1
Literate	1.1	1.6	1.3
Primary/ Basic Education (Cycle I)	15.4	14.1	14.8
Preparatory Education/ Cycle II	31.1	27.5	29.4
General Diploma	45.6	46.8	46.2
Post-school Diploma	4.0	5.1	4.5
BA	1.9	3.6	2.7
MA	0.0	0.0	0.0
PhD	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100	100	100

(National Center for Statistics and Information)

Table (29): Percentage distribution of adults (15+ years) by educational status according to the data of the 2010 Census

Educational Status	2010		
	Males	Females	Total
Illiterate	8.92	19.39	14.11
Literate	7.16	6.98	7.07
Primary Stage/ 1 st stage of Basic Education	12.37	10.50	11.44
Preparatory Stage/ 2 nd stage of Basic Education	19.85	15.75	17.82
Secondary Stage Certificate/ General Education Diploma	37.50	33.60	35.57
Certificate of intermediate and technical colleges/ Diploma	5.9	5.7	5.8
BS/ BA	7	7.5	7.2
MA	1.04	0.37	0.71
PhD	0.2	0.07	0.14
Total	100	100	100

(National Center for Statistics and Information)



The percentage of holders of academic qualifications from both genders in Oman is very close according to the data of the last census, reaching 97% for females and 98% for males for the age group from 15 to 24 years old. Data also indicate that the number of Omani female students enrolled in higher education is more than their male counterparts as the percentage of holders of post-school diplomas and higher amounted to around 9% for females compared to 6% for males (National Center for Statistics and Information, 2013 B).

In order to connect education to life from the very beginning in the lives of individuals and young people, Life Skills Curriculum was introduced in the educational plan of the Basic Education and General Education. Such curriculum has to do with building the student's personality to become capable of bearing responsibility and handling the requirements of daily life, with the highest level of creative interaction, by acquiring integrated and varied set of practical skills, as well as related knowledge, skills, values, and trends. The general objectives of this subject were derived from the philosophy of society and education in Oman and its general objectives. The curriculum of this subject contains several main themes including health and safety, home culture, world of work, citizenship and globalization and personal skills, so as to keep pace with the scientific and technological advancement and to meet the requirements of the modern society.

In the area of development of vocational and technical abilities, the Ministry of Manpower made fundamental changes through increasing opportunities to enroll in technical training centers and technical colleges, as detailed later, as well as expanding in training and educational specializations in such centers and colleges, and diversifying their results and levels of skills in line with the developmental needs, through (Supreme Council for Planning, 2012):

- Creating an integrated system for technical education and vocational training in collaboration with the competent public authorities and the private sector. Through the assistance of world experts, such integrated system was developed in Oman so as to be applied in public vocational training centers and technical colleges. Such system is characterized by its integration of the theoretical and practical aspects of the training and educational process. It also provides best-performing graduates of the vocational training centers with the opportunity to enroll in educational and academic programmes in the technical colleges.
- Developing the infrastructure of the technical education and vocational training, which was required by the implementation of the integrated system. The focus was on making important development processes in the public technical colleges and vocational training centers where their facilities and equipment were expanded and updated to increase their capacity and achieve balance between theoretical and practical aspects of their programs, in line with the needs of the labor market. The development included building new colleges, adding new buildings to vocational training centers, establishing several engineering laboratories, science laboratories, and engineering workshops, developing the teaching center



of English Language, issuing regulating bylaws for the public technical colleges, vocational training centers, and private training centers, establishing a specialized department to regulate the quality of technical education and vocational training, and establishing a center for professional standards and skills' testing in collaboration with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ).

- Expanding educational and training specializations and diversification of skills.

3-3-1: Enrollment Rates in Post-Basic (Secondary) Education:

Post-Basic Education is a two-year school education system following the Basic Education Stage, which lasts for (10) academic years. Post-Basic Education aims to continue developing the basic skills, work skills, and vocational planning among students in order to prepare them to become effective members of the society, able to benefit from education, training and employment opportunities following the school education.

In the Post-Basic Education Stage, students choose the subjects they want to study in grades 11 and 12, and determine the major to be studied at university, the National Center for Vocational Guidance was established to guide students in choosing their education path in general, higher and technical education that suits their interest and abilities, in order to prepare manpower able to meet the requirements of the comprehensive development in Oman, in line with professional and vocational guidance in higher education institutions, and complement the objectives and trends of the Ministry of Education and the private sector.

Text frame (7): Objectives of Post-Basic Education

1. Enhance loyalty towards the nation and His Majesty the Sultan.
2. Confirm belonging to the Gulf, Arab, Muslim, and Global Society.
3. Confirm the belief in the principles of Islam, establish creed and spiritual values among learners, and employ them in life, and make them a standard for behavior.
4. Feel proud of the Arabic Language, expand in its education, and master its arts along with acquiring sufficient skills in one of the international communication languages.
5. Belong to the society and have awareness of the global trends.
6. Develop all types of thinking and the ability to solve problems.
7. Develop positive attitude towards work.
8. Effective use of self-education, continuing education, and search for knowledge skills.
9. Develop positive attitude towards the environment.
10. Develop the ability to interact with others and active social participation.



Post-basic education must achieve two purposes: prepare students for university study and prepare them for the labor market (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012), which are the destination of education outcomes. The Ministry of Education conducted several consultative studies on grades 11 and 12, for the purpose of having post-basic education graduates possessing several skills and an academic performance according to international standards. The Ministry of Education also organizes several seminars to promote post-basic education, including the Post-Basic Education Symposium in 2008 in collaboration with UNESCO, and the Education and the 21st century competencies in September 2013, with one of its themes tackling post-basic education and skills required for the 21st century, and their relation with the labor market.

Table (30) Development of adjusted gross and net enrollment ratios for grades (7-9) and (10-12)

Academic Year	Grades	Gross Enrollment Ratio			Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio		
		M	F	Total	M	F	Total
2000	Grades (7-9)	101.6	93.4	97.6	91.3	88.9	90.1
	Grades (10-12)	69.7	77.3	73.4	76.3	76.1	76.2
	Total	85.6	85.3	85.5	83.8	82.5	83.2
2005	Grades (7-9)	99.9	93.5	96.7	88.9	89.9	89.4
	Grades (10-12)	85.6	82.0	83.8	82.0	75.5	78.8
	Total	92.7	87.7	90.3	85.5	82.7	84.1
2010	Grades (7-9)	99.4	98.7	99.1	95.6	94.8	95.2
	Grades (10-12)	96.2	94.9	95.6	84.8	85.4	85.1
	Total	97.8	96.8	97.3	90.2	90.1	90.15
2011	Grades (7-9)	99.5	98.9	99.3	95.7	95.0	95.4
	Grades (10-12)	96.2	95.1	95.6	85.0	85.6	85.3
	Total	97.8	97.0	97.4	90.35	90.3	90.35

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Figure (23): Gross and adjusted net enrollment ratios for grades (10-12)

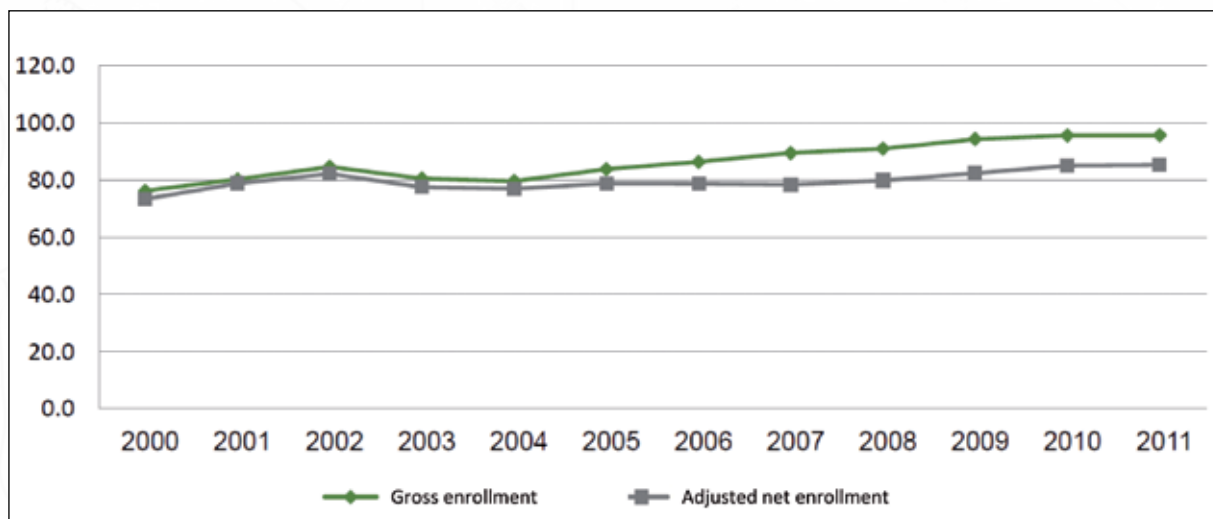


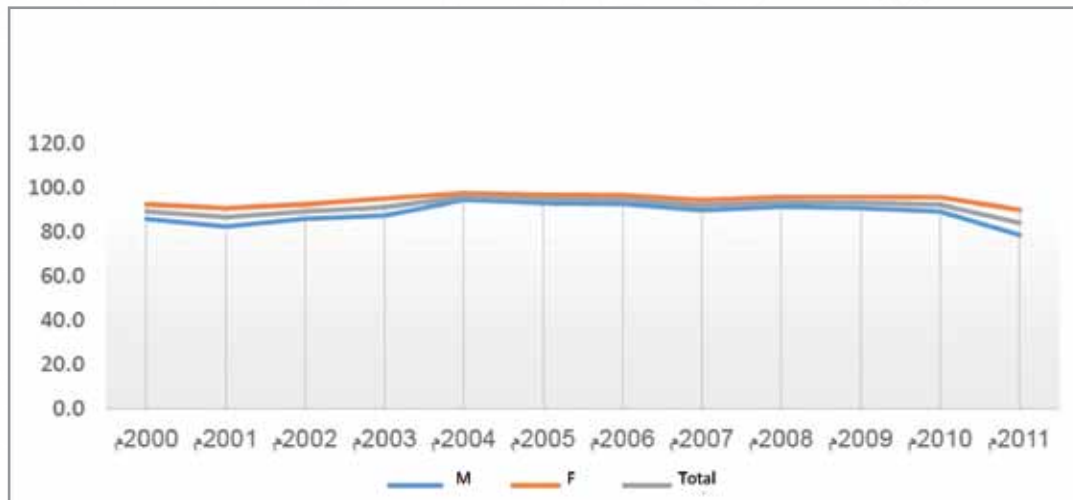
Table 30 and figure 23 indicate that the gross enrollment ratio for post-basic education (grades 10-12) increased to 95.6% in the academic year 2011-2012, compared to 73.4% in the academic year 2000-2001. The adjusted net enrollment ratio indicate that 85.3% of the age group of 15-17 years are enrolled in the public and private education system in the academic year 2011-2012, with a preference for males in the past five years due to the nature of the demographic composition.

Table (31): Development of transition rates from Basic Education to Post-Basic Education by gender

Academic Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Males	85.9	82.5	86.0	87.5	94.5	93.1	92.8	90.0	91.4	90.9	89.3	78.6
Females	92.5	90.8	92.5	95.1	97.6	96.9	96.6	94.3	95.9	95.8	95.6	90.1
Total	89.3	86.8	89.4	91.3	96.0	95.0	94.6	92.1	93.5	93.2	92.4	84.1

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Figure (24): Development of transition rate from Basic Education to Post-Basic Education

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

The actual transition rate from grade 10, the last grade of basic education, to post-basic education differs from one year to another. In the academic year 2000-2001, the transition rate was 89.3%, and declined in the academic year 2011-2012 to 84.1% in total, which may be attributed to the rise of the repetition rate in grade 10, and certain students entering the labor market and vocational training institutes, which used to accept grade 10 students of the general education, prior to changing of the vocational training system in 2012 to receive general education diploma graduates.

3.3.2: Cost of Student in Post-Basic Education, Grades (10-12):

There is a significant growth in expenditure on education in Oman, as well as the rise of the student's cost from one year to another, particularly for the post-basic education, and the big and clear difference in the cost of the secondary student, which reached (OMR 2,376) in 2012 compared to (OMR 528) in 2001.

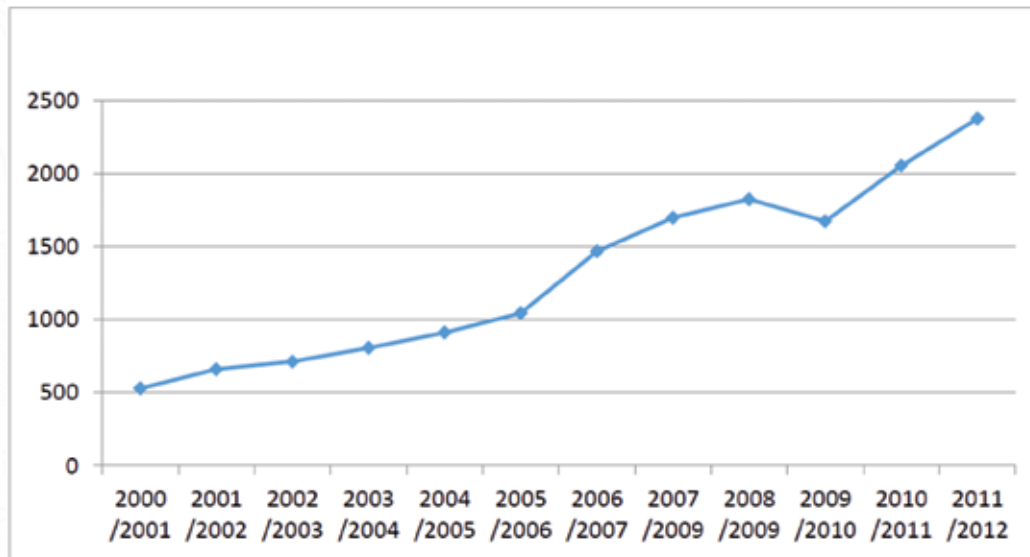
Table (32): Student's cost in the secondary stage for grades (10-12) in OMR

Academic Year	Grades (10-12)
2001	528
2003	712
2005	911
2007	1467
2010	1,673
2011	2,054
2012	2,376

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Figure (25): Student's cost in grades (10-12)



3-3-3: Vocational Training:

Oman recognized that the rapid economic, social and technological changes, and their associated developments in production and the labor market, require continuous work by the educational institutions in general, and the technical education and vocational training in particular, in order to meet the evolving needs in the labor market from technical and professional manpower with various competencies and skill levels.

The technical and vocational education and training sector has witnessed a qualitative leap in Oman, following the UNESCO 2nd International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training held in Seoul in 1999, which stressed the importance of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) as key to socioeconomic development. The UNESCO congress also called for reforming TVET in order to face the increasing challenges of globalized economies, labor markets, and 21st century societies. The UNESCO 2nd International Congress recommended reviewing and developing UNESCO recommendations on TVET. In 2001, the UNESCO revised recommendation on TVET was issued from which Oman derived several principles to develop TVET (Al-Ghasani, 2012). In order to achieve the strategic objectives of human resources development, the Ministry of Manpower took some practical measures to develop the vocational education in Oman. During 2012, the following actions were taken:

1. Determine three paths for vocational education in Oman consisting of a set of educational programmes (Formal Education, Apprenticeship, and Short Courses).



2. Include vocational education programmes within the system of the Higher Education Admission Center as educational courses for higher education.
3. Resolution of the Council of Ministers to equate the Vocational Diploma Certificate to the Technical Colleges Diploma in terms of financial grade according to the Civil Service Law.
4. Establish the Vocational Training Center in Al Buraimi and admitting the first class of students as of November 2012 according to the path of the Vocational Education Diploma.
5. Form 22 professional technical and supervisory committees to review the system and paths of vocational education in its various stages.
6. Accept the enrollment of female students in most training majors at centers and institutes.

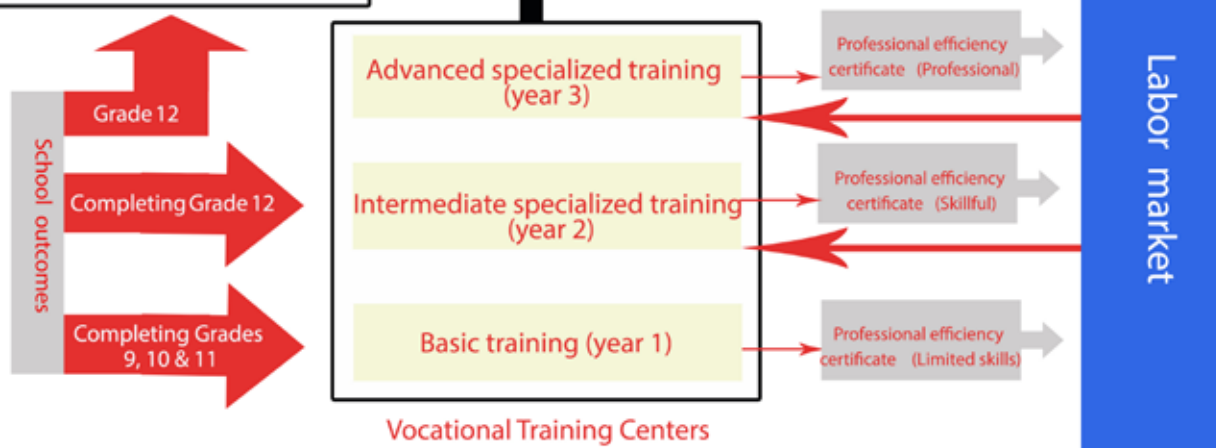
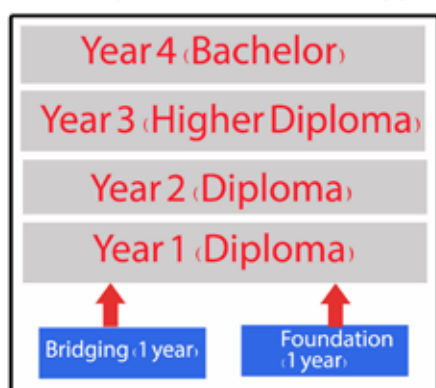


Text frame (8): Principles of TVET Development in Oman (Al-Ghasani, 2012):

- Focusing on instilling professional ethics among trainees and learners.
- Integrating leadership characteristics in the educational programmes.
- Introducing specializations that suit the need of the labor market.
- Introducing programmes that suit women and increasing their absorption.
- Facilitating students' transition to higher educational stages.
- Introducing industrial training programmes with modern and innovative methods.
- Introducing modern technology and supporting the use of ICT.
- Qualifying and training technical trainers and teachers.
- Supporting the poor families through allocating places for social security children

TVET System in Oman

Colleges of Technology



Oman seriously took the recommendations of the UNESCO 2nd International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (1999) and the UNESCO revised recommendation on TVET (2001), and several plans and programmes were developed to introduce educational programmes that suit the society's needs and market economies. This was achieved through organizing national symposiums and increasing coordination with the labor market sectors, think-tanks and civil society institutions. The following overview on the vocational training in Oman will give clear perspective in this area.

3.3.4: Origin of the Vocational Training in Oman:

Public vocational training in Oman dates back to 1972, when the (former) Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor was mandated to oversee the vocational training through the Darsait Center. Accordingly, Darsait Center represented the nucleus of institutionalized vocational training in Oman. From 1976 to 1985, (8) institutes awarding technical and commercial preparatory diploma were established. During the period from 1986 to 1990, the technical and commercial preparatory diploma was replaced with the secondary technical diploma.

During the academic year 1994-1995, such institutes were transformed to vocational training centers providing short courses to attract the largest number of trainees to be trained according to the labor market needs, and from 1999 to 2000, two levels of the Omani vocational qualifications were approved which are semi-skilled worker and skilled worker at the level of the secondary vocational diploma.

3.3.5: Enrollment, Professions and Disciplines at the Vocational Training Centers and Fishermen Training Institutes:

The vocational training centers train the national workforce on various skills, and a number of disciplines were provided covering various professions including electricity, electronics, mechatronics, refrigeration and air conditioning, general mechanics, construction, carpentry, sales and marketing, health and beauty, automotive technology, metal welding and machining, agricultural, fishing guidance, quality control, aquaculture, deep water fishing vessels engineering, coastal fishing vessels engineering, marine engines maintenance, fishing gears and methods, shipbuilding and repair, skippers of coastal fishing vessels, and skippers of deep water fishing vessels in various regions of Oman through 6 vocational training centers and 2 fishermen training centers. In addition to these major disciplines, there are over 30 other secondary disciplines.



Table (33): Number and percentage of enrolled students at vocational training centers by major disciplines for the academic year 2012-2013

Discipline	Number	Percentage
Foundation Year	125	4,9
Electricity	278	10,9
Electronics	476	18,9
Mechatronics	66	2,7
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	166	6,6
General Mechanics	73	2,9
Metal Welding and Machining	94	3,8
Automotive Technology	247	9,8
Construction	399	15,7
Carpentry	230	9,0
Agriculture	116	4,5
Sales and Marketing	249	9,8
Health and Beauty	77	3
Total	2531	100

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Report 2012)

The vocational training centers focus on the most important disciplines needed by the labor market, and they are determined in collaboration with the private sector companies so as to develop the professional standards and training programmes, which suit the needs and requirements of professions required, with the purpose of providing the Omani labor market with the qualified and trained national workforce in various vocational disciplines.



Table (34): Distribution of trainees at the two fishermen's qualification institutes by discipline for the training year 2012-2013

Discipline	Number
Fishing Guidance and Quality Control	89
Shipbuilding and Repair	99
Fishing Methods and Gear	42
Aquaculture	40
Skipper of coastal fishing vessels	10
Skipper of deep water fishing vessels	17
Marine engines Engineering	31
Coastal Fishing Vessels Engineering	13
Deep Water Fishing Vessels Engineering	14
Total	355

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Report 2012)

In recent years, there was a rapid growth in the numbers of students admitted to the vocational training centers, and this is due to increased student awareness of the importance of vocational training, in addition to the development of vocational training centers, which made them attractive to more trainees. Six vocational training centers were established in addition to two fishermen's qualification institutes.

Accordingly, there are eight training centers and institutes. Figure (35) shows that the number of enrolled persons in these centers rose from (2,326) male and female trainees in the training year 2006-2007 to (4,364) male and female trainees in the training year 2010-2011, with an average annual increase of around 10%, and several programmes targeting females were introduced in such institutes and centers, thus their enrollment in vocational education increased at an accelerated pace every year.



Table (35): Numbers of trainees at vocational training centers and fishermen's qualification institutes

Year	Number of vocational training centers and fishermen's qualification institutes	Gender	Number of trainees	Total
2006-2007	4	Male	2326	2326
		Female	-	
2007-2008	5	Male	2607	2607
		Female	-	
2008-2009	6	Male	2929	2929
		Female	-	
2009-2010	7	Male	2790	3138
		Female	348	
2010-2011	7	Male	3688	4343
		Female	655	
2011-2012	8	Male	2191	2864
		Female	673	
2012-2013	8	Male	1670	2899
		Female	1229	

(Ministry of Manpower, Directorate General of Vocational Training)

3.3.6: Academic Faculty in Vocational Training:

The teaching and training faculties at the vocational and fishermen training centers consist of multi-nationalities individuals holding high academic degrees, and have vast training expertise. The Ministry of Manpower is always working on training Omani nationals to hold jobs related with education and training in these centers and institutes, and they are increasing from one year to another. There are minimum qualifications and expertise for those working in vocational training. As for instructors, their qualification shall not be less than BA and 4 years academic experience while trainers shall have a diploma at least.



Table (36): Training and Teaching Faculties at vocational and fishermen training institutes in 2013

Center	Training and Teaching Staff		
	Omani	Non-Omani	Total
Seeb	40	71	111
Saham	23	86	109
Sur	16	58	74
Ibri	22	66	88
Shinas	16	35	51
Al Buraimi	1	40	41
Al Khabura	9	31	40
Salalah	18	37	55
Total	145	424	569

(Ministry of Manpower (2013). Annual Report of Vocational Training Centers and Institutes)

3.3.7: Private Training Institutions and Institutes:

By late 2012, there were 256 private training institutions distributed among various governorates of Oman compared to 175 in 2010. Such training institutes, centers, offices, and units are classified and licensed according to their training services as follows:

1. Vocational training institutes implementing commercial, industrial and vocational training programmes as specified in the bylaws regulating the private training institutions, and by the end of 2012 there were 162 training institutes.
2. Vocational training centers established by major companies offering training courses and vocational programmes to serve the work's requirements, and by the end of 2012 there were 19 training centers.
3. Training service offices conducting lectures, symposiums, conferences and workshops and providing consultations and training services for a limited period not exceeding 25 training hours for one week, and by the end of 2012 there were 69 training offices.



