

From local to global

Digital boost for women-led MSMEs as WE-Elevate rolls out nationally

- Programme offers mentorship, online learning, and cross-border trading platforms to develop digital, financial, and entrepreneurial skills
- Initiative aligns with SDGs, promoting gender equality (SDG 5) and decent work and economic growth (SDG 8).
- Entrepreneurs can apply to register their interest at dco.org/initiatives/stride

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Bahrain's women entrepreneurs are gearing up to take their businesses



across borders, thanks to the national rollout of the WE-Elevate programme—a digital empowerment initiative by the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO). Designed to turbocharge female-led MSMEs, the programme combines mentorship, online learning, and cross-border trading platforms, helping businesses transform from local ventures into global digital brands.

The initiative offers step-by-step training, starting from basic digital readiness and progressing to advanced skills for online trade. Participants learn to formalize their operations, expand their customer base, and sell across international markets, enabling sustainable growth and new employment opportunities. The Bahrain rollout is part of a wider expansion across all

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MSMEs are at the heart of Bahrain’s economy. The rollout of WE-Elevate strengthens our women-led businesses, giving them the confidence and tools to scale beyond borders. Our partnership with the DCO reflects Bahrain’s belief in the power of multilateral cooperation, and we are proud to be part of an organization that champions inclusive digital transformation across Member States

DR. SHAIKH ABDULLAH BIN AHMED AL KHALIFA, MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

DCO Member States, announced during the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA80) in New York. WE-Elevate aims to address the underrepresentation of women in digital leadership—globally, women hold just 12.2% of C-suite positions in STEM fields—by equipping female and youth entrepreneurs with the tools to compete in the digital economy. Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin

Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, said: “MSMEs are at the heart of Bahrain’s economy. WE-Elevate strengthens women-led businesses, giving them the confidence and tools to scale beyond borders. Our partnership with DCO reflects Bahrain’s commitment to inclusive digital transformation and multilateral cooperation.” DCO Secretary-General

Deemah AlYahya added: “WE-Elevate is more than a programme; it is a catalyst for empowerment and opportunity. Our pilot in Rwanda showed tangible results, with MSMEs improving their digital capabilities, formalizing operations, and accessing new markets. Female-led businesses are critical for innovation, job creation, and sustainable growth in the digital economy.” Bahrain’s GDP is projected at USD 46.2 billion in 2025, with MSMEs contributing 17.8% of national output and playing a central role in employment creation. The programme also supports Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). Applications are now open for eligible MSMEs across all DCO Member States. Entrepreneurs can register and start their digital journey at dco.org/initiatives/stride, taking a key step toward becoming global digital brands.



The Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) is the world’s first standalone international intergovernmental organization dedicated to accelerating the growth of an inclusive and sustainable digital economy. Founded in 2020, the DCO brings together the Ministries of Communications and Information Technology of its 16 Member States, representing nearly 3.5 trillion in GDP and a combined market of over 800 million people, more than 70% of whom are under the age of 35.

The DCO works with governments, the private sector, civil society, and international organizations to promote digital inclusion, enable cross-border data flows, empower women and youth, and support entrepreneurs and SMEs.



22-year-old man arrested for allegedly blackmailing 13-year-old girl online

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Police have arrested a 22-year-old man accused of trapping and blackmailing a 13-year-old girl through social media, the Ministry of Interior reported. The arrest was made by the Child Protection Unit in Cyberspace at the General Department of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security, following a tip-off received by the authorities. All legal measures are being taken



Picture for representation only in preparation for referring the case to the Public Prosecution. Authorities emphasized the importance of parents continu-

ously monitoring their children, educating them about the risks of certain social media platforms and websites, and ensuring the safety of their online content. Parents are encouraged to contact the unit directly at 33523300, via email at cpcu@interior.gov.bh, or call the General Administration for Combating Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security hotline 992 if they suspect any activity that could threaten their children’s safety.

Bahrain shines in healthcare, 5th in Arab world and 54th globally

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Bahrain has secured fifth place in the Arab world and 54th globally for healthcare in CEOWORLD magazine’s 2025 healthcare index, earning a score of 38.48. The United Arab Emirates tops the Arab rankings and ranks 17th worldwide, followed by Saudi Arabia (second in the region, 37th globally), Tunisia



(third Arab, 49th global), and Lebanon (fourth Arab, 50th global). Bahrain leads Jordan (sixth Arab, 56th global) and Oman (seventh Arab, 66th global), with Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Algeria, Iraq, Egypt, Sudan,

and Libya placed further down the table. The index evaluates healthcare performance based on three key measures: the availability and cost of medicines, medical infrastructure and staffing, and government readiness to support the sector. Bahrain performed strongly against many regional peers across these indicators. According to the report, the

ranking reflects Bahrain’s ongoing investments in the medical sector, reinforcing its reputation as a treatment destination and potentially attracting further health projects and capital to the kingdom. The assessment also highlights the need for continued development in healthcare infrastructure and skilled personnel to deliver comprehensive care to citizens and residents.

Coast Guard seizes 259 kg of illegally caught shrimp off Zallaq coast



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The Coast Guard Command seized two vessels yesterday off the coast of the Zallaq area carrying 259 kilograms of shrimp caught illegally, the Ministry of Interior reported. Authorities said the

shrimp were caught using bottom trawl nets (karraf), a fishing method prohibited under Ministerial Resolution No. 205 of 2015. The Coast Guard confirmed that all necessary legal measures have been taken, and the case has been referred to the Public Prosecution