

NBB served as lead coordinator for syndicated financing agreement for Eskan Bank to provide housing solutions for citizens



Manama

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) served as the lead coordinator of a landmark BHD 250 million syndicated financing deal for Eskan Bank.

The agreement was formal-

ly signed in the presence of Her Excellency Ms. Amna bint Ahmed Al Rumaihi, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning, and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Eskan Bank.

As part of the agreement,

NBB will provide additional financing and banking services, working alongside a number of leading local, regional, and international institutions. The funding will support Bahrain's national housing programmes under the Government Plan

2023–2026, accelerating delivery of housing solutions for citizens and reinforcing long-term socioeconomic development.

On this occasion, Mr. Usman Ahmed, Group Chief Executive Officer of NBB, commented: "We are proud to be part of

this significant collaboration as the sole coordinator and one of the lead arrangers; this financing will positively impact the housing sector and contribute to Bahrain's social and economic development, and is in line with NBB's commitment to na-

tional priorities and sustainable development goals."

This milestone reflects NBB's key role in impactful public-private partnerships that drive national progress and serve the Kingdom's sustainable development priorities.

BisB launches Sustainable Finance Framework in collaboration with Standard Chartered

Manama

Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB), the leading provider of innovative Islamic financial solutions for simplifying money matters in the Kingdom of Bahrain, has officially launched its Sustainable Finance Framework, marking a major milestone in its commitment to responsible and purpose-driven banking.

Developed in collaboration with Standard Chartered, which served as the Sustainability Structuring Advisor, the Framework has also been independently validated through a Second Party Opinion (SPO) issued by ISS Corporate Solutions, confirming its alignment with internationally recognised sustainable finance standards.

Under the new framework, BisB will be able to fund projects and activities that qualify as green, social, or sustainable in line with the ICMA's Green Bond Principles (June 2025), Social Bond Principles (June 2025), and Sustainability Bond Guidelines (2021), as well as the LMA's Green Financing Principles (March 2025) and Social Financing Principles (March 2025). The Framework also provides BISB with a robust platform to raise Green, Social and Sustainable Debt instruments such as sukuk, that can be deployed to finance or refinance eligible sustainable projects, serving as a reference point for classifying BISB's sustainable revenues and asset base.



Mr. Ameer Dairi, Chief Financial & Strategy Officer of BisB



Dr. Boutros Klink, CEO of Standard Chartered Bahrain



Ms. Fatema AlAlawi, Chief Executive Officer of BisB

Ms. Fatema AlAlawi, Chief Executive Officer of BisB, stated, "The introduction of our Sustainable Finance Framework marks a significant step forward in integrating ESG principles into the heart of our financing activities. This initiative reflects our vision of delivering long-term value not only to our stakeholders, but also to the broader society and environment. It empowers us to allocate capital more meaningfully, create measurable impact, and contribute to Bahrain's sustainable development agenda."

With the Framework in place, BisB can now evaluate and classify eligible projects across renewable energy, clean transportation, green buildings, and employment-focused initiatives. The framework is built on four core pillars. The first, 'Use of Proceeds', establishes

clear criteria for allocating funds to eligible sustainable projects. The second, 'Project Evaluation and Selection', applies rigorous screening to identify projects with meaningful environmental and social impact. Additionally, the 'Management of Proceeds' pillar sets out mechanisms for optimal and transparent usage of funds, while 'Reporting' ensures accountability through regular disclosures on fund utilisation and project outcomes.

By embedding ESG principles across its operations, BisB aims to enhance risk management, increase accountability, and support national and global efforts

toward a more inclusive and resilient financial system.

Mr. Ameer Dairi, Chief Financial & Strategy Officer of BisB, commented. This framework marks a proud moment in our sustainable finance journey and a true reflection of BisB's commitment to doing well by doing good. It provides us with a strong and credible platform to channel capital toward meaningful, high-impact projects that serve both our communities and the environment.

By aligning with global sustainability standards and staying true to the ethical principles of Islamic finance, we are ensuring that every decision we make contributes to real, lasting value. This framework brings greater transparency, disciplined fund management, and measurable progress toward our ESG goals.

