**Saudi Arabia's inputs on the right to education questionnaire**

This document was prepared to contribute to the Special Rapporteur’s report on education, by answering the questionnaire[[1]](#footnote-1) she prepared related to conducting the achievements made by the mandate on the right to education over the last 25 years, and identifying the main current challenges to the right to education at the current time, and critical issues of attention in the future.

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| **Question Number** | **Answer** |
| 1 | Accordingly, the education issues approached through the lens of human rights in Saudi Arabia, as articles 13 and 30 of the Basic Law of Governance stipulate that the objectives of education include: provide young people with knowledge and skills, and to prepare them to be useful members in building their society. Further, the State shall provide public education and shall be committed to combating illiteracy. Education in Saudi Arabia is compulsory based on the Council of Ministers’ Resolution No. (139) dated 14/06/2004, which stipulates that education is compulsory for those between the ages of (6-15) years. Further, illiteracy is combated by activating the Adult Education and Literacy Law issued by Royal Decree No. (M/22) dated 20/07/1972, which aims, according to Article (2) hereof, to eradicate illiteracy among all citizens of their different categories. With regard to free education, Article (233) of the general policy for education in Saudi Arabia, issued by the Council of Ministers’ Resolution No. (779) dated 26-27/11/1969, stipulates that education is free of charge in all its types and stages. |
| 2 | Everyone enjoys the right to education on an equal basis. Saudi Arabia’s laws do not include any discrimination that prevents any person from enjoying his/her right to education. The interest given to education within Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 resulted in a number of accelerated developments and reforms. Such developments and reforms include: providing educational opportunities for all in a sustainable manner, promoting equal opportunities, promoting free education, promoting equality in the field of education, developing curricula, taking care of the performance of male and female teachers, educational supervision, school buildings and equipment, developing tools and means of measurement and evaluation, educational counseling and guidance programs, and caring for people with visual and hearing disabilities and intellectual and autistic disorders, and compulsory enrollment of male and female students with disabilities in education. The budget allocated to the Ministry of Education, Universities and the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation for the year 2020 amounted to more than (192) billion Saudi riyals.  The Education and Training Evaluation Commission was developed, as the Authority’s Bylaws was issued pursuant to the Council of Ministers’ Resolution No. (108) dated 23/10/2018. The Commission is the competent authority in Saudi Arabia for evaluation, measurement and accreditation of qualifications in education and training in the public and private sectors to raise their quality and adequacy and their contribution to serving the economy and national development. The Commission aims at building evaluation and accreditation systems - including institutional and programmatic ones - in education and training, and evaluating the performance of schools, higher education institutions and training institutions. |
| 3 | Saudi Arabia has given great attention to the right to education, based on its constitutional principles and values, which are stipulated in the Basic Law of Governance, especially what is stated in Articles 13 and 30 of the Basic Law of Governance in that the objectives of education include: provide young people with knowledge and skills, and to prepare them to be useful members in building their society. Further, the State shall provide public education and shall be committed to combating illiteracy.  The strategic plan of the Ministry of Education within the National Transformation Program included improved recruitment, preparation, qualification and development of teachers. It also approved the comprehensive framework initiative for the continuous professional development of teachers and educational leaders, with the aim of improving the qualitative level of teacher and educational leadership performance, organizing professional development processes, and adopting the initiative to reduce administrative burdens on teachers and educational leaders to ensure focus on the educational process to reduce costs and improve the quality of support services by separating all non-educational services from education departments, education offices, and schools and allocating the same to an independent unit, and launching an expertise project to train male and female teachers internationally with the aim of sending (5000) male and female teachers within five years to the educationally developed countries. The total number of training programs provided to male and female teachers for the year 2020 was (47,830) training programs, and the total number of trainees in these programs for the year 2020 was (2,452,979) male and female trainees.  Saudi Arabia is currently working on implementing a time plan to build model buildings commensurate with the required educational environment, and the steady increase in the number of male and female students in classrooms at all level. It also works to address the needs of people with learning difficulties, including strengthening the mechanisms of diagnosis, follow-up and evaluation, setting appropriate mechanisms to ensure and prevent leakage from schools, following up on adherence to the legal principles related to compulsory education procedures. Such mechanisms also include increasing the number of laboratories in schools, paying attention to the social service specialization in schools, and ensuring that outputs of higher education commensurate with the needs of the labor market within the framework of implementing the "Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030", and finding a healthy diet for male and female students in schools.  At the regional and international level, Saudi Arabia has paid attention to humanitarian and relief action in education sector in several countries, by providing aids that supports many educational institutions and programs to help those affected by crises to continue education. The total aid provided by Saudi Arabia to the education sector until January 2022 reach to an amount of (7,173,167,286) US dollars, including educational aid provided through the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Action, amounted until January 2022 to an amount of (201,689,258) US dollars, with (109) projects. |
