

Kuwait's SDG Progress (VNR 2023)



SDG 1	NO POVERTY End poverty in all its forms everywhere
1. Poverty Reduction Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a direct allocation of resources to the national Poverty Reduction Program as a percentage of Gross National Income (GNI). This is a great initiative towards SDG 1.
3. Social Assistance Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A steady rate of families benefiting from social assistance can be seen, with an average rate of 10.2% over the years since 2016.
4. Non-Governmental Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an active involvement of NGOs like the Women's Cultural and Social Society, Zakat Committee, and Al Eslah Society in providing social protection and support in Kuwait.
5. Humanitarian and Philanthropic Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait's global initiatives supporting poor countries have earned it the title of "The Country of Humanitarian Action".

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Consumer Expenditure: Despite high average monthly expenditures, there's a need to ensure that economic well-being is equitably distributed.
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SDG 2	ZERO HUNGER End hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
1. Food Price Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a supervisory work by the State Audit Bureau over the Livestock Transport & Trading Company (KLTT) to ensure price stability and market supply.
2. Prevalence of Undernourishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait maintained a commendable rate of undernourishment below 2.5% between 2016 and 2019, while the world's rate fluctuated around 7.6-7.8%. In 2020, Kuwait's rate increased slightly to 2.7%, potentially influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Government Expenditure on Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of government expenditure on the agricultural orientation index slightly increased from 0.36% in 2016 to 0.46% in 2020.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Pandemic: The pandemic has put significant pressure on resources, including food and livelihoods, leading to a slight increase in undernourishment rates. Nutritional Issues: Despite improvements, challenges remain in addressing the nutritional needs of children and reducing rates of overweight.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Agriculture: While progress has been made, continued efforts are needed to expand sustainable agricultural practices and address fluctuations in the agricultural orientation index.
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SDG 3	GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
1. Maternal and Child Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuwait has achieved near-universal rates for births attended by skilled health personnel (more than 99.99%). • Maternal mortality ratio (MMR) remained significantly low between 2012 and 2020.
2. Efforts during COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Organization for Migration (IOM) provided PPE kits to vulnerable foreign laborers during the COVID-19 pandemic, contributing to SDG 3 targets. • Non-governmental efforts, such as those by the Women’s Cultural and Social Society, included awareness programs and support for cancer patients.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising Prevalence of Non-Communicable Diseases: Unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles, and exposure to pollution have contributed to an increase in non-communicable diseases, posing a health challenge. • Cost of Health Services: The increasing cost of health services is identified as a challenge. This may impact accessibility and affordability for certain segments of the population. • Life Expectancy and Diabetes: Despite slight improvements, life expectancy at birth has decreased in recent years, and the prevalence of diabetes is one of the world's highest. Addressing these health issues is crucial.
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SDG 4	QUALITY EDUCATION Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
1. Global Rankings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuwait ranks 52nd on the Human Development Index and 47th on the Global Knowledge Index, indicating high human development and knowledge levels.
2. Educational Expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government spending on education is significant, with 12.2% of the national budget allocated to education in 2021.
3. Community Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations like the Women’s Cultural and Social Society (WCSS) and Al Eslah Society have launched numerous educational programs, supporting a wide range of beneficiaries from children with impairments to university students.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and Development (R&D): Expenditure on R&D is relatively low compared to GCC averages, with fluctuating investment over the years. • Non-Communicable Diseases: The rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases poses a challenge to the health and well-being of residents. • Educational Quality: Despite high expenditure and initiatives, challenges remain in enhancing the quality of education and aligning it with labor market needs.
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SDG 5	GENDER EQUALITY Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girl
1. Legislative and Policy Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kuwaiti Constitution and various laws affirm equality between sexes, with close to 13 laws passed to support women in education, labor, rights of persons with disabilities, and more. Kuwait has ratified international conventions like CEDAW and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
2. Women’s Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established under the Council of Ministers, this committee focuses on coordinating and supporting efforts concerned with women's affairs and represents Kuwait in Arab and international forums addressing women, children, and family issues.
3. Low Prevalence of Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reported 0.02 per cent prevalence of females subject to physical violence in 2022, aiming for the Zero-target set for 2030.
4. Soroptimist Kuwait	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A global volunteering club working towards women’s empowerment in multiple sectors, holding consultative capacity with the United Nations.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing Women’s Participation: There's a need to enhance women's participation in various decision-making sectors of public life, such as ministerial and municipal councils, parliament, the judiciary, and other relevant areas. • Legislative and Cultural Barriers: Despite legislative advancements, cultural and societal norms still pose challenges to achieving full gender equality. • Gender Gap in Certain Sectors: Specific data points, such as the share of women who own agricultural land, show a significant gender gap (23 per cent for women against 76.9 per cent for men in 2016).
