



مجموعة الأغـر  
Al-Aghar Group

# **The Strategy of Knowledge Society in the Kingdom**



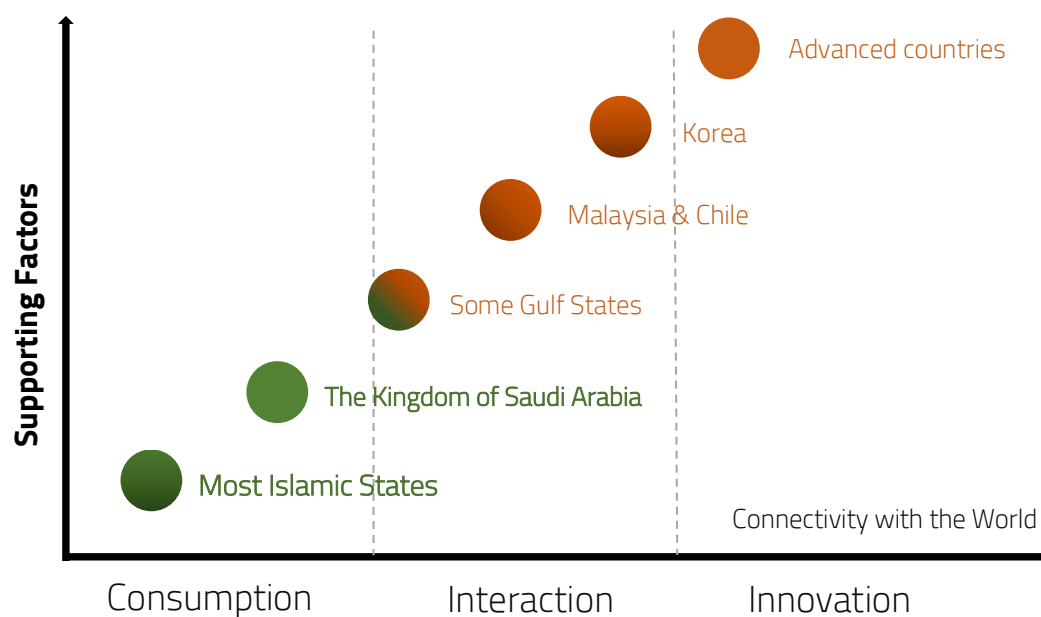


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The Kingdom should not delay the development of its society and economy especially regarding knowledge; rather we must leverage our strengths to be able to leap-frog ahead of other nations. The importance of Knowledge is deeply-seated in our belief and is also the key to closing the gap between us and other nations that have preceded the Kingdom in Knowledge creation and development. Such a transformation requires enlightened leadership, an interactive society and the appropriate infrastructure. (figures 3,4 explain the nature of the required leap-frog).