4. Training units which colleges and universities are allowed to establish to conduct the activities of symposiums, conferences, and workshops as well as provide consulting services within various training fields and by the end of 2012 there were 6 units.

Table (37): Numbers of private training institutes according to the statistics of the Ministry of Manpower for 2012

Private training institutes				Training centers of companies	Training services offices	Training units	Grand Total
Commercial	Technical	Vocational	Total				
110	25	27	162	19	69	6	256

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Report 2012)

3.3.8: Private Training Institutions and Training for Employment:

Trainees in the National Training Projects Program:

The Ministry of Manpower is continuing the implementation of the government plans and policies for providing vocational training and qualification to Omani job seekers (who are professionally qualified), in order to prepare them for joining the labor market and get the employment opportunities available in the private sector within various economic activities. The training for employment program is prepared in collaboration with the training facilities and institutions, and is financed by the government according to contract between the trainee, the future employer, and the training center or institute implementing the programme, which is designed for the purpose of qualifying and preparing the trainees to enable them to occupy the determined position at the facility according to the employment contract concluded for this purpose.

Table (38): Job seekers benefiting from the National Training Projects by gender and field of training for 2012

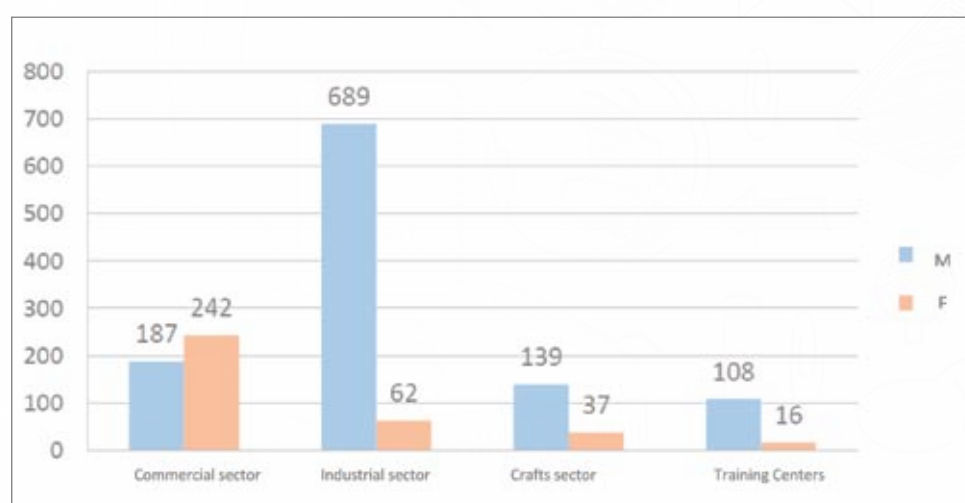
Gender	Commercial sector	Industrial sector	Crafts sector	Training Centers	Total
Males	187	689	139	108	1123
Females	242	62	37	16	357
Total	429	751	176	124	1480

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Report 2012)



1,480 Omani job seekers/trainees benefited from the national training programmes in 2012 as indicated in table (38) compared to 669 trainees in 2000.

Figure (26): Job seekers benefiting from the National Training Projects Programmes by gender and field of training for 2012



Data in figure 26 above indicate that the training of female job seekers exists mainly in the commercial disciplines while the training of male job seekers exists mainly in the industrial, commercial, and crafts fields respectively.

Trainees of Project “Earn”:

155 beneficiary job seekers benefiting from the Project “Earn”, including 39 males (25.2%) and 116 females (74.8%), and they are vocationally prepared and qualified to enter the labor market, with the government bearing the costs of their training as indicated in Table (39).

Table (39): Job seekers benefiting from Project Earn by gender and field of training for 2012

Gender	Commercial Field	Industrial Field	Crafts Field	Total
Males	12	22	5	39
Females	84	6	26	116
Total	96	28	31	155

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Report 2012)

During the period from 2003 to 2012, there was an increase in the numbers of trainees in the above programmes, within the government efforts to enroll unqualified job seekers in vocational training



programmes at advanced private training institutes and centers with funding from the government. The data of the Ministry of Manpower indicate that 35,903 citizens have been trained according to the training for employment programmes during the period from 2003 to 2012 (Ministry of Manpower, 2010-2011-2012).

Trainees at own expense:

In 2012, 33,254 approved certificates for graduates were issued by various private training institutions (institutes, centers, service offices, and training units), including 30,967 certificates for trainees at own expense in short-term courses, due to their desire to acquire new skills and develop work related vocational and technical potentials, or to serve the trainees' personal requirements.

Table (40): Approved Certificates by training fields for 2012

Training Field	Languages	computer	Commercial Courses	Crafts Courses	Industrial Courses	National Programs	Total
Number of certificates	12191	12119	5192	676	789	2287	33254

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Report 2012)

3.3.9: Technical Education: Origin of Technical Education in Oman

The origin of technical education in Oman dates back to 1984, when Oman Technical Industrial College was established in Muscat, to provide training opportunities for the general (secondary) education graduates, and prepare them vocationally and technically and qualify them to work in various professions and sectors in the fields needed by the labor market. The college started teaching the industrial technical diploma in Arabic. In 1993, four vocational training centers were transformed to industrial technical colleges awarding the industrial technical diploma, which introduced the general national vocational qualification programmes and Omani national diploma. Two new technical colleges were established later.

3.3.10: Development of Technical Education

The technical education in Oman witnessed continuous development. With the implementation of the Vision of Oman's Economy (Oman 2020), which started in 1996, and pursuant to the recommendation of the UNESCO 2nd International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Seoul 1999), considering TVET as the key to socioeconomic development, and following the UNESCO revised recommendations on TVET in 2001, and pursuant to the recommendations of the 1st Symposium on Employment of National Workforce held in 2001, significant changes in the technical education took place in Oman, as it witnessed a comprehensive development in the levels of awarded academic qualifications





and the nature of programmes available. In 2001, industrial technical colleges also changed to technical colleges awarding the advanced technical diploma, and higher technical college awarding the technical bachelor degree by virtue of a decision made by the Higher Education Council dated January 31, 2001. After the 2nd Symposium on Employment of National Workforce held in March 2003, and the Technical Education Symposium held in April 2003, the new educational programmes, which started from the academic year 2003-2004, were approved. This is followed by the establishment of two new technical colleges in 2005 and 2008 (Al-Ghasani, 2012).

3.3.11: Structure of the Educational Programme:

During their study at the technical colleges, students take gradual steps in several educational levels according to the structure of the technical qualifications. Upon their admission, students enroll in the foundation programme, which mostly focuses on English Language, considering that teaching in all disciplines of the technical college is conducted in English. During the foundation programme, students also study mathematics, IT and Life Skills. Upon successfully completing the foundation programme, students enroll in specialized study at the technical diploma level, which is followed by the advanced technical diploma and the technical bachelor degree. Students may not move from one level to the next higher level unless after fulfilling the transition conditions, i.e. achieving specific levels in the English Language for each level in addition to achieving the required grade in educational curricula. In case students complete certain educational level without achieving the transition conditions to higher level, they enroll in the field training programme, which is a graduation requirement for all educational levels, whereby students during the training period are supervised by academics from the technical colleges and practitioners working at the private sector institutions.



3.3.12: Departments and Majors of the technical colleges:

The technical colleges provide 39 majors in engineering, IT, commercial studies, applied sciences, pharmacy, photography and fashion design in order to fulfill the needs of the labor market, and keep pace with the latest economic value added technological developments. More technical majors are introduced in collaboration with the labor market. The tables at the end of this report may be referred to know the majors indicated against every department of the technical colleges, noting that the majors provided at each college depend on the needs of the labor market in the college's surrounding area.

3.3.13: Development of Students' Enrollment in Technical Colleges:

In recent years, the technical education witnessed significant and tangible development in all fields in terms of capacity, disciplines and programs. The number of enrolled students rose from 2,088 students in the academic year 2000-2001 to 6,000 students in the academic year 2009-2010, with an increase rate of over 200% in ten years. As a result, the total number of students enrolled in the technical colleges increased from 3,326 students in the academic year 2000-2001 to 22,750 students in the academic year 2009-2010, with an increase rate of around 700% in ten years. In the academic year 2013-2014, the number of students enrolled in the technical colleges increased up to 40,358 students. It is noteworthy that half of the students admitted in the technical colleges are distributed to the engineering disciplines while the remaining students are distributed to other disciplines. This rise is attributed to the government's realization of the labor market's need to the technical disciplines particularly engineering.

Table (41): Development of the number of enrolled and graduated students at the technical colleges from 2000 to 2013

Academic Year	Number of Admitted Students			Number of Graduates		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
2000/2001	1344	744	2088	714	387	1101
2005/2006	3901	1649	5550	309	290	599
2010/2011	5988	2642	8630	1502	1590	3092
2011/2012	7281	3681	10962	2247	1513	3761
2012/2013	7480	3670	11150	3771	2627	6398
Total Number	52926	25667	78593	14263	12998	27261

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Reports and Manpower Report 1970-2010)



Table (41) shows the development of the admitted students and graduates during the period from 2000 to 2013, as the number of admitted or enrolled students reached 11,150 students in 2013, with males accounting for 67.1% and females 32.9%, compared to 2,088 students in 2000. We can also notice the significant development in enrollment in technical education during the recent years due to the development of this type of education, its majors keeping pace with the requirements of the labor market, and distribution of its enrolled students to the engineering majors which are preferred by male more than female students.

3.3.14: Academic, Training, and Administrative Faculty at Technical Colleges:

The Ministry of Manpower strives to promote the education and training faculties at the public technical education institutions to ensure quality outcomes through scholarships abroad to gain the highest academic degrees such as MA and PhD and replacing expatriates with Omanis in such institutions.



Table (42): Academic, training and administrative faculties at the technical colleges by gender and academic degree 2012

Qualification	Gender	Lecturers / Professors	Trainers	Administrative	Total
PhD	M	175	1	4	180
	F	52	0	2	54
MA	M	782	83	7	872
	F	412	33	5	450
Advanced Diploma	M	8	3	1	12
	F	3	0	3	6
Bachelor	M	76	192	47	315
	F	68	63	69	200
Higher Diploma and General Diploma	M	2	110	52	164
	F	3	38	110	151
Secondary Certificate and above	M	0	2	102	104
	F	0	0	36	36
Total	M	1043	391	213	1647
	F	538	134	225	897
Grand Total		1581	525	438	2544

(Ministry of Manpower, Directorate General of Technical Education)

Figure (27): Teaching and training faculties at the technical colleges 2011/2012

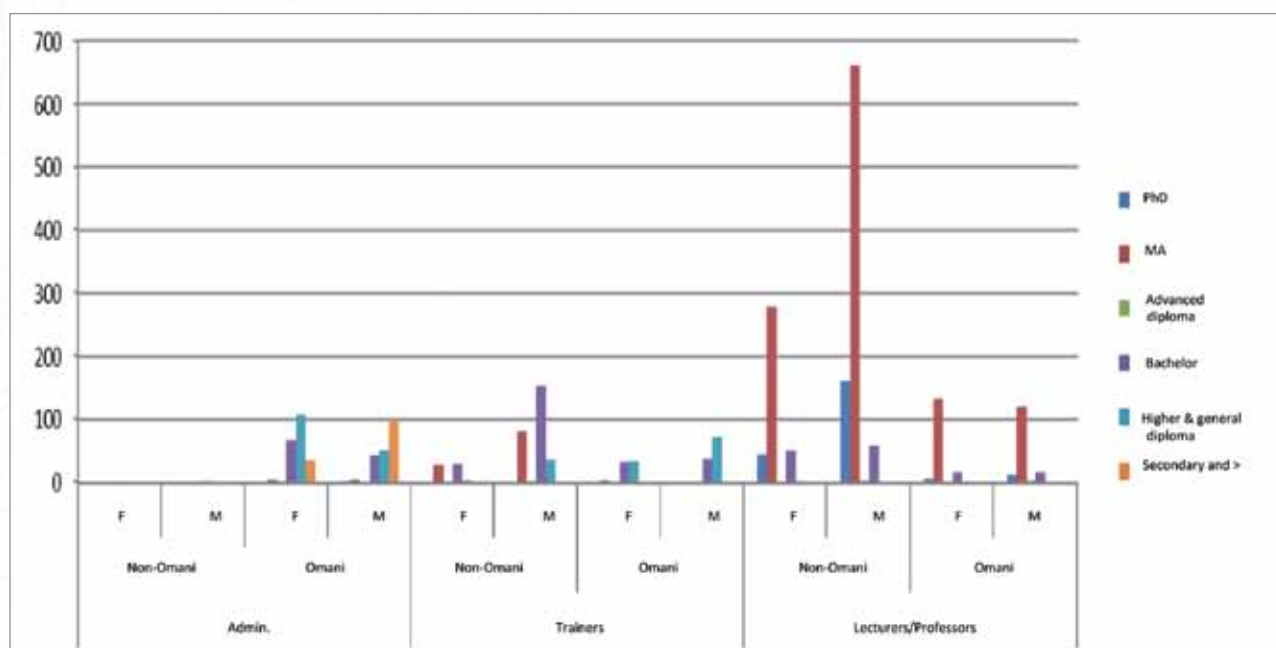


Figure (27): Teaching and training faculties at the technical colleges 2011/2012



The Ministry of Manpower sets minimum qualification and experience levels that the technical education sector faculties must have, including professors and trainers. As for professors, their academic qualification may not be less than MA and experience of four academic years, while trainers must have Bachelor's degree and experience of two academic years, except for those who possess long practical experiences in this field. These teaching and training staff is supported by well-qualified administrative staff.

Various programmes on quality assurance are held on a continuous basis for the newly appointed assistant lecturers at the technical colleges and for teachers.

3.3.15: Public Expenditure on the Technical Education and Vocational Training:

The public expenditure on technical and vocational education increased greatly in Oman. In 2000, it was OMR 16.1 million distributed as follow: OMR 10.2 million to the operational budget and OMR 5.9 million to development. In 2010, it increased to OMR 76.6 million; OMR 61.2 million to the operational budget and OMR 15.2 million to development.

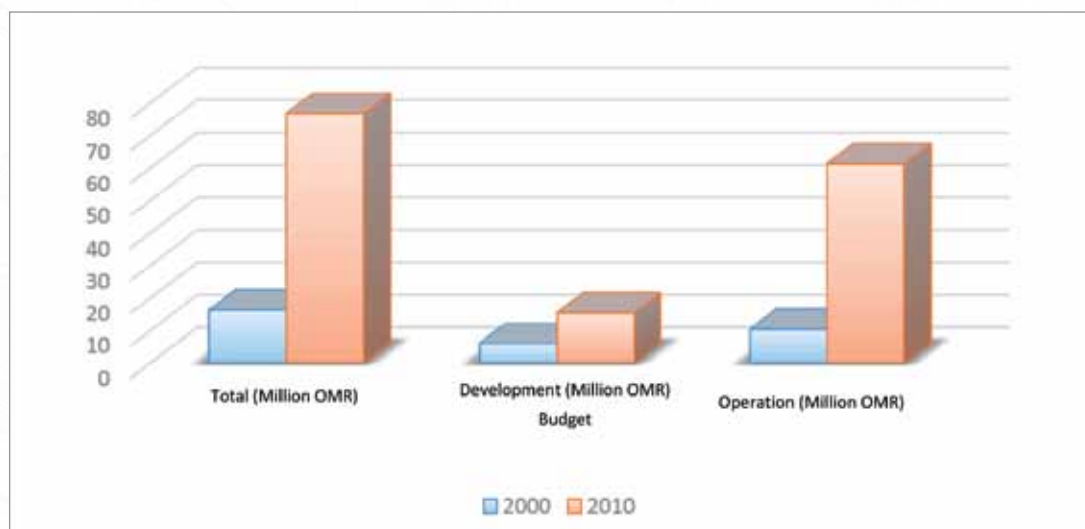
Table (43): Public expenditure on the technical education and vocational training Centres

Year	Budget		
	Operation (OMR Million)	Development (OMR Million)	Total (OMR Million)
2000	10.2	5.9	16.1
2010	61.2	15.2	76.6

(Ministry of Manpower)



Figure (28): Public expenditure on the technical education and vocational training centers



(Ministry of Manpower)

3.3.16: Higher Education, Overview:

During the last few years, the higher education sector witnessed a remarkable development, which included the general policies, numbers of institutions, capacity, educational programmes, infrastructure and human resources including the academic and administrative faculties. Such development is attributed to the government's realization of the importance of the higher education sector, and its role in building and forming the human capital. Accordingly, the number of higher education institutions increased to 54 institutions in the academic year 2011-2012, including 28 public institutions and 26 private institutions, distributed across various governorates. Oman is currently establishing another public university, i.e. Oman University which is planned to be science and technology specialized university, and intended to introduce quality majors and programmes related to development plans and modern and future projects in Oman, in addition to its attention to scientific research to become a prestigious scientific and knowledge platform.

The increasing number of the educational institutions came as an accompanying need to the steady increase in the numbers of the General Diploma outcomes. The number of students enrolled in higher education in Oman and abroad witnessed a steady growth to reach (90,994) students in the academic year 2011-2012, and students within Oman accounted for (91%) of the total enrolled students.



Table (44): Students enrolled in higher education in the academic year 2011-2012

	Number of Students	Percentage %
Inside Oman	82838	91%
Outside Oman	8156	9%
Total	90994	100

(Ministry of Higher Education, Unified Admission Center)

In 2011, the absorption rate in internal and external scholarships increased through providing (7,000) internal scholarships and (1,500) external scholarships in addition to the existing scholarships. Certain public higher education institutions increased their capacity which led to increasing the number of new students enrolled in higher education to reach (28,774) students in the academic year 2012-2013, or (73%) of the total number of successful students in the General Education Diploma compared to (35%) in the academic year 2010-2011.

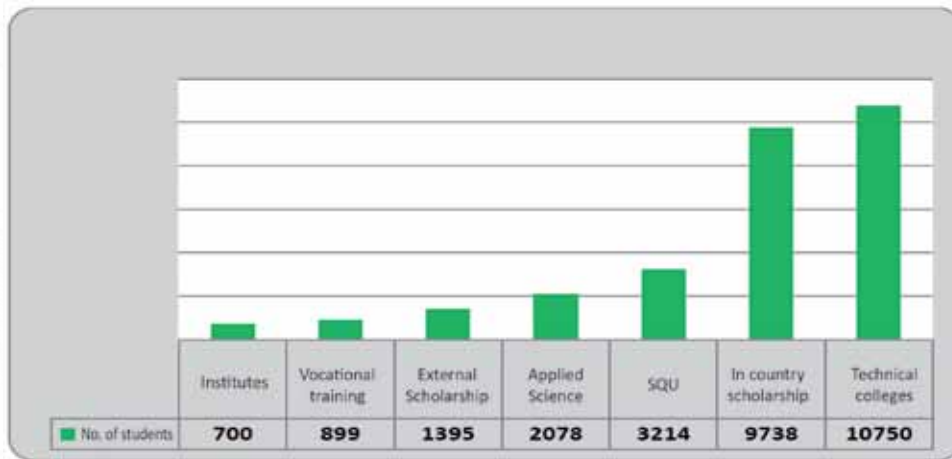
Figure (29): Successful students in the general education diploma and new students in higher education academic year 2012-2013

(Ministry of Higher Education, Unified Admission Center)

The new students in higher education for the academic year 2012-2013 were distributed among public and private higher education institutions, external scholarships and grants, and vocational training centers with varying numbers. The technical colleges as well as private universities and colleges accommodated (71%) of the total new students within the in country scholarships program.



Figure (30): Distribution of new students in higher education by educational institutions for the academic year 2012-2013



(Ministry of Higher Education, Higher Education Admission Center)

3.3.17: Samples of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship Programmes among Students:

“Ghaytuh” Training Program:

“Ghaytuh” Training Program for grade 10 students is one of the social responsibility initiatives of Oman Oil Company, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, represented by the National Center for Career Guidance. “Ghaytuh” Program in 2013 covered Muscat Governorate, Al Batinah North Governorate, and Dakhiliyah Governorate where 70 students from each governorate participated in this program. “Ghaytuh” Program aims to establish student projects and companies and develop their management potentials, promote the concept of entrepreneurship, innovation, self-confidence, time management, and introduction to teamwork skills, instill the spirit of initiative and effective community involvement and the skill of positive thinking, and develop the culture of work passion and self-employment. Various practical applications of this programme are designed to serve the inclinations and desires of the participating students including: vehicle maintenance, home maintenance, graphic design, photography, electronics and mobile phones maintenance, Omani hospitality and product development. This is done through applying a set of individual and group activities and projects.

During “Ghaytuh” Program, which includes theoretical aspect and practical application, students established several companies in the introduced fields and marketed their products. As such, the companies competed to achieve higher sales and promote their products in order to achieve the first positions in the best student company competition, which will be announced at the closing ceremony of “Ghaytuh” Program.



Sanad Program for female students:

The 2013 “Sanad” Program for female students is designed to basically develop entrepreneurial culture among female students at an early age. This programme contributes in guiding the students to establish future private projects to replace expatriate female workers in the work fields related to female aspects with Omani female workers.

“Sanad” Programme is a clear reflection of the cooperation between the National Center for Career Guidance and local community institutions, represented by “Sanad” Programme implemented by the Ministry of Manpower. “Sanad” Programme targeted 120 grade 9 female students to develop their vocational and technical skills in three fields, as required by the local labor market, i.e. sewing and embroidery of women clothes, hairdressing, and fashion design. The programme also includes a number of courses in project management to enhance the spirit of entrepreneurship. “Sanad” Programme was initially implemented with its theoretical and practical aspects in four educational governorates, i.e. Muscat, Al-Batinah North, Dakhiliyah, and Dhahirah, with one center in each governorate to be expanded in the future to include more governorates and larger numbers of female students for a longer period of time.

“Sanad” training programme was organized at women sewing training centers in Ibri, Nizwa and Saham and the vocational training institute in Muscat Governorate, and a team from the National Center for Career Guidance supervised the progress of this training programme in the governorates, in collaboration with relevant officials from the Ministry of Manpower. Students’ awareness of the importance of the programme and their interaction with female trainers were made clear through daily attendance, which resulted in developing their skills in training areas as well as producing several handmade products in short time.

Oman Challenge Programme:

Since its launch in 2009, Oman Challenge seeks to benefit from the youth potentials, and enable them to develop their skills in the area of self-discovery, teamwork and management. Numbers of regular journeys were organized to various places of Oman including Jabal Akhdar, Wadi Al Abiyad and Wahiba Sands, with the participation of a number of students in various governorates to highlight the element of adventure, challenge difficulties, and benefit from the scientific methods to overcome such difficulties,



with the help of experts for the students to acquire various skills related to self-confidence, resolve, strive and problem-solving, along with enhancing effective communication skills, time management, decision-making and the spirit of teamwork.

Oman Challenge Programme is implemented by the National Center for Career Guidance, Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the programme organizer “Outward Bound Oman”, one of the most known global programmes, active in 39 countries around the world. Oman is the only country in the Arab world where such programme is implemented, thanks to its varied topography that includes mountains, deserts and seas which make it an ideal environment to carry out such programmes.

Since the launch of Oman Challenge, the team is working according to well thought-out plans so as to involve more students of various segments of the society to benefit from this programme, with continuous annual expansion. During the last academic year, the programme implemented 44 courses in Oman’s mountains and deserts, with 792 students participating from various governorates of Oman. During the current academic year 2013-2014, Oman Challenge aims to increase the number of participating students from various governorates of Oman so as to ensure the increased effectiveness of the participation in the programme, and encourage the students to develop their skills in leadership, self-confidence, etc. for them to be qualified and prepared for their future profession.