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SDG 6	CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
1. Universal Access to Drinking Water and Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2016 up until 2022, 100% of the population have had access to safely managed drinking water services and properly managed sanitation services, including handwashing facilities.

2. Integrated Water Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A progressive increase in integrated resource management implementation, with a score starting from 80 in 2016 and reaching 94 in 2020, aiming for 100 by 2030.
3. Governance and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment Public Authority (EPA) monitors compliance with environmental laws and coordinates with state agencies on water and environmental protection, including the national program for managing control over drinking water and systematic analysis of seawater and treated wastewater.
4. Desalination Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two-phase "water desalination project" to meet increasing water demand due to population growth, including the construction of reverse osmosis desalination plants and facilities to produce potable water for all consumers.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Groundwater Levels: Kuwait faces the challenge of low levels of groundwater with a renewal rate of less than 70mm/year, necessitating the procurement of cross-border groundwater and the establishment of desalination facilities. • Increasing Water Demand: The growing demand for water due to population growth and industrial use puts pressure on water resources, requiring innovative and sustainable solutions to ensure adequate supply.
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SDG 7	AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
1. New Energy Strategy and Economic Diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuwait plans to diversify its economy and reduce dependency on fossil fuels, with a goal to increase the share of renewables in electricity generation to 15% by 2030.
2. Investment in Renewable Energy Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a considerable amount of investment for the implementation of projects like the Shaqaya Complex for Renewable Energy, aiming for a combined capacity of 4,070 megawatts by 2025.
3. Clean Fuel and Waste Management Projects by KNPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives like the Clean Fuel Project, Effluent Treatment Facility, Solid Waste Management Procedure, and adoption of Green Building standards aim at reducing environmental impact and promoting sustainability in the energy sector.
4. Research and Development in Clean Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) plays a significant role in developing solar energy technologies and evaluating the potential for renewable energy sources in Kuwait's geographical context.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Energy Consumption: Kuwait faces challenges due to its high per capita energy consumption, driven by residential electricity demand, extensive use of personal vehicles, and energy subsidies. • Limited Natural Freshwater Resources: The reliance on desalination for over 90% of water consumption increases energy demand and environmental concerns. • Dependence on Fossil Fuels: Despite efforts to diversify, the economy remains heavily reliant on oil sector revenues, which account for a significant portion of the GDP.
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SDG 8	DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
1. Economic Diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuwait aims to reduce its dependency on oil revenues, which constitute a significant portion of its national income, by diversifying its economy as part of Vision 2035 and the Third National Development Plan.
2. Public Authority for Manpower (PAM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established to supervise the workforce, particularly in the private and oil sectors, and to manage issues related to foreign workers, including recruitment and labor mobility.
3. Social Protection and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Social Affairs collaborates with the General Secretariat of Awqaf to offer training courses for women on social assistance, aiming at their reintegration into the labor market.
4. Labor Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two-pronged policy focusing on increasing the efficiency of the national workforce and establishing bilateral agreements with other countries for the mobility of workers. This includes initiatives to improve education and training aligned with labor market needs.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Fluctuations: Global fluctuations in oil prices and regional instability have affected Kuwait's economic performance and its ranking in the Global Competitive Index. • Labor Force Composition: A high percentage of the workforce consists of non-nationals, with the majority of Kuwaiti nationals employed in the public sector. • Dependency on Oil Revenue: Despite efforts to diversify, the economy remains heavily reliant on oil, representing a significant challenge to sustainable economic growth.
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SDG 9	INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation
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1. Advanced Infrastructure Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait is implementing around 30 projects under the "Advanced Infrastructure" pillar of Vision 2035, including the development of new roads, railway systems, ports, and airports.
2. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial enterprises are required to conduct EIAs to reduce their environmental impacts, including emissions of gaseous pollutants.
3. Renewable Energy Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of projects such as the "Shaqaya Complex for Renewable Energy" to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix to 15% by 2030.
4. State Audit Bureau (SAB) Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAB plays a critical role in inspecting the work of entities involved in infrastructure projects, ensuring compliance and effectiveness.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Diversification: Despite efforts, Kuwait's economy remains heavily reliant on oil, with petroleum accounting for a significant portion of export revenues. Sustainable Industrialization: While Kuwait has initiatives aimed at sustainable industrialization, challenges remain in increasing the share of industry in employment and GDP, as well as enhancing the manufacturing sector's value addition to the economy. Innovation and Research: Despite some progress, investment in research and development (R&D) as a percentage of GDP remains low, highlighting the need for further efforts to enhance scientific research and technological capabilities.