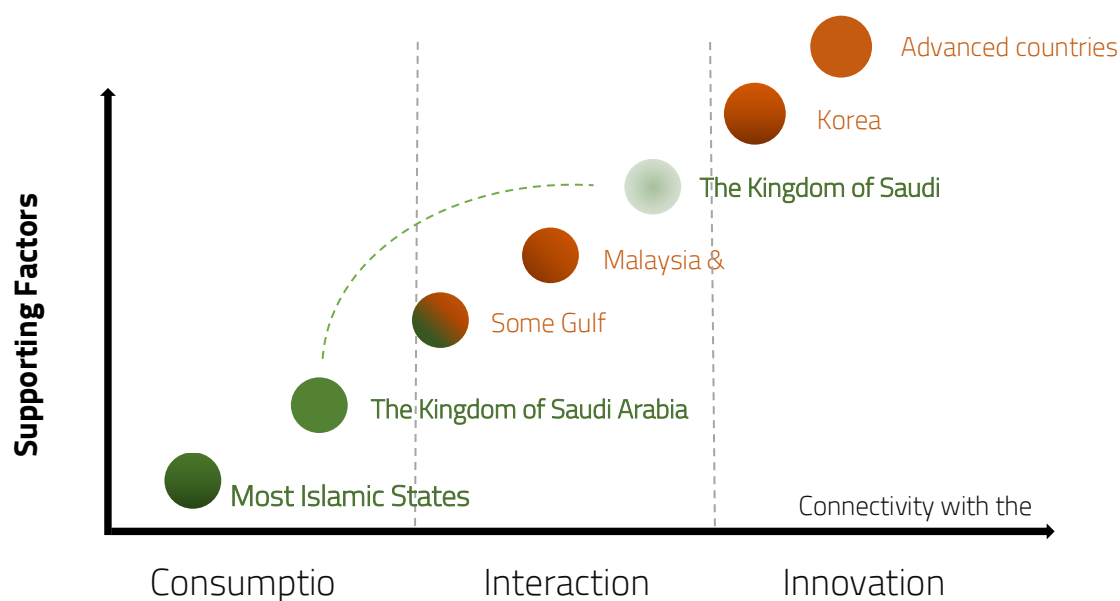
## Innovation Ability



(Figure 3)

## Leap- Frog

(This will allow KSA to bypass a few steps and expedite the transformation)



(Figure 4)



Adopting this knowledge Strategy will allow the Kingdom to benefit from a vast wealth of international minds (including Muslims ). This will enable the Kingdom to become an international knowledge society and a global center for knowledge capital.

Many efforts are currently being implemented within the kingdom, however the absence of a clear and well defined entity (Umbrella) that can unify efforts and take ownership of such a strategy might result in the duplication of efforts as well as many other common managerial mistakes that result in over expenditure and delays in reaching specific targets. Thus, hindering the Kingdoms ability to leap- frog past other nations.

### **The Opportunities Available For The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

The Kingdom has many available opportunities that will enable it to achieve the goal of building a global knowledge based Saudi society if exploited efficiently through the following points:

#### **First: The leaderships desire and willingness to reform the education system in the Kingdom:**

There is a strong and clear direction from our top leadership to reform the education system including revising education policies, improving the curriculum to satisfy future employment needs, developing skills, increasing interconnectivity with others as well as leveraging information technology to be used for education and training purposes to expedite the process of transforming into a knowledge society.



## **Second: The acceleration of technical advancements globally:**

The world is witnessing a time of consecutive development in communication and information technology that can only be properly utilized by nations who develop their people, adequately build awareness and prepare the community to be able to absorb and benefit from such advancements.

## **Third: Economic Globalization:**

This represents a golden opportunity for the development of the Saudi Economy and gradually transform it to a knowledge based economy, especially after the Kingdom's membership in the World Trade Organization and the emergence alliances with emerging economic powers such as China, India , South Korea and others.

The removal of trade barriers, the ease of movement for goods and services, the removal of Trade Tariffs and the enforcement of property rights, will help transferring knowledge to Saudi Arabia facilitating the exchange of expertise from around the world.

Globalization also represents a challenge, as the Kingdom will be required to reform some internal regulations and change some existing laws, not to mention the fact that the Kingdom will be continuously under international scrutiny and supervision to ensure that the required level of transparency is available in all dealings as well as the need to restructure some economic sectors to enable them to be able to compete internationally.

## **Fourth: The ability to utilize the other half of the Saudi Society:**

The development of a knowledge society and with the use of new technologies the importance of a women's "work location" becomes irrelevant , thus, enabling women to be more productive in the society.

## **Fifth: The New Economic Cities:**



The new economic cities which the Kingdom is developing in different areas represent an important opportunity to make them knowledge cities by using the most modern technologies in this field, and to be centers for teaching and training Saudi people . They can also be nucleus for knowledge cities which will limit the migration to other main cities, and provide employment opportunities for the increasing numbers of Saudi youth.

### **Sixth: The Global Trend to expedite the advancement and development of technologies that create Renewable Energy Resources:**

Using technological developments in the field of new and renewable energy resources will assist the Kingdom in becoming a pioneer in this field, especially because of the abundant availability of a few basic elements needed for such technologies, such as solar energy.