On one of its journeys, Oman Challenge targeted a number of students with disabilities from Al-Amal School for the deaf, in order to provide equal opportunities to students with disabilities and their peers to enable them to develop their interactive skills with their colleagues, and provide them with life experiences and take them to a different environment which depends on challenge and self-reliance. The participants proved their good interaction as their disability did not prevent them from achieving goals set by the programme, and through the educational programmes they managed to get familiar with their inherent personalities and interests, which qualify them to confront and handle the challenges that may obstruct their lives in the future.

Takatuf Scholars:

“Takatuf Scholars” is a programme financed by Oman Oil Company, in collaboration with the National Center for Career Guidance, for grade 11 students. It aims to qualify students for leading and professional roles, and provide the best-performing students with the opportunity to develop their academic talents, and complete their study in prestigious international universities and institutions. Takatuf Scholars program accommodates 60 students every year from various governorates of Oman; 80% from public schools while 20% from private schools. The applicant students are subjected to accurate screening according to a training and educational programme, developed by members of the teaching staff and international



academic support experts, so as to assist them in improving and developing their intellectual skills, expand the scope of their practical potentials and prepare them for university life. Every year 10 finalists will be selected to receive academic scholarships in international universities. Scholarships include two years of preparation in famous international schools followed by four years of the university education.

Students completing the second term of grade 11 may apply for the programme on line via www.takatufscholare.com, after fulfilling the required academic requirements and standards, including obtaining a percentage of 85% in grade 10 and the first term of grade 11, and 85% in Arabic, English, mathematics, and science in the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). The registration period begins in March of every year as students will be tested in English, personal essay, and logical thinking. The best 200 applicants in English language test will be selected, from whom 60 male and female students will be selected based on their results in logic, personal essay, and interview. These students will be given places in Takatuf Scholars provided that only 10 qualified students will be chosen for international scholarships.

Intilaaqah Programme for school students:

This is a social responsibility initiative by Shell Development Company, and is implemented in collaboration with the National Center for Career Guidance, Ministry of Education. This initiative is similar to Shell LiveWIRE International Programme, and seeks to encourage the youths to establish their own private enterprises. In general, the programme aims to raise the level of awareness among school students about the importance of small enterprises (or entrepreneurship), and encourage them to think creatively as future entrepreneurs. It also aims to demonstrate Shell Company commitment towards sustainable development in Oman. Intilaaqah aims to: encourage students to think creatively through creating their commercial enterprises, develop entrepreneurship culture and starting commercial works since young age, and indicate the importance of self-employment to students for a better future. Intilaaqah Program targets grade 10 students and lasts for a full academic year. It is based on submitting a set of working papers introducing the Intilaaqah Foundation Programme for entrepreneurship, its objectives, how to start a business enterprise, success stories, how to plan for commercial ideas, how to analyze the commercial ideas, how to transform ideas into business action plan, how to achieve profits, how to market commercial ideas, collective ideas, discussion of business ideas, and main lessons. Intilaaqah Programme



is implemented by trainers (supervisors) who are trained to apply the programme properly and achieve maximum benefit.

Pioneer Global Programme 2013:

The Pioneer Global Program (AMIDEAST) assists the students to develop their professional skills, and also contributes to getting them involved in community initiatives. This programme is designed to expand and develop students' perceptions.

Each classroom consists of 15 students and the programme lasts for 22 weeks, i.e. 88 hours where the most effective teaching methods are used, in various environments, whereas the participants attend two days per week for two hours per session with breaks between sessions. The participants are required to attend in various occasions. When a workshop or conference is held, it lasts for eight hours. The programme aims to provide an environment where youth can think about global issues affecting their communities, and work as a team to reduce their negative impacts, as well as develop the participants' abilities to contribute to economic globalization through improving the skills of research, analytical thinking, presentation and writing, etc.

In 2013, the programme targeted 90 grade 11 students distributed among Muscat Governorate and Dakhiliyah Governorate, i.e. (30) male and female students from Muscat Governorate and (60) male and female students from Dakhiliyah Governorate, who have the skills of entrepreneurship and initiative in serving their communities, as well as curiosity for global social issues to discuss them at the local level.

After this program, the participants are expected to have a strong foundation for team work and become global citizens able to bear responsibility through the three elements of the program, i.e.: Model United Nations Team, Community Service (Voluntary Work), and professional development.



Goal 4

3.4: Goal 4: Improving Adult Literacy Level:

Based on the philosophy of education in Oman, which aims to provide equal rights and duties, and the principle of equal opportunities for all citizens whether young or old and the right for education for all, education became accessible for all those who missed the opportunity for formal education, through enrolling in illiteracy eradication classes and centers across Oman, or via adult literacy and free or regular study from grade 7 to grade 12. Oman's policy is based on the principle of equal opportunities for all citizens whether young or old, males or females. Accordingly, illiteracy eradication classes and centers were established near the students' residence and inside their villages. All educational supplies



and materials were provided so as to encourage them to enroll in such classes. The march of illiteracy eradication and adult education in Oman officially started in the academic year 1973-1974, which was followed by the Decision No. 302/1975 issuing the Illiteracy Eradication Law, which was amended in 1981, in addition to the content of the Vision of Oman's Economy (Oman 2020) about working towards illiteracy eradication and human development. The illiterate is an individual, who is over 10 years old, not enrolled in a school or educational institution, and did not attain the level required in reading and writing in Arabic language, mathematics, and other knowledge. Illiterates can be found in all governorates of Oman, and are reached through the expansion in opening new illiteracy eradication classes and centers, in addition to expanding programmes and projects such as the Educated Village Project and Cooperative School Project. Graduates of General Education Diploma are used to teach in illiteracy eradication classes. The duration of the illiteracy eradication program is three years after which learners are free from illiteracy and are entitled to enroll in adult education programs from grade 7 to grade 12 which are accessible for all. The current system followed in illiteracy eradication and adult education was created to be available for learners, and is developed according to the changes associated with the modern developments. Through the illiteracy eradication curricula, and supporting programmes associated with the daily life, the programme recognizes the actual needs of learners, and establishes connection between what they learn and what they apply in their daily works and activities, leading to their great care to education and



learning. The educational needs of adults consist of learning how to read and write, mathematical and religious concepts, and life matters, which help them to perform their duties towards their families and communities. The educational programs have fulfilled the changing needs of learners through composing and re-composing illiteracy eradication curricula so as to keep pace with the educational developments, and through the supporting programmes provided to illiteracy eradication learners such as: health, religion and social programmes, as well as new projects and programmes, including the Educated Village Project and Cooperative School Project.

Table (45): Numbers and percentages of literate Omanis in 2013 (15-79 years)

Age Group	Literacy Rate for males		Literacy Rate for females		Overall Percentage
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
(Population 15 -79 years)	670850	94.47	606576	87.10	90.82

(Population Estimates of the National Center for Statistics and Information)

According to the population estimates made by the National Center for Statistics and Information in 2013, the literacy rate among Omanis for the age group (15-79) was over 90%; 94.47% males and 87.10% females. As for illiterates according to the same estimates in 2013, the general illiteracy rate reached 9.18%; 5.53% males and 12.95% females.

Since 2000, many changes were introduced to the illiteracy eradication system to make such policies and measures more responsive to the changing educational needs through:

- Increasing the study level from two years to three years.
- Including the English Language Subject for grades 2 and 3 in illiteracy eradication classes.
- Hiring the General Education Diploma graduates to teach in illiteracy eradication classes.
- Composing and re-composing illiteracy eradication curricula so as to keep pace with the educational developments.

The plan of the Ministry of Education aimed to reduce the illiteracy rate in the age group of (10+ years) of both genders by 50% in 2015, considering the importance of education for all, and providing the opportunity to those who missed the opportunity to learn earlier. Considering Oman's international commitments within the framework of Dakar Conference 2000, emphasis was placed on developing the illiteracy eradication and adult education system. This was highlighted in the 2010 Census, as the illiteracy rate decreased to less than 50% of the numbers of illiterate Omanis compared to the 2003 Census. The



Ministry of Education has a strategic plan to eradicate illiteracy by 2030. Illiteracy eradication surveys are used on a regular and continuous basis to evaluate the illiteracy level. There is also a periodic monitoring of illiteracy eradication programs, carried out through the continuous follow-up by supervisors in the educational governorates, and through reports that determine the need for enhancement or amendment.

Table (46): Comparison of the numbers of illiterate Omanis and liberated from illiteracy according to the results of the two censuses of (2003/2010)

Age Groups	2003						2010						Liberated from illiteracy since 2003	
	Males		Females		Total number of illiterates		Males		Females		Total number of illiterates			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
10+ years	78462	11.7	156318	23.7	234780	17.7	57509	7.70	122365	16.7	179874	12.2	54906	23.4
15-44	15338	3.6	60977	14.5	76315	9.0	8375	1.62	27356	5.4	35731	3.5	40584	53.2
15+ years	77106	14.5	154453	29.4	231559	21.9	56931	8.92	121831	19.4	178762	14.1	52797	22.8

(National Center for Statistics and Information)

Concerning the reduction of illiteracy rate for the age group (15+ years) of Omanis from 2003 to 2010, the results were clear in the rate achieved for illiteracy eradication between the two censuses. The illiteracy rate declined to 14.1% in 2010 compared to 21.9% in 2003. The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with other stakeholders in Oman, is continuing its efforts to eradicate illiteracy. This is highlighted by the data contained in the demographic estimates for 2013 compared to 2010.

Table (47): Number of illiteracy eradication classes and learners for the academic year 2012-2013

Gender	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Total	
	Classes	Learners	Classes	Learners	Classes	Learners	Classes	Learners
Males	9	107	11	101	11	124	31	332
Females	368	4233	257	2779	247	2555	872	9567
Total	377	4340	268	2880	258	2679	903	9899

(Ministry of Education, Department of Continuing Education)

Table 46 shows that the number of illiterate women is more than illiterate men. In 2010, there were 11,488 illiterate women in the age group (40-44), against 2,278 illiterate men. However, table 47 clearly



demonstrates big turnout by women for studying in illiteracy eradication classes, as the big difference between numbers of women's classes compared to men's classes. The numbers of illiterates are declining annually.

3.4.1: Teachers of Illiteracy Eradication Classes:

In the academic year 2012-2013, there were 1,229 teachers in the illiteracy eradication classes, including 25 males and 1,204 females. In the academic year 2005-2006, their total number was 1,489 teachers including 16 males and 1,173 females, which shows the expansion in the activity of illiteracy eradication adopted by Oman.

Table (48): Numbers of teachers and facilitators of illiteracy eradication classes by gender for the academic year 2012-2013

Governorate	Total number of teachers	
	Males	Females
Muscat	4	161
Al Batinah North	0	109
Al Batinah South	0	206
Dakhiliyah	0	191
Sharqiyah North	6	189
Sharqiyah South	3	95
Dhahirah	0	100
Al Buraimi	5	5
Al Wusta	4	38
Dhofar	3	104
Musandam	0	6
Total	25	1204

(Ministry of Education, Department of Continuing Education)

3.4.2: Literacy Projects and Programmes:

Using the Omani Women Associations in literacy programmes:

This program started in 2009/2010 through the Omani women associations spreading across Oman in the illiteracy eradication efforts, through opening illiteracy eradication classes (whether inside or outside



the associations) and supervising the management of the classes, making their members work as volunteer teachers in such classes in return for a financial reward, or spreading the awareness in the society and encourage it to cooperate so as to confront such serious problem.

Program's Objectives:

- Promote cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development.
- Benefit from the Omani Women Associations in eradicating the illiteracy of all illiterate residents in the governorates where the associations or their members provide services.
- Promote cooperation between the Omani Women Associations and the local community.
- Make illiterates, who are unable to read and write, in the governorates where such associations provide their services, reach the educational level which enables them to continue learning and continuing education.
- Assist illiterates in the society to fulfill their needs and raise their educational level.
- Establish the foundations of effective community involvement and the principle of responsibility for all.
- Stimulate the principle of voluntary work between the association members and their surrounding community.
- Develop the spirit of cooperation among the community residents and make them feel mutual responsibility.
- Contribute to reducing the illiteracy rate in Oman to 50% by 2015.
- Expand the activity of illiteracy eradication.

Educated Village Programme:

This programme is carried out by determining geographically restricted village, with no districts outside its boundaries, and with high level of illiteracy. This program is conducted by the Directorate General of Education in the educational governorate, in cooperation with the office of H.E. the Wali, where the village is located, and comprehensive surveys on the village's various aspects are conducted. This program is expanded to include all educational governorates with a rate of three educated villages inaugurated every year.

This program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Speed up the illiteracy eradication in Oman.
- Promote the spirit of cooperation and collective participation through voluntary work.
- Focus on women and increase their efficiency and participation within the community.
- Eradicate the alphabetical and cultural illiteracy in the targeted villages.
- Raise the level of social, economic and environmental awareness of residents in the targeted villages.



This project is expanded to include all governorates of Oman. The following table shows the educated villages in Oman by educational governorate.

Table (49): Number of educated villages until the academic year 2012-2013

No.	Governorate	Number of educated villages
1	Muscat	4
2	Al Buraimi	2
3	Musandam	1
4	Al Batinah North	6
5	Al Batinah South	1
6	Dhahirah	1
7	Dakhiliyah	2
8	Sharqiyah North	6
9	Sharqiyah South	1
10	Dhofar	1
11	Al Wusta	2
	Total	27

(Department of Continuing Education, Ministry of Education)

After the success of this experience, the number of educated villages increased from 16 villages in 2009/2010 to 27 villages in 2012/2013 across all the governorates of Oman.

Cooperative Schools:

This illiteracy eradication programme is based on benefiting from the public schools, whereby the schools sponsor a group of illiteracy eradication classes (inside or outside the school), in terms of supervising their management or providing support which consists of equipment and teachers' training. This project aims to:

- Highlight the role of school in serving the community as the center for knowledge and culture.
- Reduce the number of illiterates in the district where the school is located.
- Spread the culture of illiteracy eradication.
- Contribute to eradicating illiteracy of those residing in the governorate which the school serves.



- Improve the quality of teaching and increase its quality with the existence of various educational experiences provided by such schools.
- Stimulate the principle of volunteer work in schools and their surrounding communities.
- Create the spirit of cooperation among people and make them feel mutual responsibility.
- Contribute to reducing the illiteracy rate in Oman.

The project expanded to cover all governorates of Oman, with around 100 schools in various wilayats, serving 2,566 learners. Table 50 shows the number of cooperative schools and number of classes, learners, and teachers by educational governorate for the academic year 2012-2013.

Table (50): Cooperative schools in the academic year 2012-2013

Governorate	Number of schools	Number of classes	Number of learners	Number of teachers
Muscat	13	20	287	26
Al Batinah North	15	30	372	36
Al Batinah South	10	20	157	24
Dakhiliyah	5	24	292	41
Sharqiyah North	4	24	247	25
Sharqiyah South	5	9	91	10
Al Buraimi	7	21	262	37
Musandam	2	5	33	5
Dhofar	26	70	522	107
Al Wusta	6	10	67	5
Dhahirah	7	23	236	25
Total	100	256	2566	341

(Department of Continuing Education, Ministry of Education)

3.4.3: Re-composing Illiteracy Eradication Curricula:

Despite the achievements made by the curricula developed for the illiteracy eradication stage in the past in helping learners acquire the basic skills which qualify them to grade 6, and acquire knowledge which suits their needs in such stage, the content of such curricula must be reviewed so as to cope with the new developments in the educational field, and to make the new content of subjects more suitable for the actual needs of learners. Accordingly, the following was carried out:



- Re-composing the “Al-Miftah” (The Key) Book in Arabic for grades 1 and 2 of illiteracy eradication and the Islamic Education Book for grade 2. The implementation of these curricula started in the academic year 2001-2002.
- Re-composing the two “General Culture” books for grades 1 and 2 of illiteracy eradication and the Islamic Education Book for grade 1 of illiteracy eradication in the academic year 2004-2005 in addition to the books’ manuals. The implementation of these curricula started in the academic year 2005-2006.
- Re-composing the two curricula of mathematics for grades 1 and 2 to meet the actual needs of learners in the academic year 2007-2008. The implementation of these curricula started in the academic year 2008-2009.
- Re-composing the two curricula of English language for grades 2 and 3 to meet the actual needs of learners. The implementation of these curricula started in the academic year 2009-2010.
- The preparation of general document for illiteracy eradication curricula is already underway, with the purpose of making illiteracy eradication curricula in Oman reach a position, which reflects the latest achievements, and fulfills the needs and ambitions of the Omani society in raising the awareness level of learners scientifically, culturally, and socially in a manner that enables them to actively contribute to various activities of their community, and communicate effectively with their surrounding society with its various technologies and cultures. In addition, efforts include developing the scope and sequence matrix as well as the development of curricula, which consider the needs and psychological state of the learners.

Table (51): Re-composed curricula of illiteracy eradication books

No.	Subject	Grade	Composition Year	Implementation Year
1	“Al-Miftah” Book in Arabic Language	1 and 2	2000/2001	2001/2002
2	Islamic Education Book	2	2000/2001	2001/2002
3	Islamic Education	1	2004/2005	2005/2006
4	General Culture	1 and 2	2004/2005	2005/2006
5	All subjects for grade 3	3	2006/2007	2007/2008
6	Mathematics	1 and 2	2007/2008	2008/2009
7	English Language	2	2008/2009	2009/2010
8	English Language	3	2009/2010	2010/2011

(Department of Continuing Education, Ministry of Education)



3.4.4: Illiteracy Eradication Project for the Illiterates at the Ministry of Education:

This project aimed to eradicate the illiteracy of the 719 illiterate personnel in the Ministry of Education and governorates, who don't know how to read and write, so as to eradicate their illiteracy within a period of full academic year, during the official working hours, in the academic year 2010-2011, according to their work locations. Then, such persons are awarded "Liberated from illiteracy" certificate after they undergo a test to measure their reading, writing, and mathematical abilities. There are 176 centers in educational governorates; 69 centers for males and 107 centers for females. The total number of learners is 304 male and 415 female.

The subjects taught to illiterate personnel in this project are: Islamic education, Arabic, mathematics, and national education for a period of two hours per day, i.e. (15) classes per week. The duration of each class is (40 minutes) as follow:

Arabic: (9) classes per week.

Islamic Education: (2) classes per week.

Mathematics: (3) classes per week.

National Education: (1) class per week.

Table (52): Numbers of centers, learners, and teachers in the Illiteracy Eradication Project for the illiterate personnel of the Ministry of Education in 2011/2012

Name of Governorate	Number of centers	Number of learners	Number of teachers
Muscat	14	55	14
Dhofar	21	80	21
Musandam	2	6	3
Al Buraimi	3	25	3
Dakhiliyah	43	178	43
Al Wusta	18	43	18
Al Batinah North	17	98	17
Al Batinah South	4	16	12
Sharqiyah North	20	103	24
Sharqiyah South	23	65	23
Dhahirah	11	34	17
Total	176	719	228

(Department of Continuing Education. Ministry of Education)



The Department of Continuing Education and the Directorates General of Education in educational governorates follow up and evaluate this project through conducting supervisory technical visits to the educational divisions, analyzing the field reports sent from the educational governorates on the project, and send periodic reports to higher authorities about the project's progress so as to reinforce strengths and overcome difficulties and obstacles of the project's implementation.

The most important objectives of the project's implementation are as follows:

- Liberate illiterate personnel of the Ministry of Education from their alphabetical illiteracy.
- Take the Ministry of Education as an example in the area of eradicating illiteracy of its personnel for other ministries and public and private institutions.

*** Project Future Vision:**

- Universalize the project on all remaining ministries, public departments, and public and private institutions.

3.4.5: Adult Education System:

Adult education started in Oman in the academic year 1974-1975 so as to provide education opportunities for those who were deprived from them in the past as well as enable those who left schools for any reason and are free from illiteracy to continue their education according to their desires and abilities.

Since its beginning, adult education has contributed to academically qualifying great numbers of the working Omani youth in various institutions, which enabled them to contribute to the Omani renaissance. Adult education is a parallel educational system to the formal education. It includes grades (7-12) with registration in adult education made by virtue of a ministerial decision. Persons willing to be liberated from illiteracy, persons who passed grade 7 enrollment test or persons who completed grade 6 in formal education and dropped out of school are entitled to enroll in grade 7. Evaluation in adult education is limited to final evaluation and there is no continuous evaluation. Enrollment in adult education is just for those whose age exceeded the age of the formal education. Study in adult education centers is divided into two parts: regular study in adult education centers where learners must attend and study at their classes during the evening period of the official working hours, and free home study where learners are not required to attend to centers but they have to study at home. Adult education centers are opened according to the willingness and number of learners all over Oman. In adult education centers, the same curricula and subjects taught in morning formal grades are implemented, as learners are promoted to higher grades and stages according to the procedures by which students of formal schools are promoted. Hence, learners can continue their education until they obtain the General Diploma degree which enables them to enter higher education if they wish to.



Adult education began by registering 1,497 learners in the academic year 1974-1975, and in 2012/2013 there were 27,886 learners, including 25,853 male and female learners in the free study system, and 2,033 male and female learners in the regular study system.

Table (53): Persons enrolled in adult education programmes in free and regular study in Oman from 2000 to 2013

Academic Year	Free Study	Regular Study	Total
2000/2001	16331	7382	23713
2005/2006	17324	7059	24383
2010/2011	27181	1959	29140
2012/2013	25853	2033	27886

(Educational Renaissance in the Sultanate of Oman in Numbers 1970-2010). Department of Continuing Education.

3.4.6: Online Registration of Learners in Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education Classes:

Learners enrolled in illiteracy eradication classes are registered online via the educational portal before the beginning of the academic year, in order to make it easy for them to register from their place of residence, as well as allow personnel working in illiteracy eradication programmes to obtain accurate data of divisions, centers, and numbers of learners and reduce the phenomenon of learners relapsing back to illiteracy. This programme ensures obtaining the statistical reports with ease, and contributes to inputting the results of learners and obtaining their reports electronically.

3.4.7: Important Future Projects and Programmes of Continuing Education:

The future vision of illiteracy eradication emerges in light of the international commitments, by analyzing the state of the existing activity and identifying and overcoming the problems that impede the march of illiteracy eradication, and avoid its negative impact. In this regard, the Ministry of Education had its known contributions in removing all obstacles which may encounter the activity of illiteracy eradication, through the continued efforts since the start of the activity as it achieved and is still achieving several purposeful achievements. Accordingly, such achievements are the balance which constitutes the features of the future vision of this activity through which we can say that the most important future plans lie in the following:

- Providing the budget required to manage the activity properly through unifying the efforts of all



institutions in the public and private sectors and NGOs.

- Implementing the project on reduction of illiteracy rate to (50%) within the context of the National Plan for Education for all until 2015, which is considered a promising project and excellent vision for the future of this activity.
- Integrating the efforts of the Ministry of Education with the efforts of the relevant ministries, institutions, and bodies as well as the Arab, regional, and international organizations.
- Stimulating the role of the implemented projects, such as the experience of the General Diploma graduates and the experience of the volunteer teachers in illiteracy eradication classes, educated villages and cooperative schools.
- Qualifying the parties working in the area of illiteracy eradication technically and administratively on a permanent basis in order to improve performance.
- Continuing updating and renewing illiteracy eradication curricula so as to cope with the latest developments.
- Preparing integrated plans and programmes so as to make quantitative and qualitative advancement in the reality of the activity.
- Organizing symposiums and workshops at the local and regional level.
- Conducting studies, experiments and researches with the purpose of developing work and increasing the effectiveness of programmes.
- Expanding the use of modern technologies in illiteracy eradication programmes such as media and the internet.
- Expanding the existing projects such as the educated village and cooperative school projects, expanding the cooperative schools, and stepping up the training programmes of personnel working in the area of illiteracy eradication, and expanding the project on development of academic skills of illiteracy eradication personnel.
- Boosting the performance of personnel working in illiteracy eradication centers.
- Organizing awareness campaigns in various occasions.
- Designing posters and signage to be displayed in public places, which urge illiterates to enroll in illiteracy eradication programmes and encourage the community to contribute to eradicating illiteracy.
- Producing awareness publications to be distributed in various occasions.
- Assisting newly-literate persons with financial incentives.
- Expanding the production of audiovisual educational media as well as producing educational programmes co-financed by the private sector.
- Stimulating the role of the education portal in serving continuing education programmes.
- Getting people familiar with the use of media and the internet.
- Expanding cooperation with organizations in illiteracy eradication programmes and activities.
- Expanding the role of civil society to participate in the area of illiteracy eradication and adult education.