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SDG 10	REDUCED INEQUALITIES Reduce inequality within and among countries
1. Legislative Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait has implemented legislative changes to prohibit discrimination in the labor market and other societal segments, showing a commitment to promoting active participation and equal opportunities for all citizens.
2. Social Protection Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The country has adopted fiscal, wage, and social protection policies to progressively achieve greater equality. This includes a positive increase in the labor share of GDP and social protection payments.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Availability: There is a challenge in reporting on some targets of SDG 10 due to missing or outdated data, which makes it difficult to accurately assess progress and implement targeted interventions. Implementation Gaps: Despite the establishment of laws and policies to reduce inequalities, there are gaps in implementation, particularly in ensuring that policies translate into tangible benefits for all groups.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Diversification: The reliance on oil revenue and the need for economic diversification remain challenges in creating a more inclusive economy that offers opportunities for all segments of society.
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SDG 11	<p align="center">SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>
1. Kuwait Master Plan IV (KMP4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This comprehensive urban planning framework aims to balance development across Kuwait, ensuring that growth is sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally friendly. By planning for the redistribution of the population across new and existing urban areas, KMP4 seeks to alleviate the pressures on Kuwait City and promote balanced regional development.
2. Sustainable Living Environments under Vision 2035	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of five new smart and sustainable residential areas represents Kuwait's commitment to expanding its urban infrastructure in a way that is environmentally sustainable and technologically advanced. These areas are designed to be self-sufficient, with a focus on green technologies, efficient public transport, and renewable energy sources.
3. Environmental Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuwait is investing in projects that enhance urban sustainability, including the development of smart cities, the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and the construction of buildings that meet LEED standards. These initiatives are crucial for reducing the carbon footprint of urban areas and promoting a cleaner, greener urban environment.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Concentration: The challenge of managing the demographic reality where over 98% of the population resides in urban areas, requiring innovative solutions for sustainable urban expansion and infrastructure development. • Legislative and Regulatory Framework: The full implementation of waste recycling systems and environmental sustainability projects is pending the enactment of relevant legislative laws, highlighting the need for a supportive regulatory environment.
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SDG 12	<p align="center">RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>
1. National Policies and International Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuwait has integrated sustainable consumption and production into its national policies and has ratified several international environmental treaties, including the Basel, Stockholm, Rotterdam, and Minamata Conventions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Commerce and Industry's issuance of Ministerial Decree No. 20 of 2021, in accordance with the Basel Agreement, regulates the export of recyclable waste, showcasing Kuwait's efforts to manage waste responsibly and encourage recycling.
2. Environmental Management and Waste Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Public Authority (EPA) took significant steps in 2019 by closing waste dumps of damaged rubber tires and transferring them to safe areas for recycling. This initiative not only addresses waste management but also supports the rubber and plastic industries, as well as road construction and improvement. The increase in medical waste in 2020, peaking at 10,693 tons, highlights the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and underscores the need for effective hazardous waste management strategies.
3. Sustainable Finance and Corporate Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kuwait Finance House (KFH) exemplifies corporate responsibility towards sustainability, aligning its operations with SDGs and contributing to Kuwait's Vision 2035. KFH's efforts in promoting Islamic finance, environmental commitment, and social development initiatives underscore the role of the financial sector in achieving SDG 12.
4. Corporate Engagement in SDGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) aligns its operations with multiple SDGs, undertaking projects that support job creation, health, education, gender equality, water management, renewable energy, and more. KNPC's initiatives, such as blood donation campaigns, water quality sampling, and solar energy projects, illustrate the potential of corporate entities to drive progress in responsible consumption and production.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycling and Hazardous Waste Management: Despite efforts to promote recycling and manage hazardous waste, Kuwait faces challenges such as the surge in medical waste due to the pandemic and the need for increased recycling rates. The recycling of solid waste decreased to 0.76 per cent in 2021, indicating a gap between initiatives and desired outcomes.
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SDG 13	CLIMATE ACTION
	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
1. Carbon Neutrality Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait aims to achieve carbon neutrality for the oil sector by 2050 and for all sectors by 2060, highlighting a long-term commitment to reducing carbon emissions.
2. National Adaptation Plan (NAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plan outlines strategies to increase resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change, involving various stakeholders across different sectors, reflecting a comprehensive approach to climate adaptation.

3. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait has updated its NDC, pledging to increase mitigation ambition by 7.4% by 2035, showcasing its commitment to the global effort to limit climate change.