Technological developments in the field of removing carbon from fossil fuels (such as petrol, gas) will help to convert them into environmentally friendly energy sources and to use the extracted carbon to fill oil fields as a means of increasing productivity and efficiency.



## **The Threats Facing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

There are threats facing the Kingdom that may hinder its ability to transform into a society and an economy that can cope with modern developments of which the most important can be summarized as follows:

### **First: The Fundamentalist way of thinking and Terrorism**

All reasons that lead to the development of terrorism should be studied, understood and confronted as well as the importance of encouraging tolerance, accepting others and avoiding discrimination.

### **Second: The Fluctuations of World Petrol Prices**

It is probable that international petrol prices will decline in the near future especially if the political factors in our region and other hot regions, calm down, as well as the continued expansion in the production of fuel in different regions worldwide and the environmental/ conversationalist policies adopted by industrial countries and some other developing countries to rationalize the consumption of fuel and expedite replacing fossil fuels with alternative energy sources.

### **Second: Fluctuation in Petrol Prices**

The expected decline in petrol prices reinforces the importance of diversifying the Saudi economy through the transformation into a knowledge society and building a knowledge based economy that capitalizes on its advantages in order to achieve more value in a multitude of sectors.





### **Third: The rise of unemployment rates in the Kingdom**

The increase in unemployment rates in the Kingdom is a real threat especially combined with the fact that even more Saudi youth are projected to keep entering the work force, which means the importance of providing employment opportunities to cope with these numbers requires the economy in the Kingdom to exceeding or at least match the annual growth rates of these newcomers to the work force.

The emphasis on services sectors such as information technology and other sectors related to knowledge will provide increasingly required opportunities of employment as they require manpower as a main productive element in delivering such services.

