**1) What social protection systems are in place for children in your country? Please provide examples of specific laws and regulations, measures, policies, and programmes directed at ensuring children’s access to inclusive social protection.**

* In 2020, Brunei Darussalam has established a national guide for child protection called the **National Framework on Child Protection (NFCP)**. NFCP was established with the aims **to further develop the existing child protection ecosystem in Brunei** from 2020 to 2024. This national guide focuses on children and young persons (CYP) who are under 18 years old and also sets strategies for addressing key national priorities on child protection through a whole-of-nation and whole-of-government approach.
* Under the Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA), a child is defined as those who has not attained the age of 14 years. Whereas a young person is defined as those who has attained the age of 14 years but has not attained the age of 18 years. The **Children and Young Persons Act (Chapter 219) (CYPA)** is the **key legislation that protects children** **under the age of 18 years old** and is enforced by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.
* The formulation of NFCP is driven by the Brunei Vision 2035 (*Wawasan 2035*). Brunei Vision 2035 is a long-term national vision where by 2035 Brunei Darussalam is to be recognized as a nation whose people are highly educated, skilled and accomplished; has a high quality of life and has a dynamic and sustainable economy. In addition to this, the formulation of NFCP is also driven by existing legislations, the Plan of Action on the Well-being of Children (POA) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Furthermore, the formulation of NFCP is also guided by Brunei Darussalam’s national philosophy of Malay Islamic Monarchy; Sustainable Developmental Goals; concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Brunei Darussalam to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and the Regional Plan of Action on Violence Against Children (2016-2025) under the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
* Moreover, as the nature of child protection cases has multifactorial needs and interventions; it is necessary to develop a standardized, agreed method and means of identification and reporting decisions to be used by the child protection agencies. Currently, Brunei Darussalam is developing **evidence-informed assessment tools** called; **Sectoral Assessment Protocol (SAP) and the Child Protection Reporting Protocol (CPRP)** with the assistance of Ministry of Social and Family Development, Singapore (MSF). The SAP and CPRP is a result of the accumulation of experiences, feedback and contributions of 332 professionals who come into contact with children in their line of work namely those from the enforcement sector, health, education and social services sector.
* The **Sectoral Assessment Protocol (SAP)** is a sector specific guide that assists first responders from key sectors (Enforcement, Health, Education and Social Services) to **identify possible child protection cases**. The possible child protection cases are categorized into the three traffic lights – red, yellow and green to indicate the level of risk, the parties that will need to be involved for each type of case and the expected response time.
* The **Child Protection Reporting Protocol (CPRP)** is the **complementary guide to SAP** that are used by internal experts or focal persons on each child protection sectors. This **will guide users on the next course of action that will need to be done** for each type of case. The CPRP has included the standard operating procedure (SOPs) from each sector for high risk cases (red indicator from SAP).
* Other initiatives that has been taken in order to ensure children has access to social protection is the **development of reporting mechanism/ helpline especially for children**, called **Child Helpline 121** (***Talian ANAK 121)***. This helpline was launched on 1st October 2019 by the Community Development Department (JAPEM) which is a 24-hour toll free child helpline. This helpline aims to increase social service access, highlights the importance of children’s well-being and this number can be contacted by children for any issues they would like to voice out or report. In addition to this, there is also a helpline called **Hope Line 145 (*Talian Harapan 145)*** developed by the Ministry of Health which is a line that provides help and support to the public especially in Brunei in dealing with issues related to mental and emotional health.

**2) What are the main gaps and challenges to children’s enjoyment of social protection in law, policy, and practice in your country and the impacts on children’s rights? Please provide any relevant statistical or disaggregated data based on age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, migration status, or other categories. Please consider the specific situation of marginalized children and those in vulnerable situations in your response.**

* One of the main gaps and challenges to child protection in Brunei Darussalam is **culture**. One example is on sexual abuse, where it is a taboo to be discussed in Brunei. Some victims are ashamed to report sexual abuse cases and sometimes, family encourages the victims to not report or drop the case in order to protect their family name or they do not want to engage with court procedures. Another example is underage pregnancy (with adult partner/ Unlawful Carnal Knowledge) where instead of reporting for rape, some family encourages the victims or the victims herself chose to get married in order to protect their family name.



\*Source: Ministry of Health, Brunei Darussalam

* In addition to this, there is a gap to children’s **rights for identity** in Brunei where there is no connection between hospitals and immigration to register birth certificate automatically. Some family delay their child’s birth certificate registration for many years up until they reach the age of schools (5 years old).
* Moreover, there is also challenges to children’s **rights for education** where in Brunei Darussalam, only secondary schools have school bus provided to children who comes from low-income family or family with transportation issues. For primary schools, only children at Year 6 can stay at hostels if they have attendance issues. Therefore, children below Year 6 will not be able to attend school if they have transportation issues.

