



Ref. No: 413/0964

16 October 2023

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 inputs on enhancing capacity-building for local governments to incorporate human rights into all their work, as a basis for developing guidance tools on human rights education for local governments. In that regard, the Permanent Mission has the honor to attach herewith contribution of 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 Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, the assurance of its highest consideration.





Key Achievements and Developments in Promoting Human Rights Culture

This Document has been prepared in response to a request from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in accordance with Human Rights Council Resolution No. 51/12, to enhance the content of the summary report of expert meeting concerning bolstering capacity-building for local governments in integrating human rights into all their activities. The following highlights the measures taken by the Kingdom in this regard:

1. **What capacity building initiatives have been taken to implement/incorporate human rights in local administration?**
 - a. **Please provide information on institutional structures for coordination and harmonization of capacity building initiatives.**
 - b. **Please provide information on the involvement of civil society, the private sector, academia, etc. in capacity building initiatives.**
 - c. **Please provide information on any monitoring or evaluation mechanisms assessing the effectiveness of capacity building initiatives and their impact on the promotion and protection of human rights at the local level.**
- **institutional structures**
 - Several ministries, governmental and non-governmental institutions within the Kingdom are dedicated to disseminating and promoting a human rights culture and education, these include: Ministries of (Education, Culture, and Media).
 - the Human Rights Commission that is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights in accordance with Islamic law, applicable regulations, international standards across all domains, and raising awareness thereof. King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue also aims to address national issues (social, cultural, political, economic, educational, etc.) through channels of intellectual dialogue and its mechanisms.



- In addition to these, civil society institutions play a crucial role in this domain, these include: National Society for Human Rights, associations and institutions concerned with women's rights, persons with disabilities rights, and childhood rights. These entities organize conferences and seminars with the goal of fostering human rights awareness, issuing publications, media materials, and statements designed to achieve this objective.

- **capacity building initiatives.**

- There is a memorandum of technical cooperation signed between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, represented by the Human Rights Commission, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, more than (98) programs and activities were held to raise national capacities within the framework of this memorandum.

2. What are the capacity building gaps and needs of local governments in relation to implementing/incorporating human rights at the local level?

As an example, the capacity building gaps could be related to the following:

- Taking into account the priority when designing the programs of capacity building.
- Determine the targeted audience in the action plans of capacity building.
- Considering the national context (national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious back grounds) when designing and implementing the capacity building programs.

3. What measures are needed to further strengthen the capacity of local governments to implement/incorporate human rights at the local level?

- As an example, the local governments could encourage the local civil society organizations in the order to provide programs to educate the local population about the human rights and how to access remedies in case of violations.

4. What are existing procedures and practices for engaging local governments in the work of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and in implementing, reporting and following up on



relevant recommendations? How could the existing level of engagement be enhanced?

Enhancing National Capacities:

- The human rights commission in has the authority on monitoring the capacity building gaps and needs of local governments in relation to implementing/incorporating human rights at the local level.
- The Human Rights Commission has undertaken educational programs aimed at disseminating a human rights culture. These programs include lectures, seminars, training courses, workshops, awareness activities, and events conducted in various regions of the Kingdom. Additionally, the commission provides legal consultations through participation in periodic events held at universities or seasonal exhibitions.
- Moreover, there is memorandum of technical cooperation signed between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, represented by the Human Rights Commission, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2012. Numerous training programs and activities have been conducted to enhance national capacities in the field of human rights, totaling more than (98) programs covering various human rights areas. Participants included judges, public prosecutors, lawyers, law enforcement officials, government officials, and civil society institutions' representatives.
- In addition, The Standing Committee on Preparing the Kingdom's Reports on Human Rights Conventions was established by the Royal Order issued on January 18, 2015. The Committee consists of several competent entities, and entrusted with all matters related to preparing draft reports of Saudi Arabia regarding human rights conventions or mechanisms of Human Rights Council. The Committee is also responsible for monitoring recommendations emanating from regional and international treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review.

5. What are the capacity building gaps and needs of local governments in relation to engaging with the United Nations human rights mechanisms and in implementing, reporting and following up on relevant recommendations?

- There are no capacity building gaps, where this is reflected in the existing cooperation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, represented by the Human Rights Commission,



and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as mentioned in the answer to the previous question (Q - 4).

6. What are the main challenges in your country in the promotion and protection of human rights at the local level?

- Challenges are being addressed through the measures mentioned in the answer to Question (4), however insufficient data collection can hinder the human rights awareness measurement.

7. Please provide examples, good practices, challenges, and recommendations with regard to the above-mentioned issues.

• General Education

- The Saudi Human Rights Commission has launched awareness campaigns addressing issues related to children, women, elderly people, persons with disabilities, workers, combating human trafficking crimes, and introducing various national, regional, and international regulations through social media platforms, with the aim of reaching all segments of society and achieving the intended awareness goal, which is to define human rights within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The following provides further clarification on the activities undertaken by the commission to achieve this objective:

Activities presented by the commission during the period of 2019 - 2022.		
S.N.	Activity	Number
1	Awareness Materials (Digital Media)	174
2	Lecture, Scientific Seminar, and Discussion Session	34
3	Workshop and Training Course	17
4	Awareness Activity and Event	61
5	Social Participation	27



- **Human Rights Education:**

- This is accomplished through the dissemination of a human rights culture among school students. The Human Rights Commission signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education on December 14, 2017, included launching an electronic platform titled "Educational Portal for Human Rights" under the slogan "My Nation Protects My Rights." This platform aims to introduce students to their rights and spread a culture of human rights.
- Furthermore, a royal decree was issued on January 18, 2015, in coordination between the Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Education, to incorporate academic curricula in the field of human rights into educational institutions in the Kingdom. The efforts also include expanding seminars and training courses to achieve the objectives of promoting a culture of human rights.
- The Ministry of Education has established programs that promote values of coexistence and acceptance of diverse opinions. These programs include Student Dialogue Programs (training on dialogue culture and dealing with differences), School Theater Programs (addressing national, educational, and social themes), and Student Clubs and Centers (enhancing participation spirit).
- Moreover, the Ministry of Education conducted 185 deletions, 171 replacements, and 77 modifications in the content of curricula across all educational levels. This aims to instill values of tolerance, coexistence, and a positive outlook on life, while also developing curricula to stimulate logical thinking skills.
- King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue plays a continual role in promoting tolerance and coexistence through various meetings that involve diverse segments of society. The center launched (213) programs in the fields of dialogue and promoting tolerance, it also initiated the "Naseej" program aiming to establish values of peace and social coexistence to build a strong and cohesive community foundation through a



generation that understands the consequences of coexistence on its present and future. Among its goals are national identity development among community members and enhancing social coexistence. The program has benefited (39170) participants.

- The Electronic Publishing Regulation emphasizes its objectives in supporting dialogue and diversity culture, and enhancing a human rights culture, including freedom of expression as guaranteed by the law. It also upholds individuals' rights to create and register any form of electronic publishing. Additionally, the regulation aims to promote new media culture and its means in society.