4. Transition to Low Carbon Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait is exploring a transition to a circular carbon economy, with plans to diversify its energy mix and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 4.7% by 2035 through national efforts. The Kuwait Oil Company's (KOC) significant reduction in gas flaring represents a tangible step towards reducing emissions in the oil extraction process.
5. International Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait has ratified key international agreements like the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement, committing to global efforts to limit warming to below 2 °C, with an emphasis on achieving a 1.5 °C target.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rational Use of Natural Resources: There is a need for greater awareness regarding the sustainable use of natural resources to encourage the population towards more sustainable behaviors. Diversification of Energy Mix: Efforts are focused on diversifying Kuwait's energy mix to avoid increases in GHG emissions by 2035.
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SDG 14	LIFE BELOW WATER Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
1. Protected Marine Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress towards achieving 100% coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas is ongoing, with a current coverage of 6.63% since 2016, indicating an area for improvement.
2. Environmentally Friendly Ecosystem-Based Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since 2016, Kuwait has successfully managed all its economic zones using these approaches, ensuring the protection and sustainable use of marine resources.
3. Combating Illegal Fishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuwait has made strides in implementing international agreements to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, showing a commitment to sustainable fishing practices.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of Protected Areas: Currently, only 6.63% of marine areas are protected, indicating a need for significant expansion to meet the 2030 target. Sustainability Concerns: Uncertainties exist regarding the sustainability of positive trends in ocean health and clean waters.
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SDG 15	LIFE ON LAND Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests,
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	combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
1. Protected Areas Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the coverage of protected areas to 11.6% of the territory demonstrates Kuwait's dedication to conserving its biodiversity. This initiative is crucial for safeguarding habitats and species, contributing to biodiversity conservation on both national and global scales.
2. Ecosystem Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects aimed at rehabilitating degraded lands, such as planting Sidr trees and cultivating mangrove seedlings, showcase Kuwait's proactive measures to restore natural habitats. These efforts not only combat desertification but also enhance carbon sequestration, support biodiversity, and contribute to climate change mitigation.
3. Environmental Protection Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Public Authority's role in implementing environmental protection laws underscores the government's commitment to preserving Kuwait's natural heritage. This includes actions against illegal encroachments and environmental degradation, ensuring a sustainable balance between development and conservation.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Vegetation Cover: Addressing the challenge of increasing vegetation in a predominantly desert country is complex. Efforts to expand green cover are constrained by water scarcity, harsh climate, and soil conditions, requiring innovative and sustainable solutions such as the use of drought-resistant plant species and advanced irrigation techniques. Desertification: Combatting land degradation and desertification is a significant challenge due to Kuwait's location in a desert region.
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SDG 16	PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
1. Human Trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving zero cases of human trafficking since 2016 highlights the effectiveness of Kuwait's legal and institutional frameworks against human trafficking and its commitment to protecting vulnerable populations.
2. Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of public safety, with 100% of residents feeling secure in their neighborhoods, underscore the effectiveness of Kuwait's public safety measures and community policing.
3. Legislative Frameworks for Public Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitutional guarantees for public access to information and the establishment of the National Bureau for Human Rights are significant steps towards enhancing transparency, accountability, and human rights protection.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing Cases of Violence: The rise in reported violence cases poses challenges to social harmony and requires enhanced mechanisms for prevention, support, and rehabilitation for victims. • Enforcement of Laws and Policies: While Kuwait has made significant progress in enacting laws and policies for peace, justice, and strong institutions, challenges remain in the consistent and fair enforcement of these laws, requiring ongoing efforts to strengthen institutional capacities and judicial independence. • Engagement in Global Peacekeeping: As global dynamics evolve, Kuwait faces the challenge of maintaining its peaceful stance and contributing to regional and international peacekeeping efforts amidst complex geopolitical tensions.
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SDG 17	<p style="text-align: center;">PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>
1. Integration of SDGs into National Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The integration of Agenda 2030 into Kuwait's Vision 2035 and the significant progress in institutional and technical capacities for data generation and sharing illustrate Kuwait's strategic approach to sustainable development.
2. Global and Regional Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kuwait's long-standing engagement with the UN and other international bodies underscores its role in advancing global well-being and supporting development across countries through substantial resource allocation.

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data and Statistical Analysis: Despite improvements, the challenge of gathering, analyzing, and utilizing comprehensive and up-to-date data for policy guidance and SDG monitoring remains critical. • Economic Diversification: The need to further diversify the economy away from oil reliance, while also enhancing the efficiency of non-oil revenue generation and investment in sustainable development. • Enhancing International Image: Balancing domestic development goals with efforts to improve Kuwait's international standing and contribution to global peace and sustainability.
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