

**RUW CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND SOCIETY**  
 Royal University for Women,  
 Kingdom of Bahrain  
 19-20 April 2016

<b>DAY 1: Programme</b> <b>19<sup>th</sup> April 2016, AC 02</b>	
<b>Under the patronage of</b> <b>Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa,</b> <b>Wife of the King of Bahrain, President of the Supreme Council for Women</b> <b>Deputised by</b> <b>Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Mariam Bint Hassan Al-Khalifa,</b> <b>Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Women</b>	
<b>8.30-10.00 am</b>	Registration
<b>10.00-11.00 am</b>	Inaugural Session
	<b>National Anthem</b>
	<b>Recitation of the Holy Quran</b>
	<b>Welcome Note from the RUW President</b> Professor Mazin Jumaah, PhD
	<b>Keynote Address by Secretary General, Supreme Council for Women</b> H.E. Hala Mohammed Jaber Al Ansari
	<b>Keynote Address by Provost, West Virginia University</b> Dr. Joyce McConnell
	<b>Keynote Address by Head of Women and Child Rights Committee, Shura Council</b> H.E. Hala Ramzy Fayez
	<b>Presentation of trophies to keynote speakers and sponsors by:</b> H.E. Dr. Shaikha Mariam Bint Hassan Al-Khalifa
	<b>Group Picture</b>
<b>11.00-11.30 am</b>	Inauguration of Poster Session and Exhibition
<b>11.30-12.00 hours</b>	Refreshments
<b>12.00-14.00 hours</b>	<b>Session I: Women in Culture and Society</b>
	<b>Keynote Speaker “Women across Cultures”</b> Shaikha Hala bint Mohammed Al Khalifa Director of Culture and Arts, Acting Director of Bahrain National Museum, Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities “Cultural institutions in nurturing and promoting young talents”
	<b>Keynote Speaker “Women, Innovation and Technology”</b> Ms. Joanne McSheffrey, Chief Technology Officer, Silah Gulf “Role of Women in innovation and Technology”
	<b>Keynote Speaker “Women in Art and Design”</b> Dr. Mona Suri, Academic Vice President, RUW “Sustainable Low Cost Technology for Development of Feminine Hygiene Products: a case study”
	Question & Answer
<b>14.00-15.00 hours</b>	Lunch

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Royal University for Women's research conference held on 19-20 April 2016, explored the dimensions and nuances of "Women and Society." Employing multi- and interdisciplinary approaches, this conference provided a platform to discuss the relationship between women and society in historical, social, legal and creative contexts. The conference aimed to provide an environment for academics, researchers and practitioners to exchange ideas and recent developments on the topic of women and society. The conference fostered networking and collaboration amongst participants to advance specific theories and the general practice of academia. Royal University for Women is the first private, purpose-built, international university in the Kingdom of Bahrain dedicated solely to educating women. This academic year, RUW is celebrating its tenth year in operation as a comfortable environment in which to produce leaders, dynamic decision makers, independent thinkers and community-conscious individuals with a focus on academic excellence and personal development. This conference was an endeavor in celebrating RUW's Journey of excellence.

There were 45 research papers presented in the conference that included 6 keynote speakers and 39 researchers from over 15 countries. 12 posters were also presented by the undergraduate and post graduate students in the Poster session. Further researchers and participants from over 15 countries participated in the conference. A delegation from West Virginia University, Morgantown comprising of 4 Researchers including the keynote speaker Dr Joyce McConnell participated in the conference. 11 members from Dar al Hekma University also presented papers in different sub themes of the conference and attended the event. From RUW 13 faculty members presented their research papers. Thus the conference was well represented by scholars and academicians from across the globe. There were 4 parallel sessions on day 2. The parallel session on Women in Business and Leadership and Women in Innovation and Technology was jointly organised by College of Business and Financial Sciences and College of Information Technology where 10 research papers were presented.