Goal 5

3.5: Goal 5: Gender Equality in Education:

Achieving equality among Omani citizens is one of the most important foundations on which the Omani policy was based since the onset of the renaissance era. This right is guaranteed by the law irrespective of gender, race or religion, as stipulated in the Omani Basic Statute (Constitution) in Article (13) - Cultural Principles: “Education is a cornerstone for the progress of society which the State fosters and endeavors to spread and make accessible to all”. The right to education is guaranteed for both genders and there are no legal provisions that restrict education to men only. Article (12) of Social Principles stipulates that: “Justice, equality, and equal opportunities among Omanis are the cornerstones of the society which the State guarantees”.

The legal or legislative reality in Oman has witnessed a breakthrough towards progress and development of the legal and judicial systems. It is clear that legislations made men and women equal in their provisions with due observance of the provisions of the Islamic Sharia and the society’s traditions. However, certain legislations distinguish between the genders due to several considerations,

including the social role of women, their natural physique, or other justifications required for the public interest. The Omani Basic Statute also established a general rule included in Article (17) thereof stating that



all citizens are equal before the law in public rights and duties, and that there is no difference among them. This is the basis on which legislations in Oman are established, and was not absent before the issuance of the afore-mentioned Basic Statute, rather it was an established principle imposed by the officials in charge in the Sultanate in the laws or regulations which they enact. In addition, the principle of gender equality was approved in previous laws before the Omani Basic Statute in various fields. Such laws include: the Oman Labor Law No. (35/2003), Civil Service Law, Civil Status Law No. 32/97, Social Security Law No. 84/87, Law of Women's Right for possession, and the Law on women's right to form associations.

The right to education was not limited to Omanis only, but it extends to include all residents of Oman as the educational services are provided free of charge to the children of expatriates alongside Omani students. The Ministry of Education also granted the foreign communities in Oman the right to establish their own schools.

The Ministry of Education is making great efforts so as to provide outstanding and high quality educational service to all students of both genders on equal footing. Such efforts include students with special needs. The Ministry of Education is stepping up its efforts to ensure quality of education, particularly in schools away from city centers; as such schools sometimes suffer from the instability of the teaching staff and poor internet services, which are elements that have effect in improving the learning services for students residing in remote areas. It is noteworthy that the Ministry of Education recently started providing preschool education to students in schools away from city centers, for which private schools services have not been provided yet, as part of the preparation classes project currently adopted by the Ministry, noting that the service of preschool education in large communities is currently provided by the private sector, and there are permanent demands to extend the public services to include early childhood stage.

In light of the foregoing, the spread of education and its accessibility to both genders, particularly basic and secondary education, is extremely important after His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said assumed the reins of power in 1970. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos urged that girls must sit beside their male counterparts in schools so as to contribute to building this country in the future.

3.5.1: Female Enrollment Ratio out of the Total Enrollment:

According to the latest statistics, the percentage of enrolled female students out of the total enrollment by educational level seems to be natural and high since 2000. One can see that the percentage of females in preschool education rose from 47.0% in 2000 to 49.4% in the academic year 2011-2012, and that the simple disparity between both genders is attributed to Oman's demographic composition in the first place, in addition to family conditions and trends towards enrolling their children in education.



Table (54): Development of the enrolled females out of the total enrollment by educational level

Academic Year	Pre-school Education	Basic Education		General Education		
		Cycle I	Cycle II	Grades (1-6)	Grades (7-9)	Grades (10-12)
2000	47.0	48.4	0.0	48.2	47.0	51.5
2001	45.8	48.6	47.9	48.3	46.8	51.0
2002	46.3	48.5	48.9	48.4	46.4	50.1
2003	47.5	48.4	48.8	48.7	46.6	49.4
2004	45.5	48.6	48.7	49.0	46.4	49.0
2005	49.7	48.7	48.8	49.1	47.3	48.0
2006	49.9	48.9	48.8	49.6	47.0	47.9
2007	52.1	49.0	48.9	49.6	48.2	47.5
2008	48.8	48.9	48.7	50.1	48.4	48.3
2009	49.9	49.1	48.7	49.8	49.0	48.3
2010	49.7	48.9	48.7	49.6	49.5	49.1
2011	49.4	49.2	49.1	49.1	49.6	49.1

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

Based on the above, Oman achieved equality in this aspect in a manner that reflects the religious and human principles, as well as the Omani Basic Statute and the global trends, despite the challenges facing this stage in the area of general enrollment, as this service is provided by the private sector in light of the regulating laws. There are efforts made by the Ministry of Education with regard to the spread of preparatory classes in remote areas where there are no adjacent private schools.

The State's focus was not limited to eliminating the gender gap in early childhood, but also extended to basic education and post-basic education. Statistics clearly indicate the availability of educational opportunities for both genders equally without any obstacles, as Oman is very keen on maximizing the benefit of all its human potentials, so as to ensure their effective participation in the development, in addition to its keenness on making its citizens obtain the highest academic degrees. Despite all the difficulties associated with the demographic distribution in various locations, and disparity of the population density, Oman spares no effort in providing the educational services for both genders even in desert areas whose population is characterized by moving from one place to another, and the State provided mobile schools which move with the population so as to provide the educational services for both genders.



In 2012, the percentage of females in Cycle I of Basic Education, grades (1-4), was 49.2%, compared to 48.4% in 2000. In Cycle II, the percentage was 49.1% in 2012 compared to 47.9% in 2001. As for Post-Basic Education grades (10-12), the percentage was 49.1%.

3.5.2: Ratio of Female Teachers to the Total Number of Teachers:

The statistical data in tables (55) and (56) indicate that female teachers and administrators had higher ratio than male teachers and administrators in basic education. In the academic year 2000-2001, the ratio was higher for females due to the start of teaching Cycle I of basic education, where schools were mixed and female teachers were teaching students at this stage of education. The decline of this ratio in subsequent years does not denote the decline of the number of female teachers and administrators in basic education, but the spread of implementing the basic education system as well as students' transition to Cycle II of basic education in single-sex schools where male teachers participate in teaching. Female teachers and administrators are still having the highest ratio of teaching in the basic education stage. We can notice that the lowest ratio of female teachers and administrators exist in grades (1-6) of General Education due to the increase of the number of male schools than female schools in this type of education while we find such ratio very close in Grades (7-9) and Grades (10-12) of General Education.

Table (55): Development of ratio of female teachers to the total number of teachers by type of education

Academic Year	Basic Education	General Education		
		Grades (1-6)	Grades (7-9)	Grades (10-12)
2000	91.4	43.3	47.6	52.4
2001	74.3	41.6	48.8	53.0
2002	71.4	40.4	47.5	52.6
2003	69.9	41.0	46.5	50.7
2004	69.4	41.1	45.9	49.7
2005	67.8	38.1	44.8	48.2
2006	69.3	36.5	44.4	46.0
2007	68.5	42.6	43.4	46.3
2008	67.0	46.4	46.6	47.1
2009	68.7	56.9	47.1	47.7
2010	68.3	60.1	47.6	48.4
2011	70.1	60.5	48.0	48.9

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Table (56): Development of ratio of female school principals and assistant principals by type of education

Academic Year	Basic Education	General Education		
		Grades (1-6)	Grades (9-7)	Grades (12-10)
2000	96.9	40.8	48.6	53.0
2001	77.4	38.1	48.1	55.2
2002	74.3	37.0	44.0	57.9
2003	73.7	33.5	45.2	56.2
2004	70.3	27.8	42.7	56.5
2005	68.0	23.0	40.8	53.0
2006	66.5	23.5	39.0	55.3
2007	65.5	19.4	35.3	48.4
2008	64.1	23.7	39.1	52.5
2009	66.7	43.5	36.3	40.1
2010	65.4	60.0	40.8	45.9
2011	64.0	54.5	46.4	47.2

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

3.5.3: Ratio of Female Education administrators at the Central and Governorates Levels:

When calculating the ratio of female education administrators, we started with the jobs of a department head, deputy director, director, assistant director general and director general. We notice that the percentage of female educational administrators increased from 8.5% in the academic year 200-2001 to 17.6% in the academic year 2011-2012. Such percentage increased at the main campus of the Ministry of Education from 15.8% in the academic year 200-2001 to 27.3% in the academic year 2011-2012.



At the level of governorates, the highest percentage is in Muscat Governorate with 17.3% while the lowest percentage exists in Al Wusta Governorate with 0%, as it does not have any female educational administrator. The decline of such percentages in a number of governorates is attributed to the increase in the number of male administrators without change in the number of female administrators in such governorates.

Table (57): Development of ratio of female educational administrators at the Ministry's main campus as well as departments and directorates in the governorates

Academic Year	2000	2005	2010	2011
Governorate				
Ministry of Education	15.8	20.6	24.8	27.3
Muscat	16.7	19.6	17.3	17.5
Al Batinah North Governorate	0.0	4.7	6.0	7.7
Al Batinah South Governorate	0.0	3.4	10.9	14.3
Dakhiliyah	3.3	2.4	9.6	9.4
Sharqiyah South	2.9	9.5	14.5	14.0
Sharqiyah North	5.7	6.7	11.5	8.3
Al Buraimi	9.5	21.4	15.6	17.1
Dhahirah	0.0	6.1	14.3	15.9
Dhofar	0.0	9.3	15.9	16.1
Al Wusta	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Musandam	0.0	7.7	11.8	14.3
Total	8.5	12.1	16.6	17.6

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

3.5.4: Indicators of Gender Parity in Various Educational Stages:

The female/male enrollment ratio, total admission ratios, net admission ratios, total enrollment rates in the primary and secondary stages, and continuation rates to grade 5 and the last grade of primary stage point out the parity and equality in providing the educational services for both genders, and that the slight difference between the two ratios is very normal due to the demographic composition of Oman as well as the increase in the number of male newborns more than female newborns.



Based on the statistical data of enrollment in grade 1 and pre-grade 1 related to the goal of basic education, we find that the ratios of children enrolled in preschool education are very close and sometimes such ratios increase for males and vice versa from one year to another, the same applies to the enrollment ratio in grade 1. The statistical data also show that the enrollment ratios in grades from 1 to 12 for both genders are very close as well as the female/male enrollment ratios, promotion rates and continuation rates in grade 10. Females show a higher transition rate to Grade 11.

In the preschool education, the gross enrollment ratio in the academic year 2011-2012 was 0.99 compared to 0.49 in 2000. The adjusted net enrollment ratio in grades (1-6) remained 0.99 from 2000 to 2012. As for the continuation rate to the last grade of primary education, i.e. grade 6, it did not change with 1.01 from 2000 to 2012. The adjusted net enrollment ratio in grades (10-12) remained 1.00 from 2000 to 2012.

In the area of eliminating the gap between both genders in basic education and post-basic education, the Government, in general, enacted all legislations which guarantee full rights for both genders to obtain equal and free education in any place within Oman. For such purpose, the Government provided all capabilities including encouraging families to enroll their children, and providing all services related to education, such as transportation and sometimes residence for students who are from distant areas such as rough mountainous areas which are difficult to reach.

Table (58): Development of Gender Parity Indicator in a number of basic indicators

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio in preschool	Gross Enrollment Ratio in grades (1-6)	Net Admission Ratio in grades (1-6)	Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio in grades (1-6)	Continuation Rate to grade 6	Continuation Rate to grade 5	Transition Rate form Cycle I to Cycle II
2000	0.94	0.96	0.99	0.99	1.01	0.98	1.03
2005	0.99	0.99	1.01	1.01	1.09	1.00	0.98
2010	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	1.01	1.00	0.99
2011	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	1.01	1.02	0.99

Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators



Table (59): Development of Gender Parity Indicator in a number of basic indicators

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio in grades (7-9)	Gross Enrollment Ratio in grades (10-12)	Net Enrollment Ratio in grades (7-9)	Net Enrollment Ratio in grades (10-12)	Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio in grades (7-9)	Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio in grades (10-12)
2000	0.92	1.11	1.03	1.24	0.97	1.00
2005	0.94	0.96	1.02	1.02	1.01	0.92
2010	0.99	0.99	1.00	1.01	0.99	1.00
2011	0.99	0.99	1.01	1.01	0.99	1.00

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

3.5.5: Indicator of Gender Parity in Literacy:

Significant development in the youth and adult literacy rates, and between males and females, took place earlier in Oman, according to the results of national censuses in 1993, 2003 and 2010, as well as annual population estimates made by the National Center for Statistics and Information, in addition to the great progress made in illiteracy eradication and efforts led by the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the relevant authorities, to encourage enrolling in illiteracy eradication classes. While the literacy rate was 78.1% in 2003 for age 15+ of the population, it became 85.9% in 2010. According to the latest population estimate in 2013, the literacy rate of the 15-75 years was around 90.82%.

Table (60): Literacy Rate for 2013

Age Group	Literacy Rate for males		Literacy Rate for females		Overall Percentage
	Number	percentage	Number	percentage	
Population (15-79)	670850	94.47	606576	87.10	90.82
Youth (15-24)	240922	99.28	230400	99.26	99.27

(National Center for Statistics and Information, 2013)





Goal 6

3.6: Goal 6: Quality of Education:

The applicable laws and regulations regulating education sector guarantee access to education for all residents of Oman, while complying with the rules and standards of education quality. Oman is permanently seeking to develop plans and projects so as to implement the approved educational policy in light of the requirements of economic and social development, and scientific and technological progress, in addition to continuously developing such policy based on the philosophy of education and national objectives. The laws and regulations which guarantee the quality of the educational services include: the Basic Statute of Oman (Constitution) and the Vision of Oman's Economy (Oman 2020). The Basic Statute of Oman contains the provisions which regulate the State's care of education and its spread and universalization (Cultural Principles, Part II, Article 13), stipulating that education is a cornerstone for the progress of society which the State fosters and endeavors to spread and make it accessible to all, provision of free general education, combating illiteracy and encouraging the establishment of private schools and institutes as well as colleges and universities, under the supervision of the State, and according to the provisions of the law. With regard to the Vision of Oman's Economy (Oman 2020), it seeks to spread, encourage, and foster knowledge, develop education, and give priority to development and spread of the basic education system, and making it accessible for all through a cost-effective and efficient system so as to provide equal opportunities to citizens and expatriates alike.

The Ministry of Education strives to manage the education system well as it managed during the past four decades to establish schools all over the Sultanate including remote governorates, train teachers and supervisors, prepare and develop national curricula and school books, and develop the public national



examinations system. As a result, Oman advanced from a state where public education was not prevailing to a state where education is available for more than half a million students from Grades 1 to 12. The ratio of students to one teacher declined to about two thirds. The vast majority of Omani students in public schools are now taught by Omani teachers unlike in the past where teaching was conducted by expatriate teachers. The Ministry of Education had a critical look at various aspects of its works and introduced main amendments on the organization of education and the replacement of the general education system with a new developed system, which encourages students to remain in school until the age of 16 to complete ten years in basic education and continue for a period of two academic years in post-basic education (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012).

3.6.1: Teacher Training and Qualification:

Teacher professional development, including qualification and training, is a strategic option for any entity looking forward to developing human resources able to fulfill the work requirements and cope with the fast developments and changes. In light of the developments witnessed by the education system in Oman in all its educational structures, the Directorate General of Human Resources Development, Ministry of Education, began preparing, implementing and evaluating its qualification and training plans for all the ministry employees in line with the educational developments, in addition to seeking to implement many training projects and programmes, which aim to prepare the cadres with the required experience, efficiency, and skill in performing their activities along with seeking to achieve the educational objectives of the educational process efficiently.

Pre-service teacher training in Oman witnessed a remarkable shift, with various institutions preparing teachers before service; most notably the College of Education, SQU, which also has a programme for administrators and supervisors. About 15% of teachers graduate from the College of Education, SQU, while the remaining teachers graduate from preparation institutions inside and outside Oman, in addition to what is known as Practical Education, which is considered an important part of the pre-service teacher training programme (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012).

The Ministry of Education adopted the pre-service teacher training through preparing a training package for new teachers before joining work. The training package consists of 75 training hours and includes three themes. The first theme seeks to acquaint new teachers with Oman education philosophy, educational plan, philosophy of curricula and teachers' rights and duties within the framework of the applicable laws. The second theme deals with the educational aspect where working papers are submitted about teaching methods, evaluation methods, and some aspects related to class management and educational media. The third theme provides specialized aspects in every subject as well as provides a printed manual containing documents needed by all teachers before service.





While on duty, the Ministry of Education provides in-service teacher training at three levels. At the central level, developmental training programs are provided to teachers according to the latest developments of the education system at the main training center of the Directorate General of Human Resources Development. At the level of educational governorates, enrichment and remedial training programmes are provided at training centers in educational governorates so as to enable teachers to have the knowledge and skills required to improve the educational process. At the school level, the Ministry of Education adopted the tendency of “school as a training unit” through transforming the schools into training units for teachers and personnel, based on specific mechanisms, and according to specific educational foundations. Within the framework of its interest in the in-service teacher training, the Ministry of Education established 15 training centers to provide training services to its personnel, particularly teachers, with one main training center at the Ministry, and (11) local training centers in each educational governorate, all equipped with the training cadres, rooms and equipment required for the training environment. Moreover, there are (3) small training centers in Wilayat of Duqm, Al Wusta Governorate, Wilayat of Thumarit in Dhofar Governorate, and Wilayat of Sumail of Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, for the purpose of facilitating teacher training. A professional development plan is prepared on an annual basis for all the employees working at the Ministry of Education, through specific mechanisms, to determine and design training needs. 1,298 teacher training programmes were implemented within the professional development plan for 2009 in all educational governorates, targeting 39,400 teachers in various teaching disciplines. 1,186 teacher training programmes were implemented within the professional development plan for 2010 which targeted 29,608 teachers in all teaching disciplines in all educational governorates. The graphical statistics of the professional development plan for 2011 indicate that (71%) of the total programmes of the plan was allocated for the teachers’ segment with (869) centralized and decentralized training programmes in all teaching disciplines and in various educational governorates, as 41,906 teachers are expected to receive training. It is noteworthy that the training budget witnessed a remarkable increase. Based on the directives of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the Sultan of Oman, the budget of professional development increased threefold as of 2012, which undoubtedly contributed to improving the training programmes and increasing their numbers and targeted employees.



According to table (61), the majority of teachers working in Oman are holding various degrees including Bachelor, Diploma, Higher Diploma and Post-graduate respectively. One can also notice that the number of teachers holding diploma degree is declining annually while the number of teachers holding bachelor, higher diploma and post-graduate is increasing. Such increase reflects the tendency of the Ministry of Education to raise the education level of teachers to bachelor's degree instead of diploma, as well as to raise the educational and professional level of teachers by completing their studies, whether at the expense of the Ministry of Education through its scholarships inside and outside Oman, or at their own expense which mostly for post-graduate studies.

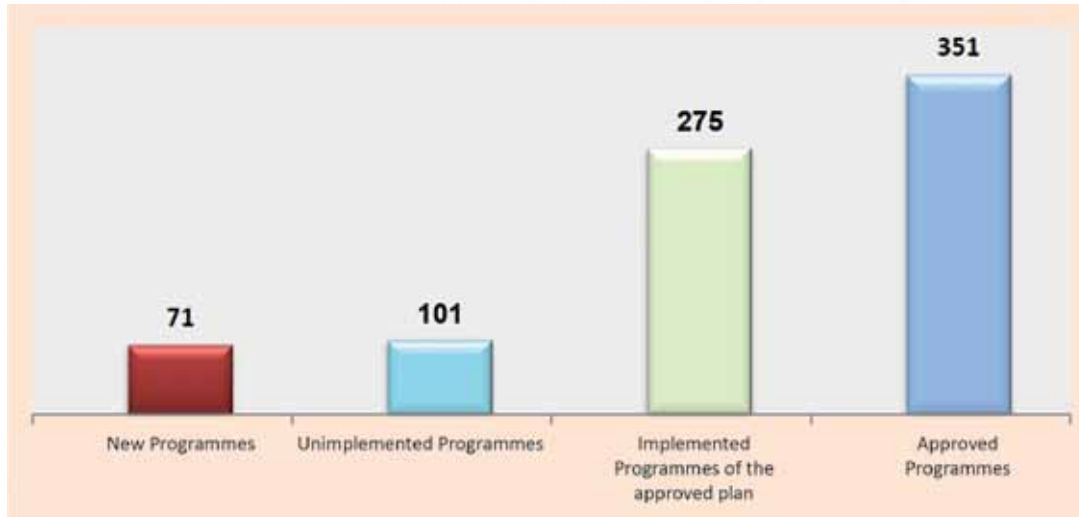
Table (61): Number and percentage distribution of teachers by academic qualifications

Academic Qualification	Gender	2000		2004		2010		2011	
		No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Below General Certificate	Males	3	0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0
	Females	0	0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0
	Total	3	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
General Certificate and equivalents	Males	169	1.3	89	0.6		0.0		0.0
	Females	375	2.7	49	0.2		0.0		0.0
	Total	544	2.1	138	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Post-General Certificate Diploma	Males	5285	41.9	4169	28.3	2058	12.2	1985	10.9
	Females	4975	36.1	4643	23.4	3234	11.4	3035	9.0
	Total	10260	38.8	8812	25.5	5292	11.7	5020	9.7
Academic degree	Males	6729	53.3	10064	68.4	14005	83.1	15287	84.1
	Females	8078	58.5	14272	71.9	22962	81.2	28175	83.8
	Total	14807	56.1	24336	70.4	36967	81.9	43462	83.9
Higher Diploma	Males	256	2.0	182	1.2	543	3.2	579	3.2
	Females	194	1.4	630	3.2	1888	6.7	2110	6.3
	Total	450	1.7	812	2.3	2431	5.4	2689	5.2
MA	Males	174	1.4	208	1.4	241	1.4	319	1.8
	Females	176	1.3	242	1.2	200	0.7	308	0.9
	Total	350	1.3	450	1.3	441	1.0	627	1.2
PhD	Males	1	0.0	3	0.0	10	0.1	9	0.0
	Females	1	0.0	3	0.0	1	0.0	4	0.0
	Total	2	0.0	6	0.0	11	0.0	13	0.0
Total	Males	12617	100.0	14715	100.0	16857	100.0	18179	100.0
	Females	13799	100.0	19839	100.0	28285	100.0	33632	100.0
	Total	26416	100.0	34554	100.0	45142	100.0	51811	100.0

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Figure (31): Distribution of programs by their status in the professional development plan for 2012



(Ministry of Education (2012). Annual Report for Professional Development)

Data indicate that 100% of the practicing teachers in Omani schools are well trained and meet all basic requirements in terms of academic qualifications and training, as determined by the Ministry of Education. The requirements in force since 1997 stipulate that persons applying to work as teachers must have a university educational qualification, or a university degree, in addition to the educational qualification diploma from an established institution, which indicates the general level of the quality of human capital invested in teaching.

3.6.2: Student-Teacher Ratio:

The study conducted by the World Bank, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, confirmed that the student-teacher ratio is low in Oman in all educational stages. In the past few years, it declined in public schools, as the numbers of teachers employed were higher than the growth of student-teacher ratio. The student-teacher ratio in the academic year 2011-2012 was (10) compared to (21) in the academic year 2000-2001. Such ratio is low according to international standards as it is much lower than the average ratio in countries included in the International Educational Indicators Study, and is less than the average ratio recorded in the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Ministry of Education and World Bank, p. 131). In grades (1-10) of basic education, there is a considerable decline in the student-teacher ratio. After such ratio was (16) students per teacher in the academic year 2000-2001, it became (9) in the academic year 2011-2012. In grades (10-12) of General Education, such ratio was (17) students per teacher, but fell to (11) in the academic year 2011-2012.



