**UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls**

**Questionnaire on the women and girls’ human security in the context of poverty and inequality**

**Answer to question 1:**

The global poverty indicators that came in the sustainable development goals do not apply to the Sultanate of Oman, as it has passed this stage, as the percentage of the population living on purchasing power of 1.9 dollars per day is zero percent, according to the results of the first quarter of the Household Expenditure and Income Survey for the period from October 2018 to October 2019, this survey is carried out in most countries of the world every five years.

**Answer to question 2:**

- The Basic Statute of the State issued by Royal Decree (6/2021) in Article (15) guarantees justice, equality and equal opportunities among citizens as pillars of society, as well as achieving equality between women and men. Article (21) reinforced equality between citizens that they are all equal before the law and they are equal in Public rights and duties and there is no discrimination between them in this regard. These constitutional rights form the basis of any national legislation…

- Residents of the Sultanate also enjoy protection, as Article (42) of the Basic Law of the State states that “every foreigner who is legally in the Sultanate enjoys the protection of his person and property in accordance with the law, and he must observe the values ​​of society and respect its traditions and feelings.”

- The Sultanate of Oman has included social welfare programs for needy families, such as the social security system, as the ministry sponsors social security families from the categories (old age, divorced women, widows, disabled, orphans, unmarried girls, families of prisoners and abandoned females) financially by providing a monthly salary for each case, and providing Social housing, creating job opportunities for children of social security families and people with limited income, and providing scholarships for post-school education for children of social security families and people with limited income who meet the conditions, in addition to other privileges provided to social security families from other parties.

- Social safety nets in the Sultanate of Oman work the arrangements and capabilities that are provided for the care of individuals who are unable to obtain a decent livelihood by ensuring that they obtain a minimum standard of living that preserves their human dignity and prevents them from engaging in socially unacceptable activities.

**The answer to question 3:**

- There are no ethnic or religious minorities in the Sultanate of Oman, as was indicated by the above laws that ensured the prohibition of such practices in the Sultanate of Oman.

**The answer to the question 4:**

a)

- To enhance the access of women and groups most in need of decent livelihoods, the social security program is based on the disbursement of monthly pensions in accordance with the Social Security Law. Those covered by social security are: orphans, widows, divorced women, unmarried girls, the disabled, old age, abandoned females, and the families of prisoners.

The Sultanate also works with its various institutions to provide more than 28 services of assistance, benefits and facilities that fall within the social welfare system, which are: exemptions from public service fees and fees for completing transactions in various government service agencies, and providing the necessary support at the level of empowerment and employment.

- Anti-poverty programs also include programs of income-generating projects, training and employment that help young people to establish projects with returns that support them as a main source of income.

The Sultanate provides annually (1,500) grants to children of families benefiting from social security who wish to continue their university educational career, who were not included in the government scholarships and missions affiliated with the Ministry of Higher Education or the Ministry of Manpower, so that they are enrolled in universities, private and government colleges in and outside the Sultanate.

- Allowing women to practice business from home, in accordance with Ministerial Resolution (4/2011) issued by the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The decision specifies the commercial activities that women can practice in their home.

- Article 14 of the Basic Law guarantees a woman's right to own and invest in her property and the freedom to dispose of it. The laws relating to home projects and small and medium-sized enterprises also guarantee her the right to own an investment project and work on it, whether at home or in shops, according to specific controls that are commensurate with the nature of women. Providing all facilities for technical support and financial support for the project.

- The Sultanate of Oman has worked to establish a number of mechanisms supporting the participation of women in economic life, where the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority was established as a specialized reference in everything related to home and small and medium enterprises, providing all services and facilities, starting from the idea to the presentation of the product. It paid attention to the conditions of rural women, and worked to support their various roles, including their work in the non-monetary sectors of the economy, where the work of rural women is calculated in the national product in the case of the existence or extraction of commercial records, municipal licenses and agricultural tenure cards for rural women's projects. And if they work in production line projects (such as date factories, etc.)

- The Ministry of Social Development also launched in 2016 the Tamkeen program, which aims to invest the energy of the individual and the family with the aim of participating in development, and transforming families benefiting from the social security umbrella into productive families and contributing to the development of the national economy, by providing them with financial support in coordination among the competent authorities to open projects for them.

b, c

- National legislation embodied the right of individuals to sue, whether they are citizens or residents. Omani law enshrined the right to claim civil compensation. The Civil Transactions Law issued by Royal Decree No. (29/2013) charted the legal way to claim the civil plaintiff for the damage inflicted on him. Victims also have the right to claim civil compensation under Article (20) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, as it is stated in it: "Anyone who has suffered direct personal harm as a result of the crime may file a lawsuit for his civil right before the court that hears the public lawsuit in whatever state it is, until the pleading is closed as a plaintiff joined in the public lawsuit", and the issuance of the Penal Code pursuant to Royal Decree No. (7/2018) brought about a qualitative leap in the penal legislation, devoting an entire chapter criminalizing the disruption of judicial procedures and misleading justice.

