

Over the past three decades (1970 - 2000), the Saudi economy has witnessed a considerable transformation in economic, social and urban aspects of life. The transformation was brought about by extensive government investments within the framework of five-year development plans to lay down the social and physical infrastructure of the country. The present Eighth Five-Year Plan, for the years 2005 to 2009, outlines objectives crucial to economic growth, while reaffirming the government's commitment to free trade and the development of a free market economy, with major private sector participation.