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In parallel session on Women and legislation and human rights organised by College of Law had 7 research scholars presenting their researches. The parallel session on Women in Art and Design organised by College of Art & Design had 9 researchers presenting their papers. Lastly in the parallel session on Women across cultures that was organised by the Centre for General Studies 13 researchers presented their research papers.

### **Inaugural Session**

**Emcee: Dr Mona Suri and Ms Norhan Ahmed Abdel Rahman**

Rapporteur: Ms Rama Nair

Royal University for Women conference on Women and Society was held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, Wife of the King of Bahrain, and President of the Supreme Council for Women at the Royal University for Women premises. Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Mariam Bint Hassan Al-Khalifa, Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Women attended the event on behalf of Supreme Council for Women.

The inaugural session was held in RUW auditorium ACo2, which commenced with the welcome note by the RUW President, Professor Mazin Jumaah, PhD. The President addressed the august gathering about the University's journey of 'A decade of academic excellence' and the continued commitment of RUW to the Kingdom of Bahrain and in the region. Then, he highlighted on the major achievements of the University and the expansion of curriculum offered at RUW. Furthermore, the statistics of RUW graduates were shared with the audience. He also introduced the conference themes for the two day conference as below.

- Women in Business and Leadership
- Women in Innovation and Technology
- Women and legislation and human rights
- Women in Art & Design
- Women across cultures

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The Academic Vice President of RUW, Dr Mona Suri, then introduced the key note speaker, **H.E. Mrs. Hala Mohammed Jaber Al Ansari, Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Women.** Her Excellency, Hala Mohamed Jaber Al Ansari, was the Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW) since 2010 and prior to that Assistant Secretary General, from the establishment of the Supreme Council for Women in 2001. In her keynote address on **“Bahraini Women: Leading by Example”**, Her Excellency, appreciated the Royal University for Women for endorsing women’s aspirations as potential leaders and agents of positive change. She provided a bird’s eye view of Bahraini women’s empowerment and the role of the SCW in bestowing women in the Kingdom of Bahrain with essential and equal rights.

Moreover, Her Excellency, highlighted on the steady increase in women’s participation in higher education, workforce, parliamentary, diplomatic and other pivotal posts in the Kingdom, regionally and internationally. She also reflected with pride on the diligent contributions of the previous generation of women since the 1950s and the advancements currently. Her Excellency, extolled the progressive thinking of the rulers of the Kingdom of Bahrain, His Majesty, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and Her Royal Highness, Shaikha Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, in promoting consistent reforms to enhance the sustainable achievements of Bahraini women.

The next keynote speaker was the **Provost Dr. Joyce McConnell, JD, LLM, West Virginia University**, who is the chief academic officer responsible for the administration of all academic policies, programs, facilities, and budgetary matters. She is committed to WVU’s land-grant mission of ensuring access to exceptional education, supporting and facilitating innovative research, and serving the needs of the state and people of West Virginia. Provost McConnell is also an academic who has dedicated her career to improving legal education. Prior to her appointment as Provost, Dr. McConnell served as Dean of the WVU College of Law (2008-2014), where she expanded the College’s multidisciplinary opportunities

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throughout the University. She made this possible by raising \$36 million in *A State of Minds: The Campaign for West Virginia's University*.

Dr. Joyce McConnell in her key note address delved on **“US Women’s Constitutional History”**. She appreciated the empowerment of women in Bahrain in comparison to the equity of women in US both in the legislature and judiciary for the development of their countries. She accentuated the importance of education, healthcare and workforce participation in both the nations. Dr. McConnell, elucidated on the need for the adoption of stringent laws to fight discrimination against women and safeguard women against domestic violence in both the countries. She also revealed that it took 80 years for US women to gain the right to vote and that the representation of women in the Shura Council was much higher than in the US Senate. She applauded the achievements of Bahrain, Supreme Council for Women and RUW not only regionally but also internationally.

