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**Country: Kuwait**

**Topic 1: Governance and its Effects on Education**

The main source of corruption in Kuwait is the parliament. While election mechanics in Kuwait are free of corruption, there is a great deal of "vote buying." Traditionally, vote buying was straightforward and candidates had ways of checking to make sure the voter voted as he promised. Corruption emerged as the central issue in the 29 June 2006 parliamentary elections. Allegations of vote-buying are common and often politically-motivated, but there is no doubt that some candidates attempt to influence voters with bribes.

Dr. Al-Essa also stressed that corruption prevails in the ministry of education and that he had detected some deliberate obstacles to prevent developing Kuwait's educational system. Furthermore, he explained that the constant change of education ministers had a negative effect on the ministry's development plans. There are strategic projects that are designed to fight corruption first and further the development of the educational system.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Education regulates both public and private schools in Kuwait. Although public schooling is free to all Kuwaiti citizens, the majority of Kuwaitis choose to send their children to private schools, which offer better facilities, and are also well-subsidised by the government. In 2003, Kuwait's education expenditures were an estimated 3.8 percent of GDP, ranking 116th in comparison to the world. The Kuwait Times reported that today, Kuwait spends 9.5 percent of the state budget on education. Despite an economic development plan passed by Kuwait in 2010 that pledged to spend up to \$130 billion over five years to diversify the economy

away from oil, the country still struggles without the balance investment and private sector participation can provide.

## **Topic 2: Preservation of World Heritage Sites**

Currently Kuwait does not have any sites which are located on the World Heritage List. However there are 3 sites which are on the Tentative List. Sadly, by being on this list it is only the first step out of five until it is considered a World Heritage Site. By being on this list Kuwait believes that these sites should be preserved for their history.

The first location that Kuwait believes should be considered a World Heritage site was put on the tentative list on in 2013. These areas are known as Sa'ad and Sae'ed Area in Failaka Island and are fenced within a land plot of around 382,000 square meters. These two villages are located very close together and known for civilization between 2nd millennium BC and the 2nd century BC. The second site which Kuwait has on the tentative list in 2014 is known as Abraj Al-Kuwait, which translates to Kuwait Towers. These are water towers that are built in Kuwait City and are monumental to the city. The original water towers that were there, were built in the 1970s. Then in the 1990s they were brutally damaged by the Iraqi forces and caused around two millions dollars in damage. With its rich history they believed that they should re build them. This took two years and then later closed again in 2013 for three years to do refurbishments. The third location is knows as Sheikh Abdullah Al-Jabir Palace. It was built in the early twentieth century.

The selection of World Heritage Sites could be improved by considering the history and value of the each country and what they consider to be identified as a world heritage site.

### **Topic 3: Supporting and Accomplishing Education 2030**

Schooling in Kuwait is compulsory for all children from age six to 14, with basic education divided into three levels, consisting of four years each Elementary, Intermediate, Secondary. Arabic is the language of instruction at public schools in Kuwait, although children are also required to learn English as a second language.

Within the public education system, girls and boys are segregated and attend different schools. The State of Kuwait, one of the high-income countries with a GDP per capita of above \$24,000 in the current times, condones an educational policy of providing opportunity to all children, including those with special needs. However, the country in the early 20th century had very basic educational institutions-- a few Quranic schools funded by wealthy merchants that provided for religious discourse and basic Arabic reading, writing and basic mathematics. The first step toward modern schools came in 1912, with the establishment of the Al Mubarakkiyya School that laid the basic foundation in commerce, mathematics and letter writing skills. It was later that history, geography, and art courses were introduced to the curriculum. The first school in Kuwait to offer English, the Al Ahmadiya School, began in 1921. The first girls' school was established in the 1920s. It was in 1965 that 7 years of primary school was made compulsory for all. The first university in the country-- the Kuwait University, was opened the following year, and it would require another 36 years for the new universities to open, this time private.

Kuwait funds its educational system, which is at present of good quality. In spite of that, the authorities determine programs for improving the quality of education and the capacity. They also have programs to improve the entry of women into their professional domain.