| 4 | Article (233) of the general policy for education in Saudi Arabia, issued by the Council of Ministers’ Resolution No. (779) dated 26-27/11/1969, confirmed that education is free of charge in all its types and stages.  According to statistical estimates for the year 2020, the completion rate for primary education reached (99.5%), the completion rate for intermediate education reached (93.13%), the completion rate for secondary education reached (98%), and the number of universities in Saudi Arabia reached (29) public universities and (54) private universities and colleges until the end of the year 2020.  Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 included striving to bridge the gap between the outputs of higher education and the requirements of the labor market. It aims at developing general education and directing students towards appropriate career and professional options, and providing them with the opportunity for rehabilitation and flexibility in moving between various educational paths. There is a goal that five Saudi universities ranked among the best (200) international universities by the year (2030), and this will be achieved through the preparation of advanced educational curricula that focus on basic skills in addition to developing talents and building personality. The teacher’s role will be strengthened and he/she will be qualified, with the creation of a comprehensive database to monitor the academic progress for students from early education to advanced stages. The "National Transformation" program, which is one of the Vision's programs, included a number of initiatives related to respecting and protecting the right to education and fulfilling it for all. These initiatives include: providing an educational structure that contain the children of expatriates, with the aim of expanding international schools and universities in providing high-quality education to the children of expatriates, by obtaining relevant global credits, increasing education options, and facilitating admission procedures. |
| 5 | All the human rights in Saudi Arabia are justiciable, including the right to education. Saudi Arabia’s laws guarantee the right to resort to the judiciary for all persons alike. Article (47) of the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that “The right of litigation shall be guaranteed equally to citizens and residents in the Kingdom”. The judicial systems, decisions and instructions issued by the judicial authorities have included provisions that facilitate recourse to the judiciary and reinforce the principle of equality before the judiciary.  The Ministry of Justice has activated the justice system and enabled the beneficiaries to complete their legal and judicial procedures during the Corona pandemic (COVID-19), **and the beneficiaries were enabled to complete their** judicial procedures without interruption, under the slogan "remote justice". |
| 6 | The Basic Law of Governance and the Saudi laws emanating from it guarantee all human rights and basic freedoms for all on an equal basis, including the right to education.  Issued the Royal Decree No. (8248) dated 01/10/2020 approving that the Ministry of Education receives the children from groups residing in Saudi Arabia irregularly, in order to enable them to enjoy their right to education on an equal basis with other children.  The Ministry of Education has established programs rooting the values of coexistence and acceptance of opinions, including student dialogue programs (training on the culture of dialogue and literature of difference), school theater programs (to address national, educational and social issues), student clubs and centers (to enhance the spirit of participation). These programs also include programs for integrating students with minor disabilities with normal students (to accustom them to accepting the other), involving students in international competitions (to achieve their integration with their peers in various countries of the world), program for preventing bullying among students, program for detecting cases of child abuse and early intervention for teachers, counselors and leaders of schools.  School curricula are constantly reviewed to ensure their consistency with national and international human rights standards, including that they do not include anything that leads - in any way - to the perpetuation of any form of racism, hatred and stereotyping against women and girls. About (185) omissions, (171) replacements and (77) amendments have been made to the contents of the curricula at all educational levels, given the age stages and levels of maturity, aiming at achieving the values of tolerance, coexistence, and a positive outlook on life. These measures aim to ensure that there is no content that may lead to racism, hatred, and discrimination against women and girls through abuse or misuse. |
| 7 | Does not apply. |
| 8 | Does not apply. |
| 9 | Covied-19 pandemic has created challenges for societies to ensure the continuity of education. Saudi Arabia has been keen to ensure the continuity of education by making it available to all on an equal basis. Multiple alternatives to attending education have been provided to ensure access for all students through: (Madrasati Platform, 24 educational channels, providing needy families with computers and SIM cards (in partnership with civil society organizations. There were many initiatives, including "Attaa" initiative, which included providing students with free SIM cards, tablets, and providing mobile classroom cars to guide beneficiaries on how to deal with the platform. Further, the National E-Learning Center also played an active role during the Corona pandemic (Covid-19) represented in preparing the national plan for education continuity, collecting and analyzing university plans, facilitating access and sharing electronic content, implementing and launching the education continuity portal, following up on the implementation of plans for continuing education, communicating with universities, providing recommendations and consultations, and providing many electronic platforms. |
| 10 | * Improving the quality of education in poor and remote areas. * Digital transformation of the education system. |

1. [the call for inputs](https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2023/call-contributions-right-education-advances-and-challenges) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)