Table (62): Development of student/teacher ratio by type of education

Academic Year	2000	2005	2010	2011
Number of Basic Education Students, Grades (1-10)	49216	212842	347445	366273
Number of Basic Education Teachers, Grades (1-10)	3027	21141	31802	38650
Student/ Teacher	16	10	11	9
Number of General Education Students, Grades (1-6)	253430	97877	23020	15853
Number of General Education Teachers, Grades (1-6)	9238	4283	1111	1049
Student/ Teacher	27	23	21	15
Number of General Education Students, Grades (7-9)	147291	119060	34791	25258
Number of General Education Teachers, Grades (7-9)	8038	5345	2541	2428
Student/ Teacher	18	22	14	10
Number of General Education Students, Grades (10-12)	104908	138295	117264	109669
Number of General Education Teachers, Grades (10-12)	6114	6731	9688	9684
Student/ Teacher	17	21	12	11
Total Students	554845	568074	522520	517053
Total Teachers	26417	37500	45142	51811
Student/ Teacher	21	15	12	10

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

3.6.3: Student-Classroom Ratio:

Standards stipulate that the classroom density of Cycle I of basic education shall not exceed 30 students and 35 students for Grades (5-10) of basic education as well as Grades 11 and 12. During the academic year 2011-2012, the same densities of classrooms were applied for general education schools. The average classroom densities developed from 76.3 in 1970 to 33.4 in 1990 to 32.4 in 2000 to 26.4 in the academic year 2011-2012. Table (63) shows the average classroom density by type of education and stage/cycle from the academic year 2000-2001 to the academic year 2011-2012.



Table (63): Development of student/classroom ratio by type of education

Academic year	2000	2005	2010	2011
Number of Basic Education Students, Grades (1-10)	49216	212842	347445	366273
Number of Basic Education classroom, Grades (1-10)	1757	7500	12562	13103
Student/ classroom	28	28	28	28
Number of General Education Students, Grades (1-6)	253430	97877	23020	15853
Number of General Education classroom, Grades (1-6)	7529	3505	953	690
Student/ classroom	34	28	24	23
Number of General Education Students, Grades (7-9)	147291	119060	34791	25258
Number of General Education classroom, Grades (7-9)	4503	3885	1445	1120
Student/ classroom	33	31	24	23
Number of General Education Students, Grades (10-12)	104908	138295	117264	109669
Number of General Education classroom, Grades (10-12)	3352	4774	4336	3991
Student/ classroom	31	29	27	27
Total Students	554845	568074	522520	517053
Total classrooms	17141	19664	19296	18904
Student/ classroom	32	29	27	27

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)

3.6.4: Educational Supervision:

Teacher educational supervision in schools and classrooms differs. It is conducted between educational supervisors and senior teachers in schools. It occurs twice or three times a year by supervisors and four times for newly-appointed teachers by senior teachers in schools, as the share of senior teachers has 50% less classes than the remaining teachers so as to have the time to supervise other teachers in classrooms. Supervisors are provided with several training courses as they are responsible for providing technical support to teachers, and supervising the levels of teaching and learning. Supervisors are one of the segments that receive a great deal of training in the Ministry of Education due to their direct relationship



with teachers, and their leading role in the training and evaluation part of the teaching-learning process. Supervisors are also the link between the Ministry of Education and schools. Accordingly, a total of 1,410 (752 male and 658 female) educational and administrative supervisors were targeted by 45 quality central training programmes in 2012, including 38 programmes from the professional development plan and 7 new programmes.

Table (64): Distribution of training programmes for supervisors by disciplines for 2012

Discipline	Number of implemented programs
Common	25
Islamic Education	5
Arabic Language	5
School Sports	3
Science	3
Special Education	1
Psychological and Social Counseling	1
Administration	1
Mathematics	1
Total	45

(Ministry of Education (2012). Annual Report of Professional Development)

3.6.5: Educational Evaluation and Quality of Education:

Educational evaluation is an important component of the teaching-learning process, through which the principle of proficiency in the learning process is achieved by handling weaknesses and promoting strengths in students' learning, developing their performance and demonstrating their talents and creative works, stimulating the principle of "the learner is the basis of the teaching-learning process", focusing on all aspects of the learning process through integrating skills, knowledge and their various applications, and developing the mental abilities of learners and provide them with a set of competencies and skills.

The Ministry of Education applies continuous formative evaluation to measure the learning outcomes



among students in all educational stages. This type of evaluation depends on the continuous diagnosis of the student learning progress at various levels, by applying various methods and tools, including short quizzes and final tests, research, reports, projects and observation, etc. Students from Grade 5 to Grade 12 take final exams, which are prepared at the level of the educational governorate (Grades 5-9) or centrally at the level of the Ministry (Grades 10-12). Exams for grades 1-4 are prepared at the school level.

As regards the evaluation of the school performance, there is a system to evaluate and develop the school performance, which includes self-evaluation process by the schools, and external evaluation by a team from the educational governorate. This system depends on evaluating the learning-teaching elements and school administration through applying evaluation tools such as questionnaires, classroom observation, etc (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Teachers conduct the continuous formative evaluation with its various tools. They are free to find or amend some tools as needed to raise the students learning level. Senior teachers and supervisors are responsible for following-up the implementation of the evaluation process and examining its outcomes in the learning process. There is a central committee at the level of the Ministry called “Examination Committee”, which examines the objectivity of the continuous evaluation score awarded to grade 12 students as a final stage of the educational hierarchy in general education. There is another committee to follow up the educational attainment, which approves the final scores of students in the remaining grades.

Self-evaluation in the evaluation system of the school performance is conducted by the school principal, assistant principal, social specialist, and senior teachers. As for external evaluation, it is conducted by the educational supervisors, school performance evaluation supervisors and administrative supervisors in the educational governorates (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Evaluation scores are distributed in Grades (1-12). As for Grades (1-4), students undergo 100% continuous formative evaluation for all the subjects. As for Grades (5-9), they undergo 60% continuous evaluation (using various evaluation tools). End-of-semester exams are prepared at the governorate’s level by 40%. Grades (10-11) undergo 40% continuous evaluation (using various evaluation tools). End-of-semester exams are prepared centrally at the Ministry’s level by 60%. Grade 12 undergoes 30% continuous evaluation (using various evaluation tools). End-of-semester exams are prepared centrally at the Ministry’s level by 70%.

Other evaluation tools include various verbal and artistic activities, project, short questions, short tests, daily observation, practical tests, reports, and other continuous evaluation tools which are indicated in detail in the evaluation documents of subjects’ learning in line with each subject.



Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)

In recent years, the education system in Oman witnessed a renewed development process, which started with the implementation of basic education at the beginning of the academic year 1997-1998. This continued to include the post-basic education, in addition to development of educational evaluation systems. Such development was accompanied with comprehensive development of educational curricula so as to suit the objectives set for both basic education and post-basic education. As a result of such development, there was a need to evaluate performance in the education system by neutral external entities, in order to know whether the students achieve their expected learning outcomes or otherwise. Whereas mathematics and science were the first educational subjects to undergo significant curricula development and radical changes at the level of the scope and sequence matrix for learning outcomes and methods of teaching, the idea was using international evaluation standards to evaluate the performance of basic education students in these two subjects.

TIMSS aims to train national cadres of the participating countries in the area of conducting standard tests, collecting data on the performance of Grade 4 and 8 students in these two subjects. In continuation of the Ministry's approach to identify the attainment level of students in these two subjects, the Sultanate of Oman participated in the 5th session of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science (TIMSS 2011) to obtain indicators which support the findings of participating in TIMSS in its 4th session, with the purpose of identifying the positive aspects of the education system as well as identifying and addressing the negative aspects.

In continuation of the this approach, Oman participated in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) to identify the attainment level of Grade 4 students in Oman, compared to other participating countries, and take the steps required to improve the teaching-learning process in teaching reading, conduct a comparative study among various educational governorates, and associate such study with various variables which will be included in the study findings and questionnaires, and make comparisons among students' levels according to Arabic Language curricula, the basic education curricula and private schools curricula.

The analysis of students' results in international exams demonstrates the need to focusing on higher mental processes, including application, analysis and evaluation, considering that the exams demonstrated major deficiency among students in possessing such abilities, and also that the attainment level of female students is higher than male students. In PIRLS, the average performance of females was 411 compared to 371 for male students. In TIMSS, the average performance of females in Science for Grade 4 was 453 compared to 405 for males. In Grade 8, the average performance of females was 458 compared to 380 for males. In Mathematics of Grade 4, the average performance of females was 398 compared to 372 for



males. In Grade 8, the average performance of females was 397 compared to 340 for male students.

3.6.6: Curricula:

Oman prepared general framework for curricula and education goals, specifying the expected learning outcomes in each school subject, in addition to setting the scope and sequence matrices for various school subjects which include strands, items and concepts, activities, teaching methods and evaluation methods, in addition to adopting continuous and comprehensive evaluation system, and specifying the rules of transition and repetition for each grade. The educational framework was gradually Omanised and the sustainable professional development for teachers and educational supervisors was achieved. The infrastructure including buildings and equipment was promoted, and various learning resources were provided in all schools with the implementation of e-Education in some pilot schools.

Achieving quality in educational curricula requires attention to their contents, clarity of their purpose and the potential of their achievement and their reality in meeting the needs of beneficiaries (students, parents and community), along with similar attention to the quality of teaching methods and evaluation tools and techniques. The priority should always be to achieve continuous improvement in teaching and learning aimed at continuously improving the learner abilities and skills since early academic years, focusing on the basic competencies which should be acquired by the learners, and the 21st Century skills, working to achieve social justice and accountability, equal opportunities, freedom, reinforcing the values of collective work as well as diversity, tolerance, acceptance others, relying on innovated educational approach that promotes self-oriented active learning model, promoting the employment of knowledge and supporting production values, developing problem-solving ability, decision-making, critical and creative thinking, involvement in building integrated and effective broad knowledge database among the learners, achieving an educational transformation which develops the community's ability of participation, instilling the features of good citizenship, belonging, and democracy among learners, and promoting the community's ability to develop future generations capable of handling complicated systems and advanced technology, as well as competing in a changing world.

Despite the diversity of educational curricula in Oman, and the existence of various choices of



educational subjects in Grades 11 and 12, their connection with the actual needs of economic development plans and the needs of the Omani market is still a question mark. The Directorate General of Curriculum Development is trying to link curriculum topics with the requirements of the external Omani labor market, such as the introduction of French and German languages, economic geography, geographical information systems, environmental sciences, and other advanced subjects in the list of the Omani curricula. Through the career guidance specialist in schools, the National Center for Career Guidance is playing an important role in developing students' awareness towards selecting educational courses, and selecting their majors in higher education, in a manner that serves the economic and social development of the Omani society. The National Center for Career Guidance is currently working to support education for entrepreneurship, so as to direct students towards having valuable ideas and projects in the market, and linking them with their future disciplines, in addition to adopting and spreading the culture of self-employment within student communities.

Considering that the curriculum serves one of the most important school objectives, which is preparing the learners to coexist with others, adopt the approach of moderation and tolerance and promote world peace, Omani curricula pay special attention to implementing the concepts of peace, respect, diversity, democracy, and cultural pluralism (World Bank, Ministry of Education, 2012).

The Directorate General of Curriculum Development is mandated to compose and develop the curricula, in cooperation with a number of professors from Sultan Qaboos University and supervisors and senior teachers. Although the curricula personnel are selected from former teachers, they are in dire need to develop their abilities with regard to curricula preparation, development and evaluation.

The Textbook and Educational Tools Production Center undertakes the design, production, and printing of books in external printing presses according to awarded tenders. A significant development took place in the design and production of books through using the latest approved computer applications. Textbooks are produced in attractive and interesting formats, while some educational materials are recorded on CDs, but not all school books have been converted into electronic formats until now (World Bank, Ministry of Education, 2012). In 2005, the Curriculum Evaluation Department was established in the Directorate General of Curriculum Development. This department is responsible for conducting studies to evaluate the curricula in schools, submitting recommendations to develop such curricula, and formulating evaluation methods used according to the international trends in curriculum development. In addition, educational curricula are evaluated by the Curriculum Development and Educational Evaluation Committee which evaluates curricula composed or developed, initiates discussion with authors and provide them with feedback for development. Afterwards, curricula are evaluated by the Educational Policies Committee, which is responsible for giving final decision on curricula's approval after their evaluation. In addition, curricula are reviewed on an annual basis by teachers and supervisors who are invited to provide feedback on some school books. (Ministry of Education, 2013)



3.6.7: School Performance Development System:

The School Performance Development System, which is in force since 2003, is one of the planned and continued efforts made by the Ministry of Education, to improve the performance level and improve outcomes through the continuous evaluation of school performance in an accurate manner, in which scientific tools are used to collect evidences so as to judge the three education areas, i.e. learning, teaching and school administration, to determine strengths and development priorities.

The importance of this system is clear through its consistency with the continued need for more improvement and development in school performance, and its coping with the latest world developments, as well as improvement of the education system outcomes, development of schools as interactive community institutions, stimulating the role of senior teachers as educational supervisors based in schools, establishing the culture of self-evaluation and self-development among all personnel working in schools through diagnosing the current performance levels, and planning for professional development programmes based on schools actual need.

The idea of this system is based on two types of evaluation; self-evaluation conducted by the school and external evaluation conducted by the external evaluation teams of the School Performance Development Department at the Ministry, using a set of evaluation tools. Results obtained by the external evaluation are of great importance for the planners at the Ministry in all fields, including curricula, as they provide clear and objective look on the quality of educational curricula from the point of view of teachers and administrators in schools, and the attitudes of teachers, students, and parents towards them.

3.6.8: e-Education:

The e-Education system gives due care to covering all educational aspects as well as publishing and running digital texts, e-books, educational audiovisual effects, and other educational materials. It also seeks to achieve all forms of distance learning.

This system is mainly based on the principle of self-learning and virtual classrooms, as it aims to provide the educational content in an atypical manner and with an interactive style that considers seriousness, suspense, and quality of the educational material learnt by students. This system can follow up the progress of the student attainment level via various reports. Students can also know more about activities and have access to other sources via browsing the Internet to enrich the educational material towards achieving integrated electronic curricula. The Oman Educational Portal plays an important role in this respect.

The Educational Portal is an interactive educational system and a digital environment connecting the elements of the educational process online (learners, teachers, parents, schools, and Ministry of Education)



via the Internet, and through a set of computer applications and systems, so as to facilitate the educational process and introduce it in a more effective and motivating manner. It also assists in organizing and following-up administrative works by making them more precise and organized through the correspondence system and electronic archiving. The Educational Portal is the link between the databases of the Ministry of Education and its personnel, from the administrative or teaching staff, in all sectors such as the Ministry, educational governorates and schools, or between learners, their parents, and community members who are interested in this sector so as to provide administrative or educational electronic services.

In addition, the following is conducted through the project:

1. Converting some educational curricula into interactive electronic contents.
2. Providing schools with interactive boards as well as training and encouraging teachers to use them.
3. Providing school science laboratories with computer-related sensors and microscopes.
4. Encouraging schools to cooperate in activating e-Education.
5. Participating in a number of regional and international contests.
6. Encouraging initiatives provided by teachers, learners, and school administrations.



3.6.9: Educational Environment:

The educational environment is one of the aspects which promote the students learning process through its physical components and facilities, which attract students and facilitate their learning. Since the launch of the educational development plan in late 1990s, the educational environments in Omani schools witnessed a great improvement through modern school buildings equipped with many facilities, which serve the learning environments.

The Ministry of Education

sought to provide suitable physical learning environment for students, and during recent years it worked quickly to establish and own all public schools. Such schools have internationally recognized safety standards, in addition to other facilities required to serve and

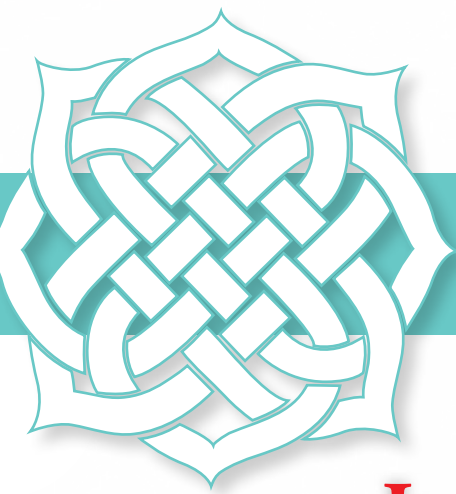


improve the learning process, including classrooms, laboratories and school facilities such as warehouses, cooperatives, medical visitor room and career guidance room. School buildings are equipped with modern equipment and educational tools. All rooms in every school are equipped with air-conditioners due to high temperatures so as to create an atmosphere suitable for teaching and learning. In addition, all public schools are equipped to accommodate students with special needs. They also have improved water sources for males and females which are separate for mixed schools. All schools in Oman have improved sewage facilities and special toilets for females in mixed schools. The model of public school buildings with all its technical specifications is constructed on an equal footing all over the Sultanate. The Ministry of Education also sought to provide free transportation service from and to schools for all students, in addition to providing textbooks free of charge to all students. On the other hand, the development of the physical environment in school buildings is an ongoing process with continuous requirements. For example, there is a need to develop the facilities provided to students with special needs and determine which facilities are related to means of transportation for students with disabilities from and to schools. There is also a need to develop the measures related to providing healthy nutrition, security and safety procedures in schools, and students' means of transportation.

The Ministry of Education also provides psychological and social counseling as an essential part of the efforts of educational development. There is a social specialist in every school responsible for providing social counseling to students, and providing support to students suffering from behavioral problems. Recently, the Ministry of Education created the position of psychological counseling specialist in every school to provide counseling services and assist in handling psychological disorders of students suffering from psychological problems. A career guidance specialist is also provided in schools which include Grades (5-12) so as to provide career guidance services to students. The Ministry of Education also coordinated with the Ministry of Health to provide legal nurse in every school so as to provide initial health services, in addition to providing awareness about the proper health habits.







Section 4

Implementation of EFA



Effectiveness of the 12 strategies:

4.1: Strategy 1: Mobilizing strong national and international political commitment for Education for All, develop national action plans and significantly enhance investment in basic education:

In all the national occasions, the Royal speeches of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said focused on education, and the development of education and the evaluation of its outcomes. In particular, His Majesty's speech during the Annual Meeting of Council of Oman in 2012 stressed on the importance of education and the necessity to evaluate the educational process in Oman. Education has also been of great interest in the Vision of Oman's Economy (Oman 2020), focusing in general on education, universalization of basic education, illiteracy eradication, and spread of knowledge, in addition to the 7th Five-Year Plan (2005-2009) and the 8th Five-Year Plan (2010-2015), which included mega projects in support of education, as detailed in this report, and various education projects and programs.

In a big step towards development of education in Oman, which reflects the political will to support this sector, the Education Council was established by virtue of Royal Decree No. (48/2012) dated September 10, 2012. The Education Council aims to develop education with its various types, stages, and outcomes as well as ensure its quality in line with the State public policy, development plans, and the labor market needs. The Education Council has the following functions:

- Develop the general policy to be adopted by the Council in exercising its functions.
- Formulate the general policy of Education with its various types and stages, as well as seeking to direct education in line with the State public policy and the requirements of overall development to achieve the cultural, social, economic, and scientific objectives in collaboration with the specialized councils, in addition to following-up the implementation of such general policy.
- Develop the education strategy within the framework of the State public policy in coordination with the competent authorities and follow on its implementation.
- Follow and evaluate the level of education quality with all its types and stages as well as taking all necessary measures to ensure the quality of its outcomes.
- Review and develop the education policies, plans, and programmes to keep pace with various changes in line with the State public policy, in addition to other mandates.



There are also competent committees in Oman's elected councils such as (Shura Council and Municipal Councils) which are concerned with education, as well as in appointed councils such as (State Council) so as to participate with the government in taking decisions related to development and evaluation of the educational policies in Oman.

The commitment is also reflected in the increasing education budgets to support the educational projects, for example and without limitation, the 2014 budget for the Ministry of Education was OMR 1,025,000,000 (Omani Rial one billion twenty five million) with an increase of OMR 75,000,000 (Omani Rial seventy five million) compared to 2013. The financial and administrative regulatory role in education was strengthened through the creation of independent administrative organizations in the State Audit Institution to support the education sector and follow up the implementation of its planned programmes. With regard to evaluating the education system, it was coordinated with the World Bank to conduct an academic study on the current state of education in Oman to boost strengths and know development priorities in its structure and items. This is a joint study with experts from the World Bank about the efficiency of the education system in Oman entitled: "Education in Oman: Moving forward to Achieve Quality. The three-year study is an evaluation of the education system as it touched on many aspects including: governance, student education, quality of education in terms of inputs and teacher skills, school days and curricula, and quality of learning for students and evaluation systems. The new development in this study is that it made comparisons between Oman and similar countries, thus giving a clear picture of the education system in Oman, particularly with regard to achievements made. The study also touched on future challenges and the road ahead, and recommendations and plan to be followed by the competent ministry to overcome difficulties in the education system.

The Inclusive Education Evaluation Project for Grades (1-12) was also implemented. It is a project based on the directives of His Majesty the Sultan, during the inauguration of the 5th session of the Council of Oman in October 2012 with the purpose of conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the education march in the Sultanate. The project is a comprehensive evaluative study carried out by New Zealand team in cooperation with the technical team from the Ministry of Education, under the supervision of H. E. the Minister of Education.

On May 19, 2014 the Child Law was enacted by virtue of the Royal Decree No. (22/2014), with its 79 articles, stipulating all matters relating to children and their rights from the State, community and parents. Most notably article (30) entitling children under the age of the preschool education the right to benefit from the services of nurseries, which they are qualified to join, and encouraging the State to establish nurseries in public authorities and the private sector, which the Ministry of Education considers that the number of their female employees and workers require the existence of a nursery and assistance required



to achieve their objectives, article (36) entitling the children the right for free education in public schools until the completion of the post-basic education stage, which shall be compulsory until the completion of the basic education stage, and parents shall be responsible for enrolling their children in schools and prevent their dropout. In addition, article (70) stipulates that any person violating the provisions of article (36) thereof shall be imprisoned for a period not less than one month and not exceeding three months and/or a fine of minimum OMR 500 and not exceeding OMR 1,000.

A draft law for general (school) education and a draft law for higher education in the Sultanate is currently under preparation.

4.2: Strategy 2: Promote EFA policies within a sustainable and well-integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty elimination strategy and development:

In Article (13), the Basic Statute of the State indicates that education is a cornerstone for the progress of the society, which the State fosters and endeavours to disseminate and make accessible to all. Education aims to raise and develop the general cultural standard, promote scientific thinking, kindle the spirit of research, respond to the requirements of economic and social plans, build a generation that is physically and morally strong and proud of its nation and heritage and preserves its achievements. The State shall provide public education, work to combat illiteracy and encourage the establishment of private schools and institutes. In article (12), the State stresses on justice equality and equal opportunities between Omanis (Ministry of Legal Affairs, 1996).

Chapter 2 entitled “Strategy of Achieving Economic Balance and Continued Growth”, in the long-term Development Strategy (1996-2020) indicates that such strategy is based, in its third theme, on developing human resources and developing the abilities and skills of Omanis to cope with the technological developments, managing their changes efficiently, and facing the ever-changing local and global circumstances.

Achieving the Vision of Oman’s Economy (Oman 2020) will rely to a great extent on the success made in implementing the following human resources development policies:

Providing free basic education for all citizens via an efficient and cost-effective system, and improving the quality of basic education through increasing the instructional time of scientific subjects such as mathematics, natural Sciences, and computer, and teach English language from the 1st grade.



Providing and encouraging technical education and vocational training for general education graduates, with its various majors, to cover the needs of the labor market from various technical specializations (“Former” Ministry of National Economy, 1996, p. 42 and p. 49).

The objectives of the Eighth Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) of the Ministry of Education are: developing the education system according to quality standards which suit the educational purposes and policies, developing the educational plan and its curricula so as to ensure producing educational outcomes that can fulfill the requirements of development and labor market, raising the efficiency of student performance evaluation so as to contribute to the development of school attainment level, expanding the employment of technology so as to keep up with the strategy of Oman’s digital community, raising the enrolment ratios in the Pre-school education to 50% for the age group between (3.5-5.5), reducing the illiteracy rate to (50%) of the current illiteracy rate, and expanding the provision of equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities and special needs as well as best-performing students (Ministry of Education, 2011 A).