### **Fourth: Unrest in The Region**

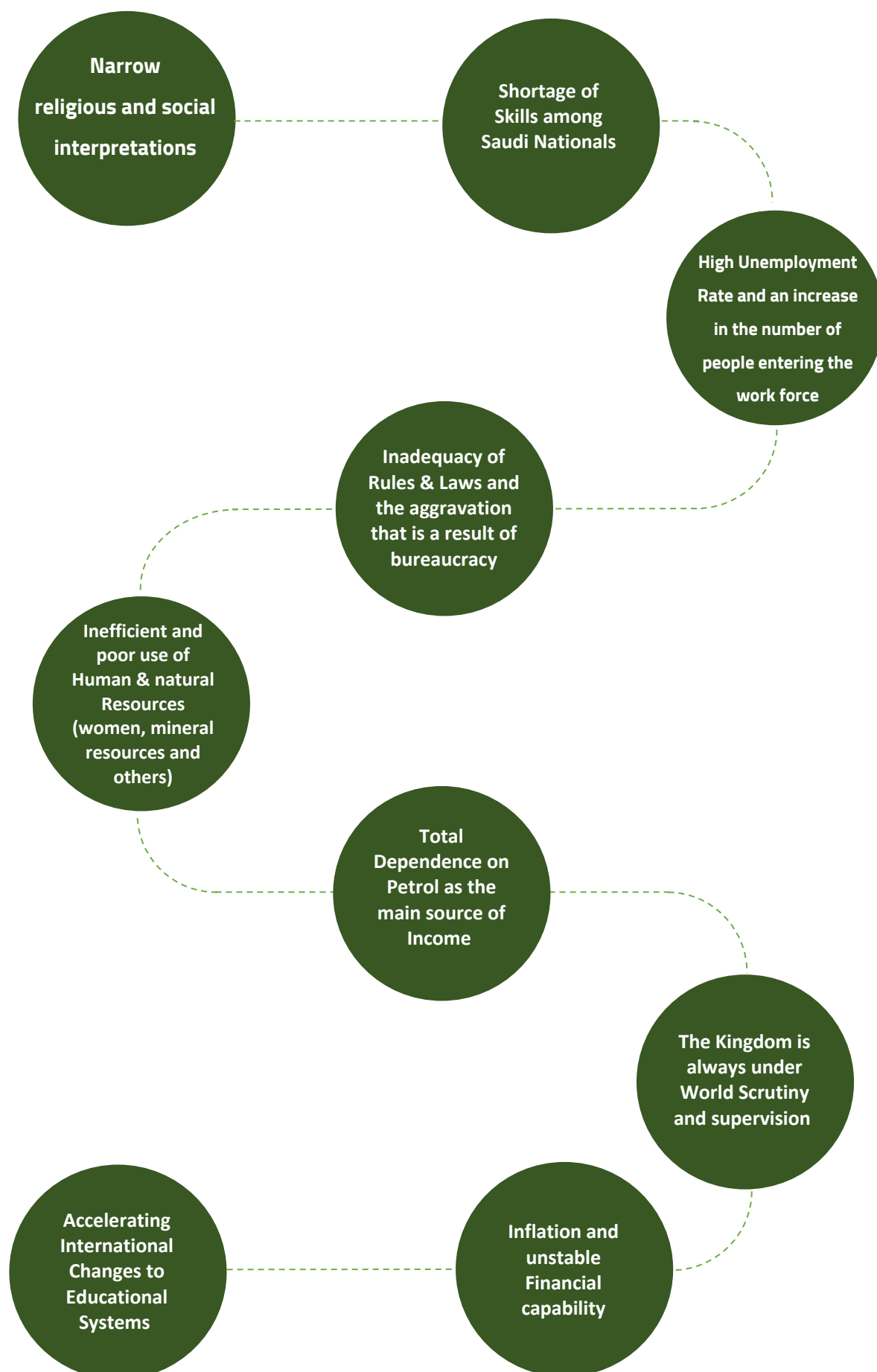
The unrest in our region is continuously increasing in intensity in an unprecedented manner. This situation makes it necessary to deal with the Saudi society in a way that prompts it to be more aware , thoughtful, productive and able to coexist with different regional crisis.

The Saudi knowledge society represents an opportunity for its autonomy. This will also give it more independence in taking decisions regarding the surrounding regional threats.