The third Keynote speaker was **H.E. Mrs. Hala Ramzy Fayez**, who was appointed by His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa as a Shura Council Member in December 2010, representing the Bahraini Christian minority. She is currently the Head of the Women and Child Affairs Committee and is also a member of the Services committee for two consecutive terms. Her Excellency was a member of the Finance and Economic affairs committee and a member of Women and Child affairs committee and Human Rights affairs committee from December 2010 to December 2014. A BSc. in Business Administration and a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), her practical experience involves more than 25 years working in areas of financial and management accounting and reporting and strategic planning. She also held positions in The Ministry of Interior, The General Organization for Sea Ports, Gulf Air and The Bahrain National Oil Company.

H.E. Hala Ramzy underscored the challenges and discrepancies faced by women and the need for giving due importance to women and elaborated the same in her discourse on the **“Role of Women in Parliament in the Kingdom of Bahrain and in the Arab Region”**. She

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commended the dual role of women in contributing to the sustainable societal development while preserving her natural role and primary task of nurturing the family and nation at large.

For the presentation of trophies to the Keynote speakers and the sponsors Mr. Essa Najibi, EXCO Chairman of Royal University for Women and Prof. Mazin Jumaah, President of Royal University for Women, escorted **Her Excellency, Dr. Shaikha Mariam Bint Hassan Al-Khalifa, the Deputy President of Supreme Council for Women**, to the stage to do the honors.

List of Trophy Recipients	
No.	Name
1.	Dr. Joyce McConnell, Provost, West Virginia University
2.	H.E. Hala Ramzy Fayez, Head of Women and Child Rights Committee, Shura Council
3.	Shaikha Hala bint Mohammed Al Khalifa , Director of Culture and Arts, Acting Director of Bahrain National Museum, Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities
4.	Ms. Joanne McSheffrey , Chief Technology Officer, Silah Gulf
5.	Dr. Mona Suri, Academic Vice President, RUW
6.	Dr. Abdulrahman Jawahery, President, Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC)
7.	Mr Ammar Awachi, Tamkeen representative
8.	Ms Faiza Saeed, Ahli United Bank (AUB)

As part of the conference, a poster display session and RUW Exhibition was inaugurated by Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Mariam Bint Hassan Al-Khalifa. It showcased the research work of 12 Masters and undergraduate students from RUW and other universities. Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Mariam Bint Hassan Al-Khalifa talked to the budding researchers about their projects and encouraged them for their academic pursuits.

Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Mariam Bint Hassan Al-Khalifa then toured the exhibition organised by the College of Art & Design, from across colleges and the Centre for General Studies, who presented their work through posters and exhibits. The exquisite exhibits from College of Art & Design included student's work in the form of roll ups, models, paintings, furniture pieces and other forms in Foundation programme, Interior design, fashion design

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and graphic design. Further excellent work from the Masters' students was also showcased as paintings and artwork. These were well appreciated by the guests. The exhibits also included students work from College of Law, Business and financial sciences and Centre for general studies.

The second part of the conference resumed with the Session II titled 'Women in Culture and Society' at **12.00pm** on Day 1 of RUW Conference.

### **Session I: Women in Culture and Society**

**Date: 19 April, 2016 (day one) 12.00-14.00 hours**

[Rapporteurs: Dr. Samar Al-Barghouthi, Dr. Nessreen Elmelegy](#)

The session started at 12:15 PM, Ms. Nourhan Abdelrahman welcomed the audience and introduced the first Keynote Speaker Shaikha Hala bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, Director of Culture and Arts, Acting Director of Bahrain National Museum, Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities. Ms. Nourhan presented the achievements of our first keynote speaker

Shaikha Hala Bint Mohammed Al Khalifa started her talk under the theme of **“Women in Culture and Society”** titled **“Cultural institutions in nurturing and promoting young talents”**

The talk started with thanking RUW for the invitation, indicated her life-long passion for academia. She started with few words about her passion in Art. She gave the audience an idea about the support that the national Museum – as cultural centre- offer to the young talents in Bahrain. In her talk H.E. Sh. Hala Alkhalifa mentioned that, everything starts with a line, a word, a sketch or a building structure, that's why museums should be an educational institute that transform the lines and simple concepts into culture and art.

