

Under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness

**Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim
Al-Khalifa Wife of HM the King,
President of the Supreme Council
for Women – Kingdom of Bahrain**

<THE SECOND FORUM OF GCC WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS>
<COOPERATION BRIDGES & OPENNESS>

Exhibition



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Organized by :
Federation of GCC Chambers

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In Collaboration with
Bahrain Chamber of Commerce
and Industry

<Sheraton Hotel>

15 - 16 October, 2014

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The Federation of Chambers of GCC

The Federation of Chambers of GCC was incorporated on September 27, 1979 as part of the initiative by the GCC economic sector proposed by the GCC chambers at the time. The Federation is Head Quarter in the Kingdom of Saudi's Eastern Province. Mainly, it aims to realize economic integration among the Gulf States; to solidify the private sector's role on the way to the economic development and to remove all commercial hurdles in geography. The list of objectives the Federation are includes the promotion of GCC exports, support small to medium size enterprises and entrepreneurship ventures through entering into partnerships with its counterpart in the Islamic and Arab world as well as leading global players.

Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Industry ("BCCI")

Established in 1939, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Industry is regarded as the oldest private sector organizations and chamber across the GCC also known as the official representative of the Bahraini private sector. The BCCI aims to represent the Bahraini private sector both locally and international; aligning its stakeholders interests by solidifying the economic policies of the Kingdom of Bahrain. On the local front, the BCCI has managed to be an effective partner in the decision-making process for establishments and cooperative organizations; by representing the private sector on global front and taking the initiative to form partnerships; and organize events in collaboration with GCC, Arab, & International organizations. Since its inception, the BCCI has adopted many economic and social initiatives aimed to boost small to medium size enterprises overall Bahraini economy.



Why Bahrain?

The selection of the Kingdom of Bahrain to embrace The Second forum of GCC Women Entrepreneurs is consistent with the advanced stage achieved by the Bahraini woman in all spheres and on different levels. This proves the primary role which Bahraini women engaged in the economic and social development process amongst many vital roles in society. According to 2013 statistics, the Bahraini women have a big and remarkable presence with approximately 33% share of the marketplace in both public and private sectors. The position of the Bahraini women as an entrepreneur is yet another needless boast as they are heavily engaged in conducting and overseeing private businesses with 40% share of the operational commercial licenses. The Bahraini woman has also secured positions on the board of major shareholding companies and this milestone was further proved by the result of the recent BCCI elections. With 28 seats, representing 22% of the total board members and approximately 15% of the gross active members of the BCCI. This is further supported by the membership in many related-sectors and BCCI committees.

The presence reflects the level of success and achievements of the Bahraini women have reached through the support of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa. Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa involvement which enabled Bahraini women to play an active role in the society which has served as a booster to organize the GCC Forum and welcome on board GCC women entrepreneurs to gather and present their key milestones in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Forum is an opportunity for women to have face-to-face meetings, have an exposure to success stories, and exchange accumulated expertise in order to realize much development and prosperity for the GCC women with the aim to nurture them economically and socially as well as regionally and globally.



Why The Second forum of GCC Women Entrepreneurs?

- ♦ This Forum builds on success achieved by The First Forum of GCC Women Entrepreneurs held in Muscat from 16 to 18 December 2012 and was attended by more than 300 GCC women entrepreneurs.
- ♦ The pursuit to employ all capabilities has resulted of the ever-growing role of GCC women entrepreneurs as they have won leading stages in diverse economic sectors. Such specialized focused forums or conferences have greater values and are beneficial to entrepreneurs in this geographical region where the economic development is witnessing an evolving cycle by competing with the most influential international economies.



Outcomes of The First Forum of GCC Women Entrepreneurs:

The First Forum of GCC Women Entrepreneurs concluded with several recommendations that were reviewed by the The Federation of Chambers of GCC that are classified it into main topics of the Forums Agenda, these are :

- ♦ To enable women participation in the economic sector such as boards of directors and assuming top management positions.
- ♦ Encouragement of new women entrepreneurs entrants to be business leaders through training, coaching, competition, and innovation programs.
- ♦ Motivation for women business owners to participate in small and medium size enterprises for being one of the pillars of the economic infrastructure.
- ♦ Identification of challenges and difficulties faced by women business owners.
- ♦ Promotion of the own-boss culture among GCC women business owners.
- ♦ Endorsement of by-laws and legislative rules that need review for their role in preventing GCC women business owners from being economically, commercially, and socially enabled.
- ♦ Ways to increase the participation of women business owners in the economic development process.



- ♦ Conducting a questionnaire on the shortfalls GCC women business owners would like to emphasize on.
- ♦ Evaluation of women participation influence in economic development and planning
- ♦ Preparation of investment opportunities in which business women owners can specifically invest in.

Outcomes of The First Forum of GCC Women Entrepreneurs :

This Forum aims to put forward economic challenges faced by business women owners in the Gulf States, to work to elevate their economic efficiency in terms of pan Arab and regional changes with the focus on praising those talented, increase the networking and harmony among GCC women entrepreneurs, and shed some light on GCC entrepreneurs men & women.'



Forum Key Topics:

The Forum aims to examine the outcomes and recommendation of The First Forum with a particular focus on:

1. Contributions of GCC Women Entrepreneurs in Sustainable Development including :

- a. Participation in Business Sector and major challenges
- b. Ways to increase women entrepreneurs participation in the economic development process
- c. Participation in the government sector and major challenges
- d. Participation in the economic decision-making

2. Today's GCCs entrepreneurs are Tomorrow's makers, including :

- a. Promoting young business owners' contributions in the sustainable business development.
- b. Models from the GCCs
- c. Sponsors' paper
- d. Open discussion



3. Role of Chambers in promoting women entrepreneurs – The realized and the targeted

- a. The role of Chamber's member in overcoming these challenges & the difficulties faced by the member chambers
- b. The role of the civil society organizations
- c. Gulf Economic Interactive Portal

4. Innovation is the Key to Development, including :

Successful stories from the GCC: UAE, Bahrain, KSA, Oman, Kuwait, & Qatar

5. Role of Gulf–International Partnerships in Bridging, including :

- a. Available investment opportunities to women entrepreneurs in the Gulf States and the world.
- b. Financial support to the youth ventures in the gulf states – Reality and Hope
- c. The importance of cooperative work, liaison, and knowledge exchange to build business relationships among women entrepreneurs
- d. Open discussion



Forum Speakers :

- 1– GCC chambers
- 2– GCC women business owners
- 3– Representatives of GCC organizations and societies
- 4– GCC entrepreneurs
- 5– CEOs and directors from various companies
- 6– General secretaries of GCC, Arab, & international organizations and establishments



Participants and Invitees:

- ♦ Members of GCC chambers.
- ♦ Members and Chairpersons of Arab and Foreign cooperative chambers
- ♦ Business women from the Arab World, the Islamic World, and from across the globe
- ♦ Government organizations and authorities specifically those women entrepreneurs supporters
- ♦ GCC Embassies
- ♦ Organizations and authorities supporting small to medium size enterprises
- ♦ Chambers; unions; authorities; and Islamic, Arab, and International organizations.



Forum Language:

The Forums language will be Arabic with translation into English.

For additional information, please call:

Mr. Bassam Atouh

Director – The Federation of Chambers of GCCs Events and Marketing

Cell: +9665048252541

Email: bassamatwah@fgccc.org