The curricula policy in Oman stresses on the following:

1. Looking at the curriculum as a set of experiences, skills and values which exceed the course contents that can be acquired through curricular and extra-curricular activities as a result of dealing with others inside and outside schools.
2. Setting clear and specific standards governing the process of curriculum design and development out of the philosophy of the Omani society and its objectives.
3. Taking into account the learners’ physical, mental, religion, emotional, social, and skill development, and consider them as the center of the educational process, focusing on the learners’ integrated look, providing educational activities in situations similar to what they face in their daily lives and linking them with the new developments and challenges taking place in the Omani family and society, and adopting the approaches of scientific thinking in life and adapting with the future and opening their perspectives to the external world.
4. Taking into account the individual differences between the learners through a range of activities which consider their needs, interests, and levels.
5. Shaping the learners’ personality in terms of cognitive, skilled, and emotional aspects as from entering to school, instilling the national values and attitudes, and developing an Omani citizen believing in their country and the honor of being loyal to it.
6. Preserving the Omani identity and heritage and civilization derived from the Arab Islamic Civilization and developing the teaching of Arabic as the means of cultural communication among the community members.



7. Focusing on teaching foreign languages (English, French, German) to assist in communicating with other peoples, achieving understanding, tolerance, and world peace, and contributing to the promotion of tourism in Oman.
8. Continuing the development of teaching science and mathematics according to the latest global methods, means and standards as well as providing the requirements for teaching these two subjects including modern curricula, tools, instruments, laboratories and technology to assist in achieving the educational objectives easily.
9. Supporting the teaching of life skills which benefit the learners in their daily and professional lives as well as providing all the required means and tools which assist in applying such skills practically inside and outside the classrooms.
10. Focusing on the practical work, which is based on learning by experience and practice which facilitates long term learning, through strategies based on cooperative learning, project learning, problem-solving, active learning, etc. and consequently succeeding at work later, instead of just instructing and memorizing.
11. Providing e-contents for the curricula to assist the learners to easily achieve the curriculum's objectives, and provide an additional source of learning, and increase schooling periods beyond school hours.
12. Involving the educational sector (teachers, senior teachers and supervisors) and the civil society, public sector, and private sector in composing and developing the curricula.
13. Benefiting from global successful experiences in composing and developing curricula.
14. Training teachers on modern teaching and learning strategies to enable them to apply self-learning, cooperative learning, problem-solving, and conducting researches included in modern curricula.
15. Diversifying and developing the measurement of learning level through applying continuous formative evaluation as part of measurement of learners' performance so as to ensure the quality of their learning.
16. Continuously reviewing the textbooks and ensuring their compliance with the set educational objectives, and updating their contents in line with the new developments.
17. Continuing the implementation of recommendations of studies and plans developed by the Ministry of Education to develop the learning level of learners in basic subjects, and ensure that education is suitable with the social reality.
18. Seeking to update the educational outcomes to respond to contemporary developments, results of new studies in the areas of Cognitive Psychology and Educational Psychology, methods of teaching and learning various subjects, and educational evaluation and its instruments, while observing the learners' cognitive, social, and skills along with the need of the local environment and labor market.

The Ministry of Education seeks to provide high quality educational service through the cognitive development of learners as a clear and specific target of the education system, as well as promote the values



and attitudes of the community along with the development of creative skills and emotional feelings, in addition to the common denominators among various peoples such as respecting individual rights, promoting equality in obtaining education and achieving its outcomes, and increasing the link between education and the needs of the individual and society.

Achieving quality in curricula requires attention to their contents, clarity of their purpose and the possibility of their achievement and their reality in meeting the needs of beneficiaries (students, parents and community) along with similar attention to the quality of teaching methods, as well as evaluation tools and techniques whose priority should always be to achieve continuous improvement in teaching and learning which aims to improve the abilities and skills of learners on a permanent basis since the early academic years, focusing on the basic competencies, and the 21st Century skills, which should be acquired by learners, working to achieve social justice and accountability, equal opportunities, freedom, reinforcing the values of group work as well as diversity, tolerance, and acceptance of the other, relying on an innovative teaching approach that promotes active self-oriented learning model, promoting the employment of knowledge and supporting production values, developing problem-solving ability, decision-making, and critical and creative thinking, and contributing to build a broad knowledge database, which is integrated and effective among learners, achieving educational transformation which develops the society's ability of involvement, instilling the features of good citizenship, belonging, and democracy among the learners, and promoting the society's ability to raise future generations capable of handling complicated systems and advanced technology, as well as competing in a changing world.

The Ministry of Education is currently preparing national standards for education, including the National Standards for Curricula. The standards constitute a pillar which aims to direct the educational work in all fields, and ensure responsibility and accountability through finding a clear reference to achieve objectivity and transparency in evaluating performance and achievements. The standard levels aim to have a clear vision of the inputs and outcomes, as well as achieve the desired objectives in the educational field.

4.3: Strategy 3: Ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development

The history of civil society institutions in Oman is not long, which makes it difficult to judge their activities and efficiency. There are many challenges facing this sector including its limited ability to act as mediator between the community and the government, considering that the community continues to believe to a great extent of the role played by the government, in addition to poor financial capabilities which result from low number of members. Civil society institutions also have poor contribution to



qualify human resources to play their role in volunteer work. However, in 2000, the civil society witnessed a real transformation with the issuance of the Law of Civil Associations promulgated by Royal Decree No. (14/2000), followed by the issuance of the Human Rights Committee Law, which constituted a real support for this sector (Supreme Council for Planning, 2012).

However, the participation and contribution of the civil society in developing education is evident in various ways, such as the formation of Education and Research Committee at the elected Majilis al-Shura, to ensure the civil society participation in the educational projects design and following-up, periodic meetings between the education officials and the elected members of Majilis al-Shura to exchange views and ideas related to citizens aspirations with regard to educational institution activities, membership of the director general of education in governorates in the municipal councils to acquaint the elected members of Majilis al-Shura with the educational programmes and projects implemented in the governorates, listening to opinions and proposals submitted by the civil society, and its aspirations from the educational institution, periodic field visits of education officials in Oman to various governorates and wilayats, meeting with local notables and listening to their observations and remarks on the development of education, and establishing Parents' Association in all governorates of Oman to be chaired by a Wali in the governorate Wilayats.

Text frame (9): Parent Associations aim to achieve the following:

- Strengthen the relation between the parents associations in the Wilayat's schools.
- Cooperate with parent associations in the Wilayat's schools with regard to examining students' problems and working to solve them.
- Exchange expertise and elements of successful projects among Parents' Associations in the Wilayat's schools.
- Examine the negative social phenomena in the local community and cooperate with Parents' Associations in the Wilayat's schools to treat them or limit their spread.
- Provide Parents' Associations in the Wilayat's schools with the techniques that may assist in stimulating their role in the school and local communities.
- Consider the reports of Parents' Associations in the Wilayat's schools and take necessary action accordingly.
- Communicate effectively with Parents' Associations in the Wilayat's schools and Parents' Association in the governorate.
- Follow up with the Parents' Associations in the Wilayat's schools on the implementation of the bylaws and the recommendations of Parents' Association in the region and the ministry.
- Participate in preparing and implementing programmes that serve the local community.



The Omani Women Associations spreading across Oman also contribute to the development of education, particularly for female education, through their memberships in several committees with the Ministry of Education and other ministries concerned with education. All the ministries involved with education are keen on getting segments of the local community involved in the national forums and symposiums on education so as to listen to their opinions and proposals to develop education.

4.4: Strategy 4: Develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management

Effective management is an important component to ensure the quality of education, and achieve the educational purposes aspired by any educational system. This report will present many systems which meet the education needs in Oman. The report also touches on the efforts made by the education stakeholders in Oman by creating several administrative organizations which contribute to the development of education.

First: Administrative organizations to develop education management in Oman:

- Specialized councils (Education Council)
- The Specialized Center for Professional Training of Teachers (Ministry of Education)
- The National Center for Evaluation and Examinations (Ministry of Education)
- The National Center for Career Guidance (Ministry of Education)
- The Higher Education Admission Center (Ministry of Higher Education)
- The National Center for Statistics and Information (Supreme Council for Planning)
- The Directorate General for Persons with Disabilities (Ministry of Social Development)
- The Vocational Standards and Skills Testing Center (Ministry of Manpower)

Second: Developing systems to meet the education needs in Oman:

- Developing the Tender Law, under which the government units, including education stakeholders, are awarded powers to offer tenders and enter into contracts for amount not exceeding OMR 3,000,000 (Omani Rial Three million).
- Awarding administrative and financial powers to the educational governorates through the regulations issued by ministerial decisions.
- Promoting interest in education and electronic contents, and coping with the national trends expressed in the e-Oman National Strategy, by adopting several projects including: development of school learning source centers, launch the digital library, launch the educational portal for students, teachers and parents, and the curricula e-content conversion project.



4.5: Strategy 5: Meet the needs of educational systems affected by conflicts, natural disasters and instability, and manage the educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and help to prevent violence and conflict:

The Ministry of Education believes in the importance of disseminating the culture of peace, tolerance, resisting the influence of factors leading to fear from, and exclusion of others and helping the young to develop their abilities of independent opinion as well as critical and ethical thinking, promoting understanding, solidarity, tolerance amongst individuals, combating violence and extremism, and abstaining from all forms of discrimination among people. Thus, the curricula include many topics encouraging such culture, and enhancing it through teamwork and various activities which learners are required to conduct, or through lectures, symposiums or morning speeches delivered through the school radio, or the school newsletters. Some curricula, such as the Islamic Education and Social Studies, include full lessons on tolerance. The activities, images, and figures in textbooks indicate the already-existing diversity in Oman. Many concepts related to human rights, child rights, women rights, and population education were included in the curricula of all subjects. The following table presents the lessons in which such concepts are included in certain subjects, for grades (1-12) of public education.

Table (65): Number of lessons which include concepts of human rights, child rights, women rights and population education in the curricula

Islamic Education	Arabic	English Language	Science	Social Studies	Life Skills	Individual Skills
34	14	15	6	368	26	17

(Directorate General for Curriculum Development, Ministry of Education)

The environment and population are amongst the most important principles of the education philosophy in Oman, considering the human interaction with the environment, its components and hazards as well as achieve the required balance to overcome and reduce such problems and hazards. Through the curricula, the Ministry of Education was keen on dealing with the topic of natural disasters and how to deal with them. All the subjects integrate with each other to instill the concepts of environment, and to spread awareness of its various problems and hazards. The social studies and science are the main subjects dealing with such topics and issues, while other subjects deal with them in a manner that serves their objectives. For example, a full unit in social studies for grade 10 is devoted to examine some environmental problems



and hazards. Such topics are displayed in textual ways, images, illustrations and practical activities, in addition to a defining natural disaster, its reasons, its most important negative effects or consequences, and methods to anticipate it and avoid its hazards. The theoretical part of the curricula is supported by effective educational tools, using educational films, practical presentations and websites. The Ministry of Education is currently preparing the digital Atlas of the Sultanate of Oman and the world, and will include interactive presentations between students and its contents. The Ministry of Education is also making various efforts so as to spread awareness and reduce the effects of natural disasters, including the Contest on Maintaining Cleanliness and Health in the School Environment, cooperating with the Civil Defense in all educational governorates, particularly with regard to security and safety systems in school buildings as well as cooperating with the relevant public authorities and private institutions during environmental occasions and events through increasing awareness of the risks of natural disasters.

4.6: Strategy 6: Implement integrated strategies for gender equality in education that recognize the need for change in attitudes, values, and practices

Although the law making education compulsory in Oman is recent, promulgated in 2014 for basic education, coinciding with the issuance of the child law, for long time the educational indicators are showing good turnout from both genders in education, at all stages, particularly with regard to the success achieved by the Sultanate in integrating females in various educational stages, which resulted in bridging the gender gap in education.

Achieving equality among the citizens is one of the most important pillars on which the Omani policy was based since the onset of the renaissance era. This right is guaranteed by the law irrespective of gender, race or religion, as stipulated in the Omani Basic Statute (Constitution) in Article (13) of Cultural Principles: “Education is a cornerstone for the progress of society which the State fosters and endeavors to spread and make accessible to all”. The right to education is guaranteed for both genders and there are no legal provisions that restrict education to men only. Article (12) of Social Principles stipulates that: “Justice, equality, and equal opportunities among Omanis are the cornerstones of the society which the State guarantees”.

In light of the foregoing, the spread of education and making it accessible to both genders, particularly basic and post-basic education, is extremely important, since His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said assumed the reins of power in 1970. His Majesty the Sultan Qaboos urged that the girl must sit beside her male counterpart in schools so as to contribute to building this country in the future.



The legal or legislative sector in Oman witnessed a breakthrough towards progress and development of the legal and judicial systems. It is clear that legislations made men and women equal in their provisions with due observance of the provisions of the Islamic Sharia and the society's traditions. However, certain legislations distinguish between the genders due to several considerations, including the social role of women, their natural physique or other justifications required by the public interest. Article (17) of the Omani Basic Statute also established a general rule stating that all citizens are equal before the law in public rights and duties, and that there is no difference amongst them. This is the basis on which legislations in Oman are established, and was not absent before the issuance of the afore-mentioned Basic Statute, rather it was an established principle imposed by the officials in charge within the laws and regulations which they enact. In addition, the principle of equality between men and women was approved in previous laws before the Basic Statute in various fields. Such laws include: the Oman Labor Law No. (35/2003), Civil Service Law, Personal Status Law No. 32/97, Social Security Law No. 84/87, Women's Law on possession and the Law on women's right to form associations. The Ministry of Education is making great efforts so as to provide outstanding and high quality educational service to all students of both genders on equal footing. Such efforts include students with special needs.

Analyses in section 3 herein clarify the goal pertaining to gender equality in education, and indicate the progress made in this goal and supporting indicators.

4.7: Strategy 7: Implement education programmes and actions to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a matter of urgency

In 1987, the National HIV/AIDS Control Program (NAP) was launched, and continued as a programme within the Five-Year plans since the start of the 4th Five-Year Plan for Health Development (1991). The sexually transmitted diseases (STD) were included in the programme as from the start of the 5th Five-Year Plan for Health Development (1996-2000). In the 8th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), such programme was included in the third vision in relation to reducing the risk factors which threaten public health as one of the health fields.

NAP seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Limit the spread of AIDS and STD infection in the society in general and high-risk groups in particular.
- (2) Improve the medical, physical, mental and social conditions of AIDS patients, reduce the disease's complications, reduce the mortality rate due to diseases associated with AIDS and treat those who are diagnosed with STDs.



- (3) Encourage and support the efforts of NGOs working in the area of combating behaviors leading to contracting the AIDS virus and NGOs caring of patients and affected persons.

In 2012, there were 127 HIV cases registered with the Ministry of Health. They decreased by 14.1% compared to 2011, with males constituting 70% of the reported cases. Despite the decline in the number of Omani patients in 2012, the total number of cases increased compared to the number reported in 2012 (Ministry of Health, 2012).

The Ministry of Education seeks to spread awareness of various diseases based on the principle of (Prevention is better than cure). Such awareness may take several forms, including the infusion of correct concepts of the diseases in terms of their causes, symptoms, complications and prevention methods, in addition to contests and activity groups such as the School Health Group, and directly through seminars, lectures and school radio programmes. The ministry is focusing on AIDS, which is reflected in various forms, including:

- Including lessons on AIDS, its causes, complications and prevention methods in the curricula, particularly for learners in higher grades.
- “Facts of Life Book” Contest, which includes a large part about AIDS.
- “My Positive Personality” Booklets which are distributed to all the schools in Oman urging the students to behave properly in various situations and how to prevent diseases.
- Spreading awareness on AIDS through curricular and extra-curricular activities, including the activities of School Health Group, School Radio Group, School Press Group, the contest on maintaining cleanliness and health in the school environment, art contests, and plays.

Making use of celebrations and events to disseminate positive messages about AID and prevention such as the World Health Day and Municipalities Month.

The Ministry of Education is also member of the National Committee for AIDS and STDs Control and participated in developing the National AIDS Control Strategy. The Ministry of Education also participates with other authorities in celebrating the World AIDS Day.



Table (66): Number of lessons dealing with AIDS in the curricula for grades (1-12)

Islamic Education	Arabic Language	English Language	Science	Social Studies	Life Skills	Individual Skills
4	97	78	9	20	A full unit on diseases	20

(Directorate General for Curriculum Development, Ministry of Education)

4.8: Strategy 8: Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning, with clearly defined levels of attainment for all:

The Ministry of Education seeks to make the learning environment more attractive to learners, so as to make the schools more interesting place for them, and to be a proper, convenient and learner friendly environment, whether with regard to the physical environment, which includes the school buildings, equipment, tools and facilities provided to facilitate the learning process, or with regard to the morale environment pertaining to the emotional aspect, and the classroom atmosphere as a social group, which can affect the learning process. The better the classroom emotional environment is, the more it can assist in better attainment for learners, as the teacher/learner relation greatly determines their achievement in the curriculum.

As regards the school building, it was developed according to the highest standards in terms of size of classrooms, and the provision of other facilities such as laboratories, multi-purpose halls, playgrounds, indoor playgrounds in some schools, spacious courtyards and management rooms. Buildings were also provided with good lighting, ventilation, air-conditioning, and security and safety facilities.

As regards equipment, tools and facilities, the Ministry of Education is keen on providing whatever is required to make the educational process comfortable, interesting and useful, including:

1. Comfortable furniture convenient for the age group of learners.
2. Appropriate educational tools for each educational subject and grade, including learning kits for science, mathematics, Arabic and English.
3. Schools laboratories and modern materials, equipment, and tools required for conducting practical experiments with emphasis that the learners should perform their experiments individually or in



groups, according to the nature of the experiment and under the supervision of the teacher and laboratory technician.

4. Schools computer laboratories with all the software and hardware, with internet connection and providing trained teachers. In 2011, the computer/learner ratio was approximately one computer per 11.8 learners.
5. All schools are provided with learning source centers which contain paper and electronic sources and internet connection.
6. Grades (1-4) in all schools are provided with classroom libraries which contain booklets supporting the curricula to achieve the objective of free reading.

The Ministry also focuses on the teaching strategies and methods to deal with the learners, including:

1. Introducing activities which develop higher-order thinking skills among learners into the curricula.
2. Using modern learner-centred teaching and learning strategies through self-learning, cooperative learning, problem-solving, and conducting researches.
3. Developing the teacher manual for school subjects, supported by numerous ideas and recommendations which assist teachers in teaching lessons, along with providing teachers with the opportunity to be creative and innovative.
4. Dramatizing some theatrical texts and activating the role of Puppet Theater in learning and teaching.
5. Promoting the extra-curricular educational activities and linking them with the curriculum's objectives according to the learners' inclinations, needs and interests.
6. Teaching individual skills subjects (arts education, school sports and music), providing tools required for their teaching, and allocating special rooms for them.
7. Strengthening the relations with parents through parents associations, and opening direct communication channels, or electronic communication with them via the educational portal, as they are partners in the teaching-learning process and essential school supporters.
8. Working to promote talented and best-performing learners as well as cultivate their talents and nurture their merits.
9. Activating the diagnostic and curative role of the educational supervision (senior teachers and educational supervisors) and monitor and fulfill the training needs.
10. Regarding schools as training units which provide training programmes according to the actual needs of their teachers and personnel.



In order to create and maintain psychological and social environment suitable for learning, the following has been provided:

1. Social specialist in each school so as to activate the social work in the school's local community and examine the learners' problems with a scientific method to solve them.
2. Career guidance specialist in schools with grades (5-12) so as to guide learners according to their professional inclinations.
3. Number of psychologists in every governorate so as to assist the schools in examining the psychological aspects of learners in collaboration with the school social specialist.

In order to ensure the quality of educational services provided, the Ministry of Education takes part in various international competitions at the global and Gulf level, through tests conducted in collaboration with the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States and the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center. The Ministry of Education also conducts national tests in a number of educational subjects. The international tests that the ministry participated in include:

- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS): Supervised by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) based in Amsterdam. IEA is concerned, since forty years, with measuring the performance of students and data collection so as to make learning of mathematics and science easier for students. IEA conducts TIMSS every four years, and the first TIMSS was conducted in 1995, followed by subsequent studies in 1999, 2003 and 2007, which the Sultanate participated in and also in The 5th TIMSS in 2011.
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS): It is a global study conducted on a regular basis every five years to measure the abilities of grade 4 students in reading skills in their mother tongue. PIRLS is also supervised by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The Sultanate participated in its 3rd session in 2011.

The national tests are prepared centrally at the Ministry level to measure the acquisition of basic skills by the targeted segment of students. They are applied at the national level to determine the level of students' performance and measure the fulfillment of objectives and competencies set for a certain curriculum, and consequently evaluate the validity of the items of such curriculum to improve the quality of education.

- The national tests for science and mathematics were applied as a pilot stage in grade 7 in all educational regions in the academic year 2005-2006.



- In the academic year 2006-2007, the actual stage was applied to four subjects, i.e.: mathematics, science, Arabic and English.
- In the academic year 2007-2008, the national tests of the four subjects were applied to grade 10.
- In the academic year 2008-2009, the national tests were applied to grade 4.

Results and indicators derived from the outcomes of such tests are used to develop the curricula.

The School Performance Development System, started in 2003, is a planned and continuous effort by the Ministry of Education, to improve performance and outcomes through accurate and continuous evaluation of the school performance, using scientific and regulated tools to collect evidences to judge the three education fields, i.e.: learning, teaching and school administration so as to determine strengths and development priorities. (For more details on the School Performance Development System and Electronic Content, please refer to section 3 herein when analyzing Goal 6)

The e-Education System is also concerned with covering all educational aspects, publishing and operating digital texts, E-books, audiovisual effects as well as other educational materials, and seeks to achieve all forms of distance learning.

4.9: Strategy 9: Enhance the status, morale, and professionalism of teachers:

The Vision of Oman's Economy (Oman 2020) stressed the importance of developing the human resources, in terms of good selection of administrative and technical competencies to develop their abilities to keep pace with the time and changes, whereas the professional development, including qualification and training, is a strategic option for any entity looking to develop its people and enable them to meet the needs of work and cope with the fast developments and changes in the work domain. In light of the developments witnessed by the education system in Oman, throughout its educational structures, the Ministry of Education, represented by the Directorate General of Human Resources Development, began preparing, implementing and evaluating its qualification and training plans for all its personnel, in line with the educational developments, in addition to implementing many training projects and programmes to prepare experienced, efficient and skilled human resources seeking to efficiently achieve the educational objectives of the educational process.

The Ministry of Education is seriously working to develop its human resources by adopting many training and qualification programmes, which represent an important aspect of professional development for all



educational practitioners in general, and teachers and principals in particular, through facilitating the continuation of their university studies and enrolling them in postgraduate programmes, in addition to organizing training courses, educational forums, seminars, and lectures as well as organizing professional development events and summer forums. The Ministry of Education holds many specialized training courses every year whether at the central level, at the main training center, or decentralized in various training centers across the country, so as to develop the abilities and skills of its personnel according to their fields and specializations, and based on their actual training needs, which are derived based on a set of scientific tools and techniques.

Within this framework and due to the importance of this educational segment, the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education, promulgated by the Royal Decree No. 37/2008, includes administrative divisions represented by the establishment of the Directorate General of HR Development with its technical sections, including Teacher Training Section and Teacher Qualification Section so as to provide training and qualification services to teachers.

The Ministry annually prepares professional development plan for all its personnel based on several scientific foundations, in order to determine their actual needs, and plans and designs training programmes to meet such needs. For the teachers, several techniques are employed to measure and identify their needs including: efficiency analysis reports based on agreed standards, student results analysis (according to the results of the educational portal), feedback from supervisory visits and periodic meetings with the subject teachers, feedback from the academic year-end reports of the educational governorates, monthly feedback from senior supervisors in all the governorates, teachers technical performance reports and analysis of results of teacher performance level, measured through the mandated supervisory cadre.

The Ministry of Education provides an annual financial support for certain graduates to complete their postgraduate studies inside Oman and/or abroad. The total number of beneficiaries of the financial support provided for 2012 reached 229 beneficiaries, out of which 199 beneficiaries inside Oman and 30 beneficiaries abroad. The Ministry of Education covers 50% to 100% of the study expenses.

In addition, the Ministry's focus on developing the abilities of teachers includes:

- Dispatching 60 career guidance specialists from various educational regions to universities on an annual basis to obtain the Career Guidance Diploma with full financing from the Ministry of Education.
- Dispatching 30 learning difficulties teachers to Sultan Qaboos University on an annual basis to obtain the Learning Difficulties Diploma with full financing from the Ministry of Education.