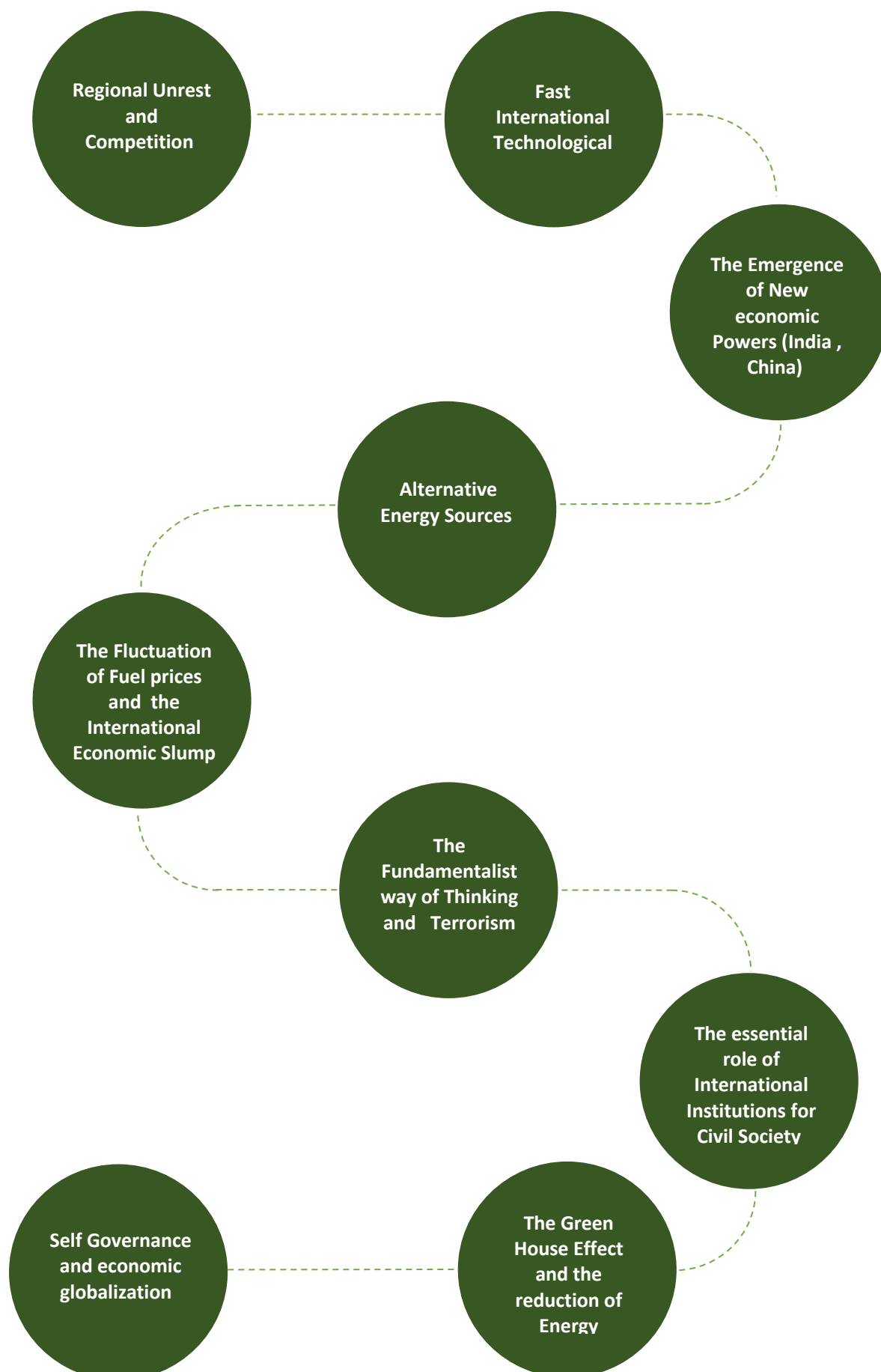


## The Current Local Challenges and Threats That Face The Kingdom





## The Current Local Challenges and Threats That Face The Kingdom





## Who are Targeted by the Strategy?

As this strategy is aiming at transforming the Saudi community into a knowledge society, its benefits cover all groups of the society in addition to those related to it and those who affect its performance from outside the Kingdom. We can summarize the beneficiary groups as follows:

1	The Saudi Citizen	9	The Muslim Nation	17	Arab Islamic & International Organizations
2	The regular residents	10	Expatriate Saudi minds	18	Decision Makers
3	Business men & business women	11	Attracted minds from abroad	19	Government Depts.
4	Women	12	Religious Ulama "scholars"	20	Special needs Persons
5	The Family	13	Producers of Technology & knowledge	21	Chambers of Commerce & Industry
6	Children	14	Pilgrims and Omra visitors	22	Economic Partners
7	Civil Society Institutions	15	Education & research Sector	23	
8	Neighboring countries	16	National & Expatriate manpower	24	



## How to serve these beneficiaries ?

There are several means and methods that can serve these groups and others who may benefit from building a Saudi knowledge society through the following:

1. Activation and the implementation of programs and systems pertaining to the protection of property rights and patents.
2. To establish and develop the basic tools necessary for building a knowledge society.
3. The subjection and development of education as an enabler for knowledge.
4. To disseminate what it means to be knowledge society and its importance to societies.
5. To include scientific and technological incubators.
6. To qualify and train different sectors to be able to deal with technology.
7. To realize the principle of equal opportunities between different groups and spectrums of the society and achieve justices.
8. To raise the standard of living.
- 9.