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Also through wide range of activities museums can link the child with art, and the visit to a museum can be more than a walk among the arts of others. The culture of museums should be reshaped by specific tailored trip, introducing new vocabulary to young audience. Studio setting in the museum put the children hands on, to feel and shape.

Cultural institutions are targeting families and parents to play major role to raise the awareness in art, to insure that culture is not only for the elites but it targets everyone in the society. She spoke about some art activities that happened, like the workshop (Blend the Ingredient) which held by 6 artists and 6 chiefs 6 nights; a coordinated efforts to link the children and the family by mixing colors and mixing ingredient to create a hybrid art/food structures. Food and art can communicate new ideas, and new themes to be explored. The amazing results covered various topics, women & identity, motherhood, exquisite dishes.

The audience were appreciating the efforts happened in Bahrain National Museum. In the end Dr. Mona Suri, Academic Vice President, RUW, mentioned that Bahrain has a lot of exhibitions, and events in Art crafts, and she asked Sh. Hala about any initiatives by the National Museum in reviving the traditional arts, and Sh. Hala answered that they have an important agenda, and they are working on it in partnership with academic institutions like RUW.

At 13.00 hours Ms. Joanne McSheffrey, Chief Technology Officer, Silah Gulf, started her talk under the theme of **“Women, Innovation and Technology”** titled **“Role of Women in innovation and Technology”**.

She Started with thanking RUW and she explained that, her journey in the world of technology, starting to study criminology, then changed to Media, after graduation she couldn't find a job in her town and had to move to London, and she got accepted in her first job as IT administrator, because she was the only woman applied for the job. She had a lot of mentoring, and she was able to mentor other women, travelling most of the time to set up solutions. She also explained that she was the only woman leading a team of 25 men, she was in charge of setting contacts through contact centers.

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She learned through her journey to conquer her fears, not to be inhibited by it. Then she talked about her job in Bahrain, which was around creating technology solutions. One of the major projects was Qatar air was, which was a challenge for her, she was the first to introduce the cloud solution in Bahrain. McSheffrey believes that diversity is the key component for creativity, without it we can't have innovation or culture, she adds "we sell technology solutions to our customers".

The last part of her speech was about the wrong perception about women in technology, many challenges faces women to change this perception, and women should stand up to the challenge.

The audience interacted well with Ms. McSheffrey, questions were asked to Ms. McSheffrey about the Priorities for women, another was about the future of technology, the last question was about her advice to IT students and she answered that they have to keep attaching with the trends, be creative, and be innovative.

At 13:40 hours Dr. Mona Suri, Academic Vice President, RUW, started her talk under the theme of **"Women in Art and Design"** titled **"Sustainable Low Cost Technology for Development of Feminine Hygiene Products: a case study"**

Dr. Mona Suri presented her project as it is done by women for women, she explained that the branded sanitary napkins available in Indian market are affordable only by the middle and high-income group women. Women of the lower income category have no option but to use old cloth rags during menstruation. Dr. Mona explained that the technology applied in this project, created a type of sanitary napkins with lower cost, which will be affordable for women with low income, also Dr. Mona referred that the technology has been applied in this research created facilities by which the low-income rural population of India shall be able to generate a good income source.

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She further discussed how projects have been done at RUW with the community specifically with BAPCO and the Supreme Council for Women emphasizing the needs of women in Kingdom of Bahrain and in future also such research projects will be taken up by the university to contribute to the society.

In the end of this session Dr. Mona Suri, Academic Vice President, RUW, thanked the Keynote speakers and all the audience and she explained the procedures for the next day.