- Dispatching a number of teachers to obtain the Bachelor, MA, or PhD degrees while statistics indicate that 100 teachers are still studying to obtain the MA degree in a number of Omani, Arab, and international universities.
- Cambridge International Diploma for Teachers and Trainers (CIDTT): It aims to expand the decentralization and achieve quality of education in a comprehensive manner. It is a programme based on partnership between the Omani Ministry of Education and the University of Cambridge International Examinations Center for Teachers and Trainers.
- IC3 Programme: Implemented by the Ministry of Education within the “IT and internet training of Civil Service Employees project”. The latest statistics indicate that the number of beneficiaries rose from 7,113 to 13,240, whereas 8,360 beneficiaries obtained the (IC3) Certificate. 257 teachers from the educational governorates were selected to work as trainers for the project during the evening period in their regions.
- Intel Education Programme: It aims to enable teachers to use technology effectively so as to develop the 21st Century competencies. More than 1,000 teachers are trained annually by local trainers trained in collaboration with Intel Corporation.
- Teachers’ participation in programmes and conferences such as:
 - Connecting Classrooms Project: Includes 6-day visit to the United Kingdom within the Teachers’ Exchange Visits for each stage of the project (UK study visit).
 - School Leadership Workshop: It is held in several cities such as Dubai, Kuwait, Manama, and Istanbul.
 - Language Assistant: Is a full-time job in a British school for one academic year as Arabic Language Assistant Teacher and the number of participants is determined according to the demand of the British schools.
 - Springboard Women’s Development Programme: It is an annual conference held in the United Kingdom.
 - TESOL Arabia: It is an annual conference on teaching of English held in Dubai.



- TESOL Qatar: It is an annual conference on teaching of English held in Qatar.
- International Association for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL): It is an annual conference on teaching English held in the United Kingdom.
- Fulbright Programme: In collaboration with the US Department of State. It aims to make educational delegations exchange visits between various countries and the United States of America. It also seeks to employ Arabic Language teachers in US universities.

Specialized Professional Training Center for Teachers:

It is a comprehensive entity for the professional development of the teaching profession in the Omani schools. It provides a coordinated overview of manpower development needs, and develops a strategy to meet such needs. It focuses on improving the educational progress of students and whatever is required for them to benefit and promote their opportunities in life, in line with the needs of the Omani economy in the 21st Century. The Center was officially inaugurated in June 2014.

The Specialized Teachers Vocational Training Center aims to:

- Develop the teachers' skills to facilitate student progress and improvement.
- Improve management quality at all levels to improve education quality in all the schools.
- Improve the school capabilities by making them learning institutions.
- Provide decision-makers with information on the development of the teaching profession as well as provide the Ministry of Education with data so as to support school management system.



4.10: Strategy 10: Harness the new information and communication technologies to help achieve EFA goals:

The e-Education System is also concerned with covering all educational aspects, publishing and operating digital texts, E-books, educational audiovisual effects as well as other educational materials, and seeks to achieve all forms of distance learning.

The Sultanate seeks to provide high-speed internet service to members of school faculty and students in higher education institutions, and a number of employees of various departments at the educational institutions whose activities require the use of internet. Such matter will contribute to increasing their production and raising their academic efficiency. (For more details, please refer to Section 3 of this report)

In addition to the above, the following activities are carried out:

1. Converting some curricula into interactive electronic content.
2. Providing schools with interactive boards as well as training and encouraging teachers to use them.
3. Providing school laboratories with computer-related sensors and microscopes.
4. Encouraging schools to cooperate in activating e-Education.
5. Participating in a number of regional and international contests.
6. Encouraging initiatives provided by teachers, learners and school administrations.

As regards public schools in 2011, we find the following:

- 100% of schools are using the educational portal.
- 99.9% of schools are using the school management program.
- 83.3% out of the total number of computers in schools are used for educational purposes while 16.7% of computers are used for administrative activities.
- 68.8% of schools have computer laboratories.
- 89.2% of schools have a learning resource center (with 15 computers).
- 86.7% of schools are connected to the internet.
- 84.4% of schools have internal network.



- Student/Computer ratio was 11.8%.
- Student/Computer ratio in the computer laboratory was 1.
- Student/Computer ratio in the learning resource center was 2.

(Ministry of Education, 2011 B)

4.11: Strategy 11: Systematically monitor progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels

The development of the educational system was part of the human development plan adopted by the government in the mid-1990s (Oman 2020). The government is working on developing a long-term strategy for the general and higher education sector alike. Such strategy includes five pillars, i.e.: education administration, student enrollment and progress through the educational stages, research in the education sector, financing of education and quality of education. The objectives of such long-term strategy are to enable the education system to achieve its purposes and goals in developing the society, develop the abilities of Omanis, reorganize the administrative structure of the general and higher education, increase education intake, maintain the student progress in the educational stages, facilitate their access to work and develop quality according to international standards, develop sustainable research abilities and ensure the provision of adequate and effective funding for the education system (Supreme Council for Planning, 2013). The establishment of the Education Council in 2012 constituted a strategic reform recently adopted by the government to develop the education sector. The Education Council is mandated to develop the strategic plans, which ensure the integration of various education sectors to meet the quality requirements on one hand, and fulfill the needs of the Omani society for various human cadres on the other hand (Ministry of Legal Affairs, 2012). The Education Council jurisdictions are detailed in the first strategy of this section. Oman also regularly prepares reports on the progress of EFA goals, including the EFA Mid-Decade Report for 2007, in addition to submitting reports and working papers on the progress made in EFA periodic conferences and meetings, at the sub-regional, regional or international level.

At the Ministry of Education, there is a monitoring and control system which consists of four levels; three of which are internal (inside the Ministry of Education) and one external “the Supreme Council for Planning chaired by His Majesty the Sultan”. The three internal levels are built in a hierarchal manner:

Level 1 falls in a section concerned with monitoring and evaluating the National Education Plan, and directly accountable to the Director General for Planning and Quality Control, and is called the Monitoring

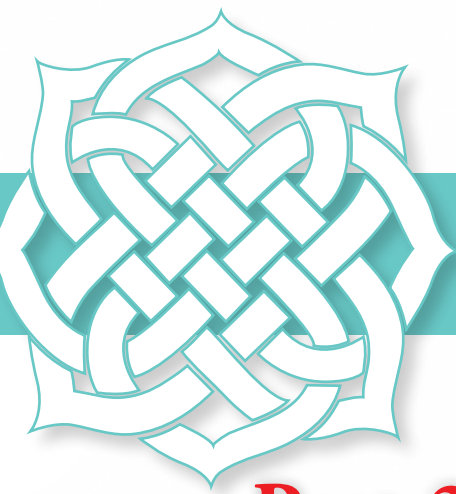


and Evaluation Section. Since 2011, it has been relying on the balanced performance card approach to monitor the plan achievement level according to clear and specific performance indicators. This section monitors and evaluates the achievement of the plan's initiatives, programmes and activities every six months in all the administrative divisions related to the plan's performance, whether the responsible authorities or the supporting authorities. Accordingly, the section issues annual reports on the plan, which include achieved objectives according to the approved timeframe (deliverables), unachieved objectives (challenges), and recommendations to overcome such challenges. Such document is reported to Level 2 of the monitoring and evaluation of the National Education Plan.

Level 2 is a committee chaired by an advisor with undersecretary grade. The committee reviews and analyzes the monitoring document reported by level 1. Such committee works to overcome some challenges and adopt some recommendations presented by the executive levels, after treatment in level 1 of the monitoring and evaluation system, within the Ministry's jurisdictions and according to its available financial and human resources. In turn, the committee reports its findings on the challenges and recommendations, which cannot be overcome or activated to level 3 of the monitoring and control system.

Level 3 falls within the mandates of the Policies and Education Development Committee, chaired by the Minister of Education and membership of the undersecretaries and numbers of advisors and directors. The committee examines the report of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee. The Policies and Education Development Committee performs its role in examining such report, particularly its challenges and recommendations, in addition to reporting its annual report on the plan's performance and its recommendations to overcome the challenges to the Supreme Council for Planning, which in turn interacts effectively with the Ministry's needs of financial and human resources to enable it to continue achieving the national education objectives, and overcoming challenges which impede achieving some of these objectives properly.





Section 5

Post-2015 Education Prospects (Sultanate of Oman)



5.1: Post-2015 Education Prospects (Sultanate of Oman)

The evaluation of the progress made in achieving the EFA goals, and the reports issued in this respect since the beginning of the initiative and until now, as well as available statistics on the progress, confirm that there are many challenges or steps which must be taken into account during the coming period, when preparing and formulating Post-2015 education strategies, according to our needs, and in line with the main features of the education agenda agreed upon in the Global EFA Meeting (GEM) in Muscat during May 2014, which urge countries to develop a framework to direct the implementation of the next education agenda, as well as set objectives and indicators for every country separately to reflect the social, political, economic, and cultural diversity. The GEM closing statement urged countries to use such framework during their consultations at the national, regional and global level with regard to Post-2015 education agenda in May 2015, in the Republic of Korea, and that such framework or global agenda must constitute an integral and important part of the Global Development Agenda, which will be adopted at the UN Summit to be held in New York in September 2015.

Oman was amongst the first countries that have committed since the beginning to achieve the EFA goals, starting from Jomtien in 1990 to Dakar Summit in 2000, in addition to its compliance with the closing statement of the Global EFA Meeting held in Muscat in May 2014, particularly with regard to the Post-2015 education agenda, and its agreement and confirmation, along with the countries around the world, that education is a principal human right enjoyed by every individual, and that education is a basic requirement for self-realization, peace, sustainable development, economic growth, proper employment, gender equality and responsible global citizenship. Education also contributes to reducing disparities and eliminating poverty through providing opportunities to establish fair and inclusive societies (UNESCO, 2014).

Since the onset of its blessed renaissance, Oman's interest in education has growing at an accelerated pace from one stage to another, as Oman achieved qualitative advancements in various aspects, whether with regard to enrollment, educational environment, human resources development, provision of teachers, curriculum development or evaluation techniques. Such interest has increased since the launch of the EFA Initiative, whereas it is based on specific standards and indicators to measure the achievement of objectives, equity and inclusiveness. As stated earlier, and despite achievements made during previous periods, there are still some challenges facing the education system in Oman, and many improvements need to be introduced in some parts of the education system.

Ensuring high quality educational opportunities at all levels is a main objective sought after by all education stakeholders. To achieve such objective, strategic plans are drawn up to ensure the integration



of various education sectors, the provision of qualified and well-trained teachers at all education levels and “quantitative and qualitative” expansion of the scope of qualification and training, raising the level of the educational outcomes in line with the education system in the Sultanate, reviewing the legal legislations which ensure the quality of education at all levels and conditions, and fostering educational environments enabling the students to safely receive education. There are many indicators through which the provision of quality education opportunities can be measured, starting from providing a unified definition of quality, creating symmetry between the numbers and efficiency of the general education and higher education outcomes, meeting the needs of the labor market, increasing and improving the centralized and decentralized teacher quality training and qualification programmes, creating database for the training and qualification programmes and the results of evaluating their training benefit, adopting scientific studies to measure the training effect and the feasibility of the training programmes provided, providing accurate measurements to measure all the process outcomes to measure students’ ability in literacy and arithmetic by the end of grade 4 and allocating financial resources to provide quality services and ensure the effective use of such resources. Also, if possible, measure the enrollment ratio in various labor sectors, measure the availability of safe school buildings that can withstand various kinds of disasters, provide proper nutrition and health care for all students in addition to security, safety and transport, and have legislations and regulations which ensure the safety of students.

Studies conducted by the education stakeholders in the Sultanate highlighted such challenges and proposed many interventions which can handle many challenges.

The Ministry of Education has recently led the circular consultations to know the opinions of the education stakeholders in Oman on development and priorities for Post-2015 period. Such consultations resulted in reaching agreement on some important topics, which must be taken into account during the coming phase for achieving the desired and remaining objectives, as well as working on continuous development.

5.2: Governance:

The Sultanate of Oman adopts centralized system to disseminate and provide education. However, most studies conducted by the Ministry of Education, as well as education stakeholders, confirm the necessity to transform to decentralized system, and award certain authority to the educational governorates. The Ministry of Education started applying decentralized system gradually, by awarding certain authority to the educational governorates by virtue of the Ministerial Decision No. (21/2009), awarding schools many authorities in managing their educational programmes. The educational governorates were also awarded many authorities with regard to the management of general examinations, employment of teachers and implementation of the in-service teacher



training programs. Under the Ministerial Decision No. (667/2013), working groups were formed to supervise the awarding of administrative and financial powers to five educational governorates and two directorates at the Ministry's headquarter.

However, there are still some challenges with regard to the governance of the education system as some measures need to be focused on, such as:

- Moving forward in applying gradual steps towards decentralization, as well as providing training and qualification programmes to ensure the creation of competent administrative manpower capable to undertake the administrative and technical powers at the level of schools and educational governorates.
- Working to issue a special law for education to tackle teacher conditions and other jobs related to the teaching faculty, and to demonstrate the general foundations of school education, promotion system, incentives, and accountability.

5.3: Financing:

The free education in Oman forced the government to allocate large amounts of money in its annual budget for the education sector, considering its commitment to develop this sector and achieve quality. The increasing expenditure on education in the past was not attributed only to the increasing numbers of student in schools, but also to several reasons including inflation, high cost of living, and most importantly teachers' salaries and wages.

All indicators stress the importance of conducting a comprehensive review of expenditure on the education system, so as to direct expenditure towards ensuring the quality of educational outcomes. The Education Quality Analysis and Diagnosis Report in Oman indicates certain development priorities during the coming phase, including:

- Reviewing the foundations on which the budget of the Ministry of Education is built, in order to link the financial allocations with the quality of the education system outcomes.
- Reviewing the current salaries and wages system to motivate teachers and maintain the best-performing and experienced personnel in the educational system in Oman.
- Developing the current financial and administrative systems in a manner that allows the Ministry of Education to maximize profit from its available financial and material potentials.
- Reviewing the rules and regulations in a manner that ensures greater contribution from the private sector in providing the educational services in Oman. This in particular should be focused on to



control the fast increase in public expenditure on education, and to confront any potential economic crises which may limit the government's ability to provide the resources required for general education in the future.

- Reviewing the financial items allocated for student transportation. The increase of the annual invoice allocated for this aspect in the allocations of the current budget of the Ministry of Education constitutes a big challenge for the Ministry. Finding alternatives which ensure overcoming the existing quality problems in the student transport sector, and reducing the increasing financial costs should be one of the priorities of the financial reform during the coming phase.

5.4: Development of School Administration:

The significant development and accelerating changes in the educational systems necessitate paying attention to schools and their own independence in administering their affairs. Under the applied centralized system, school administration must implement the centralized policy with regard to the taught and applied curricula, evaluation system, and to determine the school needs and distribute its financial resources. Then the schools are supervised by the educational governorate and members from the Ministry of Education. Here, stakeholders should review the school performance development system, schools overall performance and awarding the schools autonomy in administering their affairs.

5.5: Curricula Development for High Quality Education:

The Ministry of Education prepares and develops the general education curricula, taking into account development of curricula in line with the development objectives, as well as positive habits and traditions based on the values of tolerance, justice and equality, and attempt to develop the curricula to meet the requirements of the labor market. But there are some challenges in this regard, particularly with regard to the connection between curricula and the needs of economic development and the local and foreign labor market. The concepts of information technology and communication have a driving force in this respect. Curricula can be developed in the future through:

- Developing a coordinated scope and sequence matrix for school subjects so as to build textbooks according to clear, approved, and reliable standards.
- Focusing on linking textbook contents with the requirements of development and the Omani market.
- Developing the current pattern in composing textbooks through adopting the method of tenders and encouraging competition among the best bids.



- Employing the results of the Curricula Standards Project as a main foundation in the process of curricula development in the future.
- Diversifying the list of elective subjects in the educational plan of the Post-Basic Education (grades 11 and 12).
- Paying greater attention to the practical aspect when teaching and applying curricula in schools. Such matter needs greater investments in terms of providing tools and the environment to practice.

5.6: Improvement of the Educational Outcomes Level:

- **Student Performance:** The quality of educational outcomes is the most important challenge facing education in Oman, as it greatly contributes to the economic development and increased competitiveness at the global level. Such matter requires some measures as stated in the 2012 joint study between the Ministry of Education and the World Bank, such as increasing students' time in schools, the need to develop the culture of higher standards for students' learning, examining and treating poor performance levels of male students, and increasing the participation of parents and local civil society in education.
- **People with Special Needs:** The focus on achieving equity in education and caring for all the segments requires expanding the scope of public education for both genders, and people with special needs, in various educational stages, from preschool education to higher education, as well as monitor the



cognitive and skilled development of learners in various educational stages. Thus various stakeholders concerned with this segment, including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Health need to cooperate in collecting data of such segment, spreading special needs education across Oman, integrating them into the school community in an appropriate and healthy manner and providing them with qualified teachers.

- Early Childhood: The Omani private sector assumed the duty of providing preschool education through private schools for such purpose. Most of these schools exist in Muscat Governorate and are accessible for only those who can afford them. Thus they present an obstacle for other families wishing to enroll their children in such schools. Global studies indicate that students who enrolled in preschool education prior to entering Basic Grade 1 are better in educational attainment than children who did not enroll in preschool education. In recent years, the Ministry of Education applied the Initiation Classes System in remote areas where there are no private schools, although such preparation classes are yet to cover sufficient number of children. Certain studies suggest that preschool education should be introduced in the formal educational hierarchy in the future, so as to ensure the enrollment of children.

5.7: Professionalization of Teaching:

Teachers are the key to quality of education, the most important inputs into the educational process and have significant impact on student learning. In Oman, teacher preparation institutions vary, and 15% of Omani teachers graduate from Sultan Qaboos University (Ministry of Education and World Bank, 2012), while others graduate from various institutions in Oman and abroad. Accordingly, their abilities and motivations for teaching differ, and their levels vary, thus many teachers lose their motivation for teaching. Efforts to prepare teachers before and in service, as well as efforts to professionalize education, were touched on earlier in this report. However, there are significant related measures listed in the National Education Quality Analysis and Diagnosis Report, including:

- The importance of completing all requirements needed to establish the Teachers' Professional Academy as soon as possible. Such academy will work on developing training programmes according to the actual needs of teachers to qualify them professionally, in addition to qualifying supervisors and senior teachers to provide a better support to teachers.

Applying the principle of the teacher professional license.

- The need to review teachers' financial status and improve the conditions of the profession to achieve job satisfaction, which helps teachers to provide better teaching to their students.



- The necessity to develop a system which links the student attainment performance with the teaching performance of their teachers, with emphasis on using the outcomes of such system for reward and accountability of good and poor performers, and to develop specialized training programmes for inadequate teachers.
- Increasing the focus on improving the school environment by providing practical application of curricula such as specialized scientific laboratories and specialized halls to practice individual development subjects such as sports, arts education, and music, in addition to increasing the investment in providing computers and other technological appliances so as to facilitate using them by teachers in classroom instruction.
- Developing mandatory national standards and tests with regard to selection of practicing teachers.
- Applying the requirements of the teachers' professional license and link it with the job promotion process.
- Developing clear and accurate standards for teacher admission to colleges of education.
- Announcing the conditions of academic accreditation of colleges of education operating in Oman.
- Taking all measures required to raise the social status of teachers and make the teaching profession attractive to the best qualified individuals.
- Developing the systems which ensure encouraging teachers to remain in the teaching profession such as financial incentives and clear paths of career progression.
- Taking care of teachers through establishing special entertainment centers and clubs for the teachers' community.

5.8: Development of Educational Evaluation:

In Section 3, the report presents the educational evaluation in Oman, and the continuous formative evaluation system used to measure students' learning outcomes. Oman also applies national tests to evaluate students' performance in grades 4, 7, and 10, as this experiment led to having experience in preparing test items and conducting survey studies. However, there are still many challenges during the coming phase to better employ evaluation such as:

- Training teachers to employ evaluation as learning tool more than a tool to measure learning.
- Developing national standards for evaluation which focus on developing higher mental abilities for learners.



- Accelerating the establishment of the National Center for Evaluation and Examinations, this will play an important role in developing the evaluation process and type of student examinations, as well as increasing the training and qualification of teachers on the use of the continuous formative evaluation tools. Accordingly, the center will have autonomy and will work according to the philosophy of re-formulating the educational measurement process so as to be directed to develop learning and teaching.
- Publishing the results of evaluation of students' attainment and self-evaluation of schools and make them available to all stakeholders of the educational work.
- Developing student admission mechanisms in higher education institutions, so the grade 12 completion certificate is not the only standard of preference among applicants for university study.

5.9: Developing Community Relations:

- **Parents:** Various studies confirmed that parents' involvement in discussing and following up topics related to their children in schools has a great impact on the progress of the attainment level of students. More efforts are needed to make parents aware of the importance of integrated partnership and involvement in the education plans, and support it through the parent associations, meetings and seminars which can be organized to develop the relations between the education system and community.
- **Private Sector:** It is one of the most notable entities supporting education. Its participation always assists in the success of the development processes. Considering that education in Oman is subsidized by a large government budget, which is increasing year after year, and is always subject to the conditions of economy and national income, stakeholders of education and its policies realize the importance of the private sector and its support during the coming phase, in addition to opening up other horizons and options for education in the Sultanate.
- **Civil Society:** Legislations related to NGOs have developed in Oman to broaden their participation in the development. Countries recognize the importance of the civil society participation, side by side with government, in the development of education. Despite the newness of this sector in Oman, NGOs are called to play a greater role in formulating education strategies and policies during the coming phase, considering that such partnership between the government and NGOs is one of the most notable alternatives for the progress and development of the educational systems.



5.10: Alignment with the Labor Market:

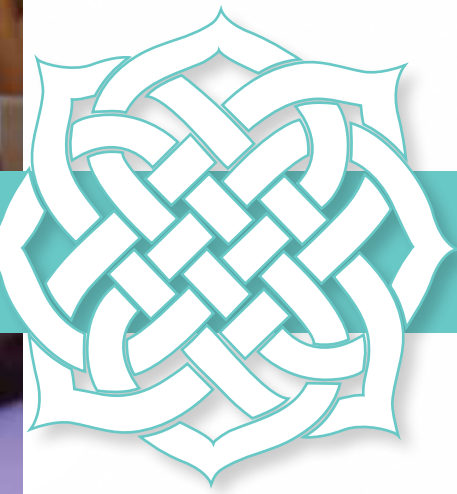
The Omani education system seeks to prepare the learners for the labor market. One of the most features of the Vision of Oman's Economy (Oman 2020) was to provide students and learners with the business world skills and competencies in order to enable them to contribute to development and economic progress. Most studies conducted by education stakeholders in Oman confirmed the remoteness of educational outcomes from the skills and competencies required by the labor market, particularly the private sector, and such challenges which became obsession for education stakeholders need to be faced. The Education Quality Analysis and Diagnosis Report, as well as the joint study conducted by the Ministry of Education and World Bank in 2012, proposed a range of measures to face such challenges, including:

- Adopting the use of open educational resources (OER) in all educational institutions at all levels.
- Taking all measures which guarantee an integrated relation between the Ministry of Education on one hand and all partners of the public and private sectors on the other hand.
- Accelerating the creation of accurate database on the reality of the Omani labor market and available job opportunities, particularly in light of the accelerating change witnessed by the Omani and global economies.
- Seeking to open paths of vocational education for the Post-Basic education stage.
- Reviewing the content of Post-Basic education curricula so as to ensure that they meet the needs of employment entities and higher education institutions that accommodate the graduates of such stage, with special emphasis on the development of learners' attitudes, skills and knowledge in relation to entrepreneurship.
- The necessity to link between the academic and professional paths as well as giving flexibility to the whole system to cancel dead-end paths in addition to promoting the principle of lifelong learning among student communities.
- Seeking to develop the regulatory and legislative environments at the Ministry of Education so as to ensure more flexibility in evaluating the best-performing students who achieve higher academic levels to allow them to move to higher grades.









Appendices



Appendix (1): School health data for the academic year 2011-2012 .

