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The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and would like to refer to the letter received regarding the call for Information for the preparation of the rights of the child and inclusive social protection report -Human Rights Council Resolution 49/20. In that regard, the Permanente Mission has the honor to attach herewith information from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the afore-mentioned request.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurance of its highest consideration.



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### Measures Taken by Saudi Arabia to Promote and Protect Child's Rights

Referring to Human Rights Council's Resolution No. 49/20 on the Child's Rights, which requests the High Commissioner to prepare a report on the child's rights and inclusive social protection, to be submitted to the Council at its fifty-fourth session. The report aims to explore (1) Legal and political framework related to child's rights and inclusive social protection. (2) Main gaps and challenges facing children's access to social protection and its impact on children's rights. (3) Elements of a child rights-based approach to inclusive social protection. (4) Good practices for inclusive social protection for children. (5) Measures to ensure effective implementation of inclusive social protection for children, including through international cooperation.

Accordingly, this note has been prepared to answer the questions contained in the questionnaire<sup>1</sup> related to the said report, as follows:

- 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.**
  - Issued the Child Protection Law by Royal Decree No. (M/14) dated, as amended by Royal Decree No. (M/72) 09/03/2022. The Law included the necessary provisions to protect the child's rights, and defined the child as every person who has not exceeded 18 years old, in accordance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia, and the international laws and conventions to which Saudi Arabia has become a party. The Law stipulated that in the event of parental separation, the mother has the right to custody of her children, except by a court ruling.
  - Issued the Law on Protection from Abuse by Royal Decree No. (M/52) dated 09/03/2022. This Law protects from abuse of all kinds, provides assistance, treatment, social protection centers, and social, psychological, and health care for its victims, and holds the perpetrator accountable and punishes the perpetrator, emphasizing spreading awareness about the concept of abuse and its consequences, and addressing behavioral phenomena in the society. The Law obligated everyone who witness a case of abuse to report it immediately and stipulated a special provision obligating every civil or military

<sup>1</sup> [Call for inputs on rights of the child and inclusive social protection](#)



public employee and every worker in the private sector who witness a case of abuse - under his work - to inform his employer of the case when he became aware of it. The employer, in turn, shall inform the competent authority or the police of the case of abuse once they become aware. The Law also affirms that the identity of the person reporting a case of abuse may not be disclosed except with his consent or in cases specified by the Implementing Regulations of the Law. It should be noted that the penalty increased if it is associated with any of the following: The person who was exposed to abuse is a person with a disability, one of the parents, someone, over (sixty) years old, or the pregnant woman if that resulted in miscarriage of her fetus. The penalty also is increased if the abuse occurs in the place of work, study, or worship, or if the abuse occurred from those who are entrusted with applying the provisions of this Law, and if the abuse occurred coupled with the use of a weapon, or if there were multiple acts of abuse in the incident.

- Issued the Personal Status Law by Royal Decree No. (M/73) dated 08/03/2022. The Law deals with the provisions regulating the family relationship. It aims to preserve the stability of the family, as the family is the essential component of society, and control the discretionary power of the judiciary in a way that enhances the stability of judicial rulings and limits the conflict of rulings. The Law also aims to frame relations between family members, protect their rights, and accelerate the settlement of family disputes. The Law specified the minimum age for marriage at (18) years, affirming the woman's right to her husband's maintenance over her regardless of her financial condition, proving the woman's right to annul the marriage contract unilaterally in several cases, and enabling the woman to document divorce and review even if the husband did not agree to the same. The Law also obliges the husband to fairly compensate the wife if he fails to document the facts of the personal status in several cases.
- Issued the High order No. 25803 dated 25/02/2018 regarding providing legal assistance to women and children in cases of abuse. This Royal Decree includes directing the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, in coordination with the Saudi Bar Association, to obtain a periodic list of the names and addresses of donating lawyers to provide Legal assistance and cooperation with them.
- Establishing a center for receiving complaints, which is concerned with receiving reports of cases of abuse. To enhance the mechanisms for receiving complaints related to abuse, the complaints receiving center was launched on 20/03/2016, with a cadre



of women working 24 hours a day to receive all reports of domestic violence through a unified number (1919) and to form protection teams in all regions and governorates to receive reports. According to Article (17) of the Criminal Procedures Law, the Public Prosecution institutes criminal cases and investigates crimes in which individuals have a private right if it deems it a public interest.

- Dealing immediately with the reports by communicating with the case, evaluating the situation of the case in terms of seriousness, conducting a medical evaluation for the case, if necessary, and taking all necessary and appropriate measures to deal with the case.
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.**

Saudi Arabia has taken preventive measures to ensure social protection to children by establishing the Human Rights Commission - an independent oversight entity - to promote and protect human rights for all without discrimination. This commission receives complaints related to children's rights, takes legal measures regarding the complaints, and addresses practices that may constitute a violation of their rights through monitoring, awareness, and other measures. Human Rights Commission also ensures that the concerned government entities implement the laws and regulations related to human rights, detect abuses, and take the necessary legal measures in this regard. It also ensures that the government entities implement the relevant international human rights treaties ratified by Saudi Arabia and that those entities take the necessary measures to implement them.

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

Violence complaints and communications are received at the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development by the Receiving Center, which was established on (20 March 2016), that works for (24) hours, to receive all domestic violence reports through a unified number



(1919), and the National Center For security operations (911) and through the electronic application designated for that, protection teams were formed in all regions and governorates to receive communications. The reports that the center receives are referred to the social protection units deployed in all regions of the Kingdom, which are responsible for completing the necessary procedures, assisting the victims, and referring those who have sufficient evidence to commit a crime to the (Public Prosecution) to complete the regular procedures according to what the protection system stipulated.

**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?**

Several measures have been taken that have contributed to combating the Corona pandemic (Covid-19) through two parallel tracks: limiting the spread of this pandemic, providing high-quality health care to those affected, and addressing its economic effects. The measures taken by Saudi Arabia are based on a human rights approach, as these measures are based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination and the effective implementation of the principle of complementarity, interdependence, and indivisibility of human rights stipulated in the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action 1993, through the protection and fulfillment of other rights affected by the Corona pandemic (Covid-19). In addition, the economic reforms did not stop during this crisis, and among the measures related to social protection taken by Saudi Arabia during this pandemic are the following:

- The continuous deposit of the aid amounts into the social security account. This account provides cash and in-kind aid to beneficiaries of women and men alike, as it has not witnessed a decrease from the previous level concerning the amounts deposited. A ministerial resolution (Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development) was issued stipulating that no beneficiary of the social security pension be dropped during this crisis, and more than (two billion Saudi riyals), equivalent to more than (533) million US dollars, have been deposited for social security beneficiaries ( April 2020).
- To ensure the continuity of education during corona pandemic (Covid-19), the "Madrasati" platform was established, an e-learning management system that includes many electronic educational tools that contribute to achieving the educational goals of curricula and courses.



- Taking the necessary precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus in detention centers and social welfare institutions.
5. **How can States deliver more effectively to ensure the effective implementation of universal social protection for children, including through international cooperation?**

Through continued cooperation between inter government entities concerned with child protection and civil society institutions to provide optimal means for inclusive social protection for children.

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