We are honored to play a role in advancing the Kingdom's sustainability vision and to help shape a future-ready financial ecosystem — one that is responsible, inclusive, and firmly rooted in the values of the Shari'a

Dr. Boutros Klink, CEO of Standard Chartered Bahrain

said, "we are delighted to have supported Bahrain Islamic Bank in the development of its Sustainable Finance Framework, which enables it to raise Green, Social and Sustainable Debt aligned with global standards. Through this framework, BISB can now access sustainable capital markets to finance projects that deliver measurable environmental and social benefits. As the Sustainability Structuring Advisor, Standard Chartered is proud to contribute our global expertise to advancing Bahrain's sustainable finance ecosystem and supporting the Kingdom's vision for a more inclusive and resilient economy."

ISS Corporate Sustainable Finance team stated "We are pleased to have worked with Bahrain Islamic Bank in furtherance of launching its first Sustainability Finance Framework which identifies various Green and Social categories such as green buildings, renewable energy, clean transportations, employment generation, affordable housing and access to essential services projects as eligible uses of proceeds."

BENEFIT, India's NPCI International Payments Limited sign linkage agreement to enable Real-Time Cross-Border payments between Bahrain and India

Manama

BENEFIT, the Kingdom's innovator and leading company in Fintech and electronic financial transactions service, has announced the signing of a linkage Agreement with NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) – India, to enable seamless integration between Bahrain's Electronic Fund Transfer System (EFTS), specifically Fawri+ service, and India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

The initiative is being carried out under the supervision of the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) and Reserve Bank of India (RBI), marking a significant step towards advancing cross-border payment connectivity between the two nations. UPI facilitates nearly 20 billion transactions every month, amounting to over \$280 billion in value. With a user base of 500 million and commanding approximately 84% of India's retail digital payment market, UPI has emerged as a global benchmark in digital



payments.

This landmark collaboration represents a strategic step towards strengthening Bahrain's position as a regional financial hub and a leader in digital transformation and electronic payments. It reaffirms the Kingdom's commitment to adopting state-of-the-art financial infrastructure innovations and marks a pivotal milestone in the ongoing expansion of Bahrain's Fawri+ service into international networks and systems.

Furthermore, the agreement opens new horizons for users in both countries to perform the cross-border real-time transfers, securely, and seamlessly.

The partnership is the result of joint efforts between the Central Bank of Bahrain and BENEFIT, reflecting a shared vision to expand on the use cases of instant payments, fostering cross-border payments, and facilitating digital banking services for individuals and businesses alike.

On this occasion, Mr. Abdulwahed AlJanahi, Chief Executive of BENEFIT, stated: "The signing of the linkage agreement with India's NPCI International represents an important strategic milestone in strengthening Bahrain's presence in the global digital financial landscape. The partnership underscores our commitment to delivering advanced digital payment services that contribute to supporting the national economy and expanding economic relations

between Bahrain and India. The new service will enable citizens and residents in both countries to send and receive money instantly and securely, reflecting our continuous efforts to meet the growing demand for fast, reliable, and cross-border financial solutions."

Mr. AlJanahi further added: "BENEFIT continues to pursue its strategic vision of expanding its real-time payment network globally in line with the directives of the Central Bank of Bah-

rain and the Kingdom's ambitious national strategies. These initiatives aim to strengthen the digital economy while facilitating international trade and investment. We look forward to fostering more similar partnerships and collaborations, which will enhance the reach of Bahrain's payment ecosystem and ensure seamless integration with global markets."

Ritesh Shukla, MD & CEO, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), said, "We are delighted to partner with BENEFIT to enable secure, real-time remittances between India and Bahrain. We believe this collaboration will deepen financial connectivity, pave the way for further cross-border payment innovations, and contribute to promoting financial inclusion and shared economic growth that benefits individuals and businesses alike. The initiative will also serve the large Indian diaspora in Bahrain, making money transfers faster, safer, and more convenient."