



About Government Procurement Program

Proceeding from the government's interest in the SMEs sector, the Cabinet has issued two resolutions (Resolution No. 2416-06 for 2017 and Resolution No. 2516-04 for 2019), which allocated 20% share of the value of government procurements and tenders for SMEs, in addition to giving them a 10% advantage in the auctions of public utilities that are held within the establishments of government departments and in government tenders as well. In this context, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism has been tasked with coordinating with all entities concerned with setting criteria and operational mechanisms to evaluate and qualify these enterprises to enter into tenders and procurements for ministries and governmental companies.

As a preliminary step, the Ministry, represented by the SMEs Development Directorate, has coordinated with the mentioned authorities in the first decision to form a working group that included representatives of 12 competent government entities to develop operational plans and discuss mechanisms and criteria for adoption. Moreover, the Directorate has organized four workshops during the period from November 2017 to September 2018, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) and with the presence of the action group and a group of SMEs to discuss the program, learn about the relevant U.S. model and come up with necessary implementation recommendations, whereas, the most important recommendations approved by the Working Group and the SME Development Board, chaired by the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, included:

- A) Develop an integrated mechanism to implement the Cabinet's resolutions on Government Procurement.
- B) Specify criteria for SMEs eligible to enter the government procurement program.
- C) Develop an online registration system for SMEs (SMEs Registration System).
- D) Commence the implementation of the first phase of the program by enabling the SMEs to obtain the advantage as per the resolutions.

Accordingly, the Directorate, in collaboration with the Ministry's technical support team, developed and launched an advanced online platform for registration and classifying SMEs on April 16, 2019, so that they can register and benefit from the resolutions in accordance with the criteria set. Last but not least, Tender Board approved executive procedures for granting this advantage as of December 15, 2019, and as a result, in 2020, 146 government tenders were awarded to SMEs among those who hold SMEs classification certificates with a net worth of 55 million Bahraini Dinar, accounting for 7% of the total award values for the same period, where 59 SMEs have benefited from that, while the number of bids received from these enterprises amounted to 539 bids, in which 151 SMEs holding a classification certificate participated.