Governorate	Number of public schools	Number of students	Number of private schools	Number of students	Number of physicians		Nursing Team		Number of schools with clinics	Percentage of schools with clinics	Number of dentists	Number of assistant dentists	Oral and dental technician	Mobile Dental Units	Opticians at schools
					Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time							
Muscat	141	87,893	155	34,938	0	26	62	0	126	89.4%	35	37	5	4	4
Dhofar	150	40,090	26	4,874	0	37	27	32	85	56.6%	14	13	1	6	2
Musandam	17	4,772	2	113	1	5	6	0	17	100%	5	4	0	1	0
Al Buraimi	27	11,051	8	1,706	1	2	10	1	27	100%	0	1	1	1	1
Dakhiliyah	139	78,187	51	6,096	-	26	60	-	139	100%	15	18	4	2	2
Al Batinah North	175	103,127	61	9,022	2	11	25	63	175	100%	0	7	8	4	6
Al Batinah South	116	68,560	35	5,121	4	26	73	0	114	98.3%	7	5	3	4	3
Sharqiyah South	87	43,577	32	5,401	5	19	47	4	87	100%	10	10	2	2	1
Sharqiyah North	84	41,504	24	2,471	0	25	53	0	84	100%	11	11	1	1	1
Dhahirah	81	32,717	11	1,465	2	12	38	0	81	100%	3	2	1	2	1
Al Wusta	23	5,575	1	67	0	11	5	11	23	100%	5	0	0	1	1
Total	1,040	517,053	406	71,274	15	200	406	111	958	92.1%	105	108	26	28	22

** Periodic visits of physicians and male nurses in Muscat Governorate were suspended as from the academic year 2003-2004 and participation shall be based on the capabilities of the health center.

(Ministry of Education 2010/2011)



Appendix (2): Development of repetition rate in Basic Education (grades 1-6) by grade and gender

Grades	Gender	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1	Males	5.9	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Females	5.4	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	5.6	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2	Males	6.3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Females	4.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	5.5	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3	Males	5.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Females	3.9	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	4.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
4	Males	5.9	1.5	2.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Females	2.6	1.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	4.3	1.2	1.7	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
5	Males	5.1	1.3	2.0	1.8	2.2	3.1	3.3	5.5	4.1	3.1	3.1
	Females	2.2	0.7	1.1	1.9	3.6	5.1	3.4	6.3	4.9	4.0	3.9
	Total	3.7	1.0	1.6	1.9	2.9	4.1	3.4	5.9	4.5	3.6	3.5
6	Males	3.6	0.8	1.2	1.5	1.3	2.5	2.6	2.9	3.4	2.5	2.7
	Females	1.3	0.6	0.7	1.1	1.6	3.0	2.5	3.9	3.8	2.6	3.5
	Total	2.4	0.7	0.9	1.3	1.4	2.7	2.5	3.4	3.6	2.6	3.1
Total (1-6)	Males	5.4	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.3	0.9	1.0
	Females	3.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	1.0	1.6	1.0	1.7	1.5	1.1	1.3
	Total	4.4	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.8	1.3	1.0	1.5	1.4	1.0	1.1

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Appendix (3): Development of dropout rates by grade and gender from 2000/2001 to 2010/2011

Grades	Gender	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1	Males	1.4	0.9	1.4	1.3	0.4	1.8	0.9	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.5
	Females	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.4
	Total	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.2	0.3	1.2	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.5
2	Males	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.4	-0.1	0.4	-0.5	-0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Females	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.9	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Total	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	-0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
3	Males	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.0	-0.3	-0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
	Females	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Total	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.0	-0.1	-0.3	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
4	Males	1.5	0.9	0.8	-0.3	-0.7	-0.5	0.9	2.5	0.1	0.1	0.2
	Females	1.3	0.6	0.7	0.2	-0.5	-0.2	-1.3	1.9	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Total	1.4	0.7	0.8	-0.1	-0.6	-0.4	-0.2	2.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
5	Males	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.0	-1.7	0.1	0.0	0.4
	Females	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.4	-1.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Total	1.1	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.2	-1.4	0.1	0.0	0.3
6	Males	-0.8	-1.7	-0.6	0.0	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.3
	Females	0.2	-0.3	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.2
	Total	-0.3	-1.0	-0.3	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.2
Total (1-6)	Males	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3
	Females	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.2
	Total	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.2

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Appendix (4): Development of promotion rates in Basic Education (Grades 1-6) by grade and gender

Grades	Gender	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1	Males	92.7	98.9	98.4	98.6	99.2	98.2	99.1	99.2	99.7	99.5	99.5
	Females	93.7	99.0	98.8	98.8	99.5	99.4	99.5	99.5	99.7	99.5	99.6
	Total	93.2	99.0	98.6	98.7	99.4	98.8	99.3	99.4	99.7	99.5	99.5
2	Males	93.2	99.7	99.6	99.6	100.0	99.5	100.0	100.0	99.9	99.9	99.9
	Females	94.6	99.7	99.7	99.9	99.8	100.0	99.9	99.1	99.9	99.9	99.9
	Total	93.9	99.7	99.7	99.8	99.8	99.8	100.0	99.8	99.9	99.9	99.9
3	Males	94.4	99.9	99.9	99.6	99.9	100.2	100.6	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.8
	Females	95.4	99.7	99.7	99.6	99.9	99.9	100.0	99.4	99.9	99.9	99.9
	Total	94.9	99.8	99.8	99.6	99.9	100.0	100.	99.6	99.9	99.9	99.9
4	Males	92.6	97.6	97.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.1	97.5	99.9	99.9	99.8
	Females	96.1	98.5	98.0	99.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.1	99.9	99.9	99.9
	Total	94.3	98.1	97.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	97.8	99.9	99.9	99.9
5	Males	93.6	98.0	97.6	97.9	97.1	96.3	96.7	96.3	95.8	96.9	96.5
	Females	96.9	98.6	98.0	97.4	95.7	94.0	96.2	94.7	95.0	95.9	95.9
	Total	95.3	98.3	97.8	97.7	96.4	95.2	96.4	95.5	95.4	96.4	96.2
6	Males	97.3	100.0	99.4	98.5	98.1	96.8	97.0	96.6	96.4	97.4	97.1
	Females	98.6	99.7	99.3	98.6	98.0	96.6	97.0	95.5	96.0	97.3	96.3
	Total	97.9	100.0	99.4	98.5	98.1	96.7	97.0	96.1	96.2	97.3	96.7
Total (1-6)	Males	93.9	99.2	98.6	99.1	99.1	98.4	98.8	98.3	98.6	98.9	98.8
	Females	95.8	99.2	98.9	99.0	98.8	98.1	99.0	97.7	98.4	98.7	98.6
	Total	94.9	99.1	98.8	99.0	99.0	98.3	98.9	98.1	98.5	98.8	98.7

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Appendix (5): Development of number of teachers in grades (1-6) of General Education and teachers of Basic Education by gender and academic qualification

Academic Qualification	Gender	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Below General Certificate	Males	3		1									
	Females	0	0	0									
	Total	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Certificate and its equivalents	Males	161	190	174	109	83	35						
	Females	369	414	268	81	45	50						
	Total	530	604	442	190	128	85	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diploma after General Certificate	Males	5029	4832	4718	4326	4042	3969	3759	3281	3011	1957	1867	1852
	Females	4902	4933	4874	4675	4550	4378	4195	4060	3918	3318	3181	2988
	Total	9931	9765	9592	9001	8592	8347	7954	7341	6929	5275	5048	4840
Academic Degree	Males	293	1439	2409	3238	4021	5284	5318	6347	7378	7674	8216	9582
	Females	1457	3328	5448	7228	8926	10973	12321	14393	15732	16901	17709	22942
	Total	1750	4767	7857	10466	12947	16257	17639	20740	23110	24575	25925	32524
Higher Diploma	Males	5	27	32	36	55	79	95	180	204	384	323	360
	Females	25	68	116	151	268	442	537	776	838	1498	1355	1582
	Total	30	95	148	187	323	521	632	956	1042	1882	1678	1942
MA	Males	4	35	48	43	60	85	83	90	112	107	121	172
	Females	17	41	90	90	104	128	121	89	57	120	137	213
	Total	21	76	138	133	164	213	204	179	169	227	258	385
PhD	Males	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	4	5	4	5
	Females	0	0	0	0	0		3	1	1	1	0	3
	Total	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	2	5	6	4	8
Total	Males	5495	6523	7382	7752	8262	9453	9257	9899	10709	10127	10531	11971
	Females	6770	8784	10796	12225	13893	15971	17177	19319	20546	21838	22382	27728
	Total	12265	15307	18178	19977	22155	25424	26434	29218	31255	31965	32913	39699

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Appendix (6): Development of ratio of teachers in grades (1-6) of General Education and teachers of Basic Education by gender and academic qualification

Academic Qualification	Gender	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Below General Certificate	Males	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Females	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
General Certificate and its equivalents	Males	2.93	2.91	2.36	1.41	1.00	0.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Females	5.45	4.71	2.48	0.66	0.32	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total	4.32	3.95	2.43	0.95	0.58	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Diploma after General Certificate	Males	91.52	74.08	63.91	55.80	48.92	41.99	40.61	33.14	28.12	19.32	17.73	15.47
	Females	72.41	56.16	45.15	38.24	32.75	27.41	24.42	21.02	19.07	15.19	14.21	10.78
	Total	80.97	63.79	52.77	45.06	38.78	32.83	30.09	25.12	22.17	16.50	15.34	12.19
Academic Degree	Males	5.33	22.06	32.63	41.77	48.67	55.90	57.45	64.12	68.90	75.78	78.02	80.04
	Females	21.52	37.89	50.46	59.12	64.25	68.71	71.73	74.50	76.57	77.39	79.12	82.74
	Total	14.27	31.14	43.22	52.39	58.44	63.94	66.73	70.98	73.94	76.88	78.77	81.93
Higher Diploma	Males	0.09	0.41	0.43	0.46	0.67	0.84	1.03	1.82	1.90	3.79	3.07	3.01
	Females	0.37	0.77	1.07	1.24	1.93	2.77	3.13	4.02	4.08	6.86	6.05	5.71
	Total	0.24	0.62	0.81	0.94	1.46	2.05	2.39	3.27	3.33	5.89	5.10	4.89
MA	Males	0.07	0.54	0.65	0.55	0.73	0.90	0.90	0.91	1.05	1.06	1.15	1.44
	Females	0.25	0.47	0.83	0.74	0.75	0.80	0.70	0.46	0.28	0.55	0.61	0.77
	Total	0.17	0.50	0.76	0.67	0.74	0.84	0.77	0.61	0.54	0.71	0.78	0.97
PhD	Males	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.04
	Females	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
	Total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Appendix (7): Development of the number of enrolled and graduated students at technical colleges from 2000 to 2013

Academic Year	Number of admitted students			Number of graduates		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
2000/2001	1344	744	2088	714	387	1101
2001/2002	1095	1109	2204	730	518	1248
2002/2003	2334	1179	3513	696	483	1179
2003/2004	2751	1557	4308	690	955	1645
2004/2005	2924	1748	4672	34	91	125
2005/2006	3901	1649	5550	309	290	599
2006/2007	4007	1723	5730	502	492	994
2007/2008	4494	1824	6318	683	826	1509
2008/2009	4818	2066	6884	1355	1514	2854
2009/2010	4509	2075	6584	1313	1541	2854
2010/2011	5988	2642	8630	1502	1590	3092
2011/2012	7281	3681	10962	2247	1513	3761
2012/2013	7480	3670	11150	3771	2627	6398
Total Number	52926	25667	78593	14263	12998	27261

(Ministry of Manpower, Annual Reports and Manpower Report 1970-2010)

Appendix (8): Persons enrolled in adult education programmes in free and regular study in Oman from 2000 to 2013

Academic Year	Free Study	Regular Study	Total
2000/2001	16331	7382	23713
2001/2002	17046	8696	25742
2002/2003	23080	8237	31317
2003/2004	24208	8516	32724
2004/2005	25608	8114	33722
2005/2006	17324	7059	24383
2006/2007	48349	5608	53957
2007/2008	29612	4060	33672
2008/2009	20093	2725	22818
2009/2010	19659	2675	22334
2010/2011	27181	1959	29140
2011/2012	28366	2246	30612
2012/2013	25853	2033	27886

(Educational Renaissance in the Sultanate of Oman in numbers 1970-2010)+ Department of Continuing Education)



Appendix (9): Development of ratio of female educational administrators at the Ministry's headquarter as well as departments and directorates at the educational governorates

Academic Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Governorate												
Ministry of Education	15.8	18.6	18.9	19.5	21.4	20.6	20.7	20.5	24.0	26.5	24.8	27.3
Muscat	16.7	16.7	17.9	20.0	19.1	19.6	19.6	20.4	20.0	18.0	17.3	17.5
Al Batinah North	0.0	3.1	3.0	5.0	5.3	4.7	5.4	5.4	6.3	8.6	6.0	7.7
Al Batinah South	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	9.1	8.8	8.7	13.6	10.9	14.3
Dakhiliyah	3.3	0.0	0.0	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.5	8.9	8.0	9.6	9.4
Sharqiyah South	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.2	4.2	9.5	6.7	6.5	11.3	15.4	14.5	14.0
Sharqiyah North	5.7	8.1	7.9	8.8	2.9	6.7	6.3	4.5	7.7	7.8	11.5	8.3
Al Buraimi	9.5	14.8	14.3	11.5	20.0	21.4	20.7	21.4	16.7	17.1	15.6	17.1
Dhahirah	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.1	8.6	9.1	13.3	16.2	14.3	15.9
Dhofar	0.0	0.0	2.7	2.7	2.8	9.3	10.9	6.7	16.4	16.4	15.9	16.1
Al Wusta	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Musandam	0.0	4.8	5.3	5.0	8.3	7.7	3.7	3.7	14.7	11.4	11.8	14.3
Total	8.5	9.7	10.2	10.9	11.6	12.1	13.1	12.7	16.3	17.4	16.6	17.6

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Appendix (10): Development of student/teacher ratio by type of education

Academic Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of Basic Education Students, Grades (1-10)	49216	74436	108764	139082	174920	212842	250266	283137	309527	331262	347445	366273
Number of Basic Education Teachers, Grades (1-10)	3027	7387	11140	13939	16881	21141	22942	26499	29298	30856	31802	38650
Student / Teacher	16	10	10	10	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	9
Number of General Education Students, Grades (1-6)	253430	229076	192638	159967	128084	97877	74156	52978	37498	28628	23020	15853
Number of General Education Teachers, Grades (1-6)	9238	7920	7039	6038	5274	4283	3492	2719	1957	1108	1111	1049
Student / Teacher	27	29	27	26	24	23	21	19	19	26	21	15
Number of General Education Students, Grades (7-9)	147291	148613	151636	149037	140389	119060	101483	82088	64540	48382	34791	25258
Number of General Education Teachers, Grades (7-9)	8038	6976	5974	5935	5670	5345	5388	4762	4418	2560	2541	2428
Student / Teacher	18	21	25	25	25	22	19	17	15	19	14	10
Number of General Education Students, Grades (10-12)	104908	115872	124965	128386	129471	138295	137697	135033	128767	123121	117264	109669
Number of General Education Teachers, Grades (10-12)	6114	6102	6230	6433	6729	6731	8171	8008	7476	9982	9688	9684
Student / Teacher	17	19	20	20	19	21	17	17	17	12	12	11
Total Students	554845	567997	578003	576472	572864	568074	563602	553236	540332	531393	522520	517053
Total Teachers	26417	28385	30383	32345	34554	37500	39993	41988	43149	44506	45142	51811
Student / Teacher	21	20	19	18	17	15	14	13	13	12	12	10

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Appendix (11): Development of student/classroom ratio by type of education

Academic Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of Basic Education Students, Grades (1-10)	49216	74436	108764	139082	174920	212842	250266	283137	309527	331262	347445	366273
Number of Basic Education classroom, Grades (1-10)	1757	2646	3811	4925	6179	7500	8869	10006	11069	11845	12562	13103
Student / classroom	28	28	29	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
Number of General Education Students, Grades (1-6)	253430	229076	192638	159967	128084	97877	74156	52978	37498	28628	23020	15853
Number of General Education classroom, Grades (1-6)	7529	6982	5998	5191	4307	3505	2758	2070	1505	1173	953	690
Student / classroom	34	33	32	31	30	28	27	26	25	24	24	23
Number of General Education Students, Grades (7-9)	147291	148613	151636	149037	140389	119060	101483	82088	64540	48382	34791	25258
Number of General Education classroom, Grades (7-9)	4503	4568	4664	4691	4457	3885	3410	2896	2371	1882	1445	1120
Student / classroom	33	33	33	32	31	31	30	28	27	26	24	23
Number of General Education Students, Grades (10-12)	104908	115872	124965	128386	129471	138295	137697	135033	128767	123121	117264	109669
Number of General Education classroom, Grades (10-12)	3352	3706	4065	4374	4424	4774	4831	4826	4722	4499	4336	3991
Student / classroom	31	31	31	29	29	29	29	28	27	27	27	27
Total Students	554845	567997	578003	576472	572864	568074	563602	553236	540332	531393	522520	517053
Total classrooms	17141	17902	18538	19181	19367	19664	19868	19798	19667	19399	19296	18904
Student / classroom	32	32	31	30	30	29	28	28	27	27	27	27

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Appendix (12): Departments and majors at technical colleges

Departments	Majors		
Engineering Program	Quantity Surveying	Civil Engineering	Architectural Engineering
	Computer Engineering	Electrical Engineering	Engineering Drawing
	Communications Engineering	Air-conditioning and Cooling	Mechanical Engineering
	Biological Engineering	Surveying	Oil and Gas Engineering
	Industrial Engineering	Mechatronics Engineering	Medical Equipment Engineering
	Software Engineering	Occupational Safety and Health Engineering	Chemical Engineering
Information Technology Program	Internet and Electronic Security	Engineering and Software	Information Technology
	Databases	Networks	Multimedia
	Electronic Trade		
Commercial Studies Program	Marketing	Office Management	Trade and Information Technology
	Accounting	Certified Accounting (CAT)	Executive Coordinator
	Human Resources Management		
Science Program	Environmental Sciences	Applied Chemistry	Applied Biology
	Pharmaceutics	Occupational Safety and Health	Photography
	Design and Fashion		

(Ministry of Manpower (2013). Annual Report)



Appendix (13): Numbers of Omani illiterates from 2010 to 2013

Age Group	Actual number of Omani illiterates according to 2010 Census			Estimated number of Omani illiterates in 2013		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
15-19	1005	1120	2125	977	895	1871
20-24	1223	1875	3098	1189	1498	2686
25-29	1210	2569	3779	1176	2052	3228
30-34	1229	3899	5128	1195	3114	4309
35-39	1430	6405	7835	1390	5116	6506
40-44	2278	11488	13766	2214	9175	11390
45-49	3599	15368	18967	3590	14946	18536
50-54	6265	19052	25317	6250	18528	24779
55-59	6330	14941	21271	6315	14530	20845
60-64	8098	13886	21984	8079	13504	21583
65-69	6973	9959	16932	6956	9685	16642
70-74	7825	8959	16784	7806	8713	16519
75-79	4045	4597	8642	4035	4471	8506
80-84	3002	4059	7061	2995	3947	6942
85+	2419	3654	6073	2413	3554	5967

(National Center for Statistics and Information)

Appendix (14): Development of enrollment ratios among pre-school education students at the age of (4-5) years from the academic year 2000/2001 to 2011/2012

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio			Net Enrollment Ratio		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
2000 /2001	7.8	7.0	7.4	6.9	6.2	6.5
2001 /2002	8.1	7.1	7.6	7.1	6.2	6.7
2002 /2003	8.7	7.3	8.0	7.5	6.3	6.9
2003 /2004	8.6	7.7	8.1	7.4	6.5	6.9
2004 /2005	9.8	9.2	9.5	8.3	7.7	8.0
2005 /2006	11.2	10.4	10.8	8.5	7.9	8.2
2006 /2007	39.1	41.4	40.2	19.4	24.6	21.9
2007 /2009	42.6	48.7	45.6	31.3	35.1	33.2
2008 /2009	52.8	51.7	52.3	45.1	44.8	45.0
2009 /2010	44.6	42.2	43.4	32.4	30.6	31.5
2010 /2011	54.2	54.7	54.4	41.2	40.9	41.0
2011 /2012	54.0	54.0	54.0	42.0	41.4	41.7

(Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics and Indicators)



Appendix (15): Development of enrollment ratio in private Pre-school education out of total number of enrolled students in pre-school education

Academic Year	Private Schools	Total	Students' enrollment ratio in Pre-school education at private schools
2000	7310	15271	47.9
2001	7214	14524	49.7
2002	7803	15161	51.5
2003	7402	13967	53.0
2004	8433	17798	47.4
2005	9429	18589	50.7
2006	10898	35152	31.0
2007	12109	40213	30.1
2008	14397	45590	31.6
2009	24432	50385	48.5
2010	31251	56469	55.3
2011	34150	56679	60.3

(Department of statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Appendix (16): Child/teacher ratio for pre-school education in private schools from the academic year 2000/2001 to the academic year 2011/2012

Academic Year	Number of students	Number of teachers	Student/Teacher Ratio
2000	7310	391	19
2001	7214	219	33
2002	7803	367	21
2003	7402	345	21
2004	8433	429	20
2005	9429	529	18
2006	10898	523	21
2007	12109	681	18
2008	14397	882	16
2009	24432	1297	19
2010	31251	952	33
2011	34150	1045	33

Data of private schools are only available
(Department of statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Appendix (17): Development of enrollment rate in Grade 1

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio			Net Enrollment Ratio			Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
2000	105.1	104.0	104.6	79.1	79.1	79.1	90.1	90.2	90.2
2001	104.4	103.3	103.8	79.5	79.3	79.4	91.2	90.9	91.1
2002	101.6	99.1	100.3	74.1	72.9	73.5	89.6	88.3	89.0
2003	93.9	94.5	94.2	67.2	67.6	67.4	90.4	90.5	90.3
2004	95.7	95.9	95.8	67.5	67.9	67.7	89.5	89.7	89.6
2005	98.9	98.6	98.8	68.2	68.9	68.6	92.3	93.1	92.7
2006	100.8	101.0	100.9	69.1	69.8	69.4	95.2	97.2	96.1
2007	101.8	100.2	101.0	64.7	63.5	64.1	93.2	91.8	92.5
2008	102.2	101.1	101.7	65.4	64.6	65.0	95.8	94.2	95.1
2009	101.3	100.0	100.6	72.0	71.1	71.5	96.0	94.5	95.3
2010	102.4	101.7	102.1	80.4	80.0	80.2	96.3	95.4	95.9
2011	103.0	102.6	102.8	86.2	88.3	87.2	96.5	95.6	96.1

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)

Appendix (18): Enrollment ratio in Basic Education and grades (1-6)

Academic Year	Gross Enrollment Ratio			Net Enrollment Ratio			Adjusted Net Enrollment Ratio		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
2000	102.6	98.0	100.3	90.2	89.2	89.7	92.0	91.3	91.7
2001	103.3	100.1	101.7	91.6	91.2	91.4	93.0	92.2	92.6
2002	103.3	100.1	101.7	91.1	90.1	90.6	93.1	91.8	92.5
2003	101.0	99.0	100.0	89.0	89.2	89.1	91.2	91.4	91.3
2004	100.6	99.6	100.1	89.7	89.8	89.8	92.1	91.9	92.0
2005	100.1	99.5	99.8	89.3	90.2	89.7	91.7	92.9	92.3
2006	99.0	99.3	99.2	89.1	90.3	89.7	92.1	93.2	92.6
2007	99.0	99.3	99.2	89.5	91.0	90.2	94.2	95.8	95.0
2008	99.1	99.2	99.1	91.1	91.4	91.2	97.1	96.2	96.7
2009	100.0	101.0	101.0	92.7	93.0	92.8	98.0	97.0	97.5
2010	101.0	101.0	101.0	95.9	95.1	95.5	98.4	97.2	97.8
2011	101.1	101.3	101.2	96.1	95.4	95.8	98.6	97.5	98.1

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



Appendix (19): Development of the percentage of basic education schools and grades (1-6) of the general education which provide basic/primary education out of the total number of public schools

Academic Year	Basic Education	General Education	Total
2000	10.2	76.4	86.6
2001	19.8	68.4	88.2
2002	28.3	61.1	89.4
2003	34.4	55.4	89.8
2004	41.4	48.7	90.1
2005	48.5	41.8	90.2
2006	55.9	35.3	91.3
2007	62.8	27.9	90.8
2008	72.5	19.4	91.9
2009	77.1	15.4	92.5
2010	79.2	12.4	91.6
2011	82.2	9.4	91.6

(Department of Statistics and Indicators, Ministry of Education)



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