**3) What are the good practices initiated by the Government to ensure that social protection benefits the rights of children in your country?**

* In Brunei Darussalam, the Government practices ‘**Whole of Nation Approach**’ in tackling child protection and ensuring children are safe and their needs are fulfilled. As stated in the National Framework of Child Protection (NFCP), there are four main sectors involved in the protection of children namely the social services sector, health sector, education sector and enforcement sector. This includes community involvement such as those from the private sector, religious leaders, non-government organizations (NGO), media and volunteers. Brunei Darussalam’s ratification to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 27th December 1995 is a testimony to the nation’s continuous commitment towards fulfilling and protecting the rights of children alongside with the dual Civil and Syariah legal systems in Brunei (Islamic Family Law Act 1999 and Children and Young Persons Act 2006).
* In addition to this, Brunei Darussalam is also developing standardized **evidence-informed assessment tools** to be used by the child protection agencies as the means of identifying and reporting child protection cases called; **Sectoral Assessment Protocol (SAP) and the Child Protection Reporting Protocol (CPRP)** with the assistance of Ministry of Social and Family Development, Singapore (MSF). The SAP and CPRP is a result of the accumulation of experiences, feedback and contributions of 332 professionals who come into contact with children in their line of work namely those from the enforcement sector, health, education and social services sector.
* The **Sectoral Assessment Protocol (SAP)** is a sector specific guide that assists first responders from key sectors (Enforcement, Health, Education and Social Services) to **identify possible child protection cases**. The possible child protection cases are categorized into the three traffic lights – red, yellow and green to indicate the level of risk, the parties that will need to be involved for each type of case and the expected response time.
* The **Child Protection Reporting Protocol (CPRP)** is the **complementary guide to SAP** that are used by internal experts or focal persons on each child protection sectors. This **will guide users on the next course of action that will need to be done** for each type of case. The CPRP has included the standard operating procedure (SOPs) from each sector for high risk cases (red indicator from SAP).
* Furthermore, the Community Development Department (JAPEM) under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports have also continued to **increase the awareness towards child protection** matters including policy, legal and ethical aspects, monitoring mechanisms, coordination between agencies, social services, family support, community involvement, prevention, child involvement and capacity building through **presentations of NFCP, SAP and CPRP** to Government officers, schools, health sectors and community leaders since September 2021.

**4) Are there examples of how measures and responses to alleviate poverty through social protection systems in emergency situations or, for example, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, have positively affected children’s rights, particularly to social security?**

* The Community Development Department (JAPEM) have started **Welfare Helpline 141** **(*Talian Kebajikan 141)*** on 31st July 2006. It is a toll-free number and operates for 24 hours. The provision of the Welfare Helpline 141 by JAPEM is to provide a **better and efficient service space and assistance** to clients with problems, especially in cases of abuse, neglect, protection, exploitation, advisory services, family problems and so on so that attention and action will be taken according to the priority of the cases concerned.
* During the COVID-19 pandemic, **Sukarelawan Belia COVID-19 task force** **was established** for volunteering body for COVID-19. The volunteering body consists of all NGOS, Government officials, Private officials and individuals from Brunei Darussalam. This task force is operated under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and works closely with the Ministry of Health and National Disaster Management Centre in **providing support to those who are affected by the pandemic** by providing food rations to houses, volunteering at hospitals, health centers, schools, mosques. Airport and others.
* The Ministry of Education in collaboration with Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications (MTIC) and the Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AITI) have also organized a **Device Donation Campaign** to **support online learning** and to **help students in need** as **an effort in addressing the impact of COVID-19** in Brunei Darussalam. The public, private sectors and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) were welcomed to donate new and used laptops or tablets. The first Device Donation Campaign was conducted from 11 April 2020 to 14 May 2020, where a total of 1,696 computers and tablets were donated and distributed to underprivileged students.

**5) How can States deliver more effectively to ensure the effective implementation of universal social protection for children, including through international cooperation?**

* Brunei Darussalam’s ratification to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 27th December 1995 is a testimony to the nation’s continuous commitment towards fulfilling and protecting the rights of children alongside with the dual Civil and Syariah legal systems in Brunei (Islamic Family Law Act 1999 and Children and Young Persons Act 2006). In 1989, the United Nations produced a convention that is still used by countries under the UN, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). With the CRC, it reflects the idea that children, even if they are under the age of 18, are also individuals who have their own rights. The CRC is in the form of articles, which contains 54 articles, each of which will explain what the rights of children are.
* The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in Brunei Darussalam have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Republic of Singapore on 28th September 2020 that will constitute the foundation for collaborative social development programmes through shared best practices and exchange of information, work attachments and training programmes to be hosted and conducted by the Parties on social work, social service and social protection pertaining to the children, the elderly women and people with disabilities; and other forms of collaborative projects and cooperation.