Bahrain

In the early days of the spread of the COVID-19, Bahrain imposed restrictions on the right to freedom of movement, and decided to close its borders, including over 1000 of its citizens who belong to the Shia sect were stranded in Iran.

Some of the stranded citizens died cause of COVID-19 and suffered other difficulties; some were forcibly evacuated from their residencies, because of delayed payments. The government response was slow, and although it declared an evacuation plan, yet, the implementation was slow and took months.

The Office monitored the situation and advocated for the return of the stranded citizens by interacting with Bahraini officials to inquire about measures put in place or taken by the government to evacuate them.

Monitoring a human rights situation and advocating on behalf of the concerned population was an effective intervention. In addition, sharing policy documents with UNCT and national stakeholders, and promoting human rights based approach to Bahrain’s COVID-19 response was very helpful.