## Knowledge Society Vision

To be a knowledge society which is productive and globally competitive by the year (1444 AH).

## Knowledge Society Mission

To build a knowledge society globally integrated to achieve sustainable development through investment in our human capital, modern technological infrastructure for the purpose of improving quality of life and prosperity for the Saudi society.



## The strategic Goals

**First: To enhance the Kingdom's strategic position and enable it to become a pioneer in achieving the Islamic vision of development and a center for an international invention network. There are a multitude of initiatives that can be presented in this respect:**

- To build a knowledge society and economy based on the Islamic vision of development, to be capable of providing the needs of the Kingdom and other Islamic countries on the basis that man was put on earth by God and he must strives to provide successful alternatives that lead to achieving sustainable development based on justice and equity.
- To have the Kingdom be an international hub dedicated to Global problem solving which reinforces its desire to attract creative minds from around the world especially from other Islamic countries.
- To develop a system for national innovation and link it with international innovation centers.
- To launch a Saudi strategic fund for technology and innovation with a fixed budget aiming at disseminating the initiative and the spirit of Innovation in the Kingdom and in other developing countries.
- The formation of a group of networks that are composed of international experts who deal with the projects that discuss the developmental challenges as well as creating a data base of development related knowledge, as a priority.
- Allowing access and interacting with anyone regarding data base dedicated to development related knowledge and make it available to all.



**Second: To produce a new generation of Saudi nationals influenced by a culture of knowledge and learning.**

**The most important initiatives to achieve this goal are as follows:**

To concentrate on the development of new generations who will lead the kingdom in its transformation into a knowledge society so that they become the active tools for change – this does not mean the exception of any group in the society from obtaining equal opportunities- in all education phases. At the top of the priority list is the development of human resources by providing educational and training programs with an emphasis on the importance of implementing knowledge as a source of economic growth for the nation in addition to giving the necessary incentives required.

**The programs specified for achieving this strategic goal include:**

- To concentrate on programs that aim to eradicate illiteracy and to introduce electronic education elements if possible.
- To increase the number of students studying in science and technology sections.
- To praise work , discipline and innovation among those who are able to work by incentives and recurring awareness campaigns; and provide training scholarships to international companies.
- To provide a bigger budget for research in all fields especially in science and technology.
- To establish new research centers in the fields of strategic importance to the Kingdom in both public and private sectors.
- To provide additional incentives and rewards for participants who apply and implement knowledge factors through work fields.



### **Third: Diversification of the Kingdom's Economy**

The reduction of the kingdom's dependency on raw fuel export by raising the productivity of different economic sectors and the increase of added value represents a strategic goal towards building the knowledge society which will contribute in increasing the competitive capability of the Kingdom.

#### **The most important initiatives in this regard include:**

- Increasing the added value from fossil fuel and expand the production of second and third generations petrochemical products and others.
- To develop the sources of alternative energy by using the resources in which the Kingdom has a competitive advantage and can be considered a viable source of economic diversification of the kingdoms exports such as solar energy and others.
- Water desalination technology where the Kingdom has extensive experience and represents 40% of the international market.
- To upgrade the service sector in order to meet the kingdom's needs and also the needs of the rest of world. Those services include : health, education, banking, financial services, insurance, transportation and others.





- **Fourth: To enhance the knowledge infrastructure. It is important to enhance the knowledge infrastructure to be able to achieve exponential growth in a knowledge society both economically and socially.**
- **The most significant initiatives in this domain are:**
  - To provide affordable broad band internet communication for all social sections of society.
  - To launch a Saudi fund for the development of electronic content with a view to encourage the development of creative content and to motivate fast development of the knowledge society in the Kingdom.
  - To provide the required tools of technology and infrastructure necessary for providing and facilitating the creative development of electronic content.
  - To review the legal and organizational scope that deals with the development and usage of the internet in order to gradually provide all applications on a larger scale; and at the same time protect the citizen's rights through reinforcing responsible and ethical usage of technology.



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