- Legal aid is provided that is concerned with exempting insolvent litigants from the judicial fees prescribed for filing the case and assigning a lawyer to conduct its procedures in cases that the law stipulates that they must be conducted through a lawyer. The exemption includes the fee for publishing judicial announcements and the expenses of experts, in accordance with Article 1 of the Regulation of Legal Aid for insolvent persons issued pursuant to Ministerial Resolution No. (2009/91) dated 14/2/2009 issued by the Ministry of Justice.

- The Basic Statute of the State guarantees human rights in the Sultanate of Oman, as Article 23 states that “No person may be arrested, searched, detained, imprisoned, have his residence restricted, or restricted his movement, and Articles (26, 27, 28) confirm that no crime and no punishment except according to a law, and there is no punishment except for acts that follow the implementation of the law that stipulates it. The punishment is personal, and that the accused is innocent until proven guilty in a legal trial in which the necessary guarantees are secured for him to exercise his right to defense, and the accused has the right to communicate with whomever he deems fit. He must be promptly notified of the charges brought against him and the right to appeal.

**The answer to question 5:**

The Basic Law of the State issued by Royal Decree (6/2021) approved the principle of equality between all citizens without discrimination between males and females, as indicated in Article (21).

- The Basic Law includes justice and equality, as indicated in Article (12) that governance in the state is based on justice, consultation and equality, and the state has organized laws that protect the worker and the employer and regulate the relationship between them, and every citizen has the right to practice the work he chooses for himself within the limits of the law. Legislation did not distinguish between men and women in rights and duties and assuming public office.

- The Social Security Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. (87/84) guarantees women care and access to a social security pension in cases of divorce, inability to work, abandoned by their husbands, widows, unmarried females and women in old age, provided that there is no sufficient source of income or a breadwinner able to alimony.

- The Sultanate of Oman also joined the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: by virtue of Royal Decree No. (42/2005), the Ministry worked to establish a committee to follow up on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

**Answer to question 6:**

- According to the national laws that guarantee the right to obtain these rights, there are no groups of women and girls who are more at risk or the circumstances that may prevent them from obtaining these rights due to the achievements made by the Government of the Sultanate of Oman for the benefit of the human being in Oman and improving their standard of living and ensuring his rights.

**Answer to question 7:**

- There are no laws that discriminate between persons, and reference was made in Clause No. (5) of the legislative framework to ensure the implementation of these rights.

**Answer to question 8:**

The Sultanate of Oman has taken many precautionary measures; to mitigate the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on women, the family and members of society by following up on the developments of the pandemic through the relevant Supreme Committee, and the various institutions worked to play their roles in light of the pandemic to ensure the continuity of providing services to society in general and to women in particular, taking into account the precautionary measures while providing services.

- Introducing psychological and social support services over the phone during quarantine, especially at the beginning of the pandemic; to provide support to cases, mitigate the psychological effects of confinement, implement a series of interactive programs and activities through visual communication techniques, and continue to provide protection services from violence through temporary accommodation in Dar Al-Wefaq for cases subjected to violence and abuse, and to provide care and social, psychological and legal support for them.

- Launching many initiatives in government institutions, civil society institutions and the private sector; to mitigate the economic effects on families and individuals, for example: (The Central Bank of Oman directed commercial banks to postpone the payment of bank loans and various financing loans due on all those affected without interest and without additional fees. Granting facilities to affiliates of the Social Insurance Organization by postponing the payment of monthly contributions. The same applies to the Al-Rafd Fund loans for small and medium enterprises, establishing mechanisms to support entrepreneurs, especially those with small and medium enterprises, and encouraging them to continue their work with preventive controls while employing techniques in marketing and sales.

- Taking into account the continuity of providing care services for women during pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium in health care institutions, and preparing work guides for health workers to take care of the health of pregnant women in general and women infected with the Covid-19 virus during pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium in particular. In order to follow up on the impact of Covid-19 infection on the mother and fetus, a special form was designed for this, through which infections are monitored during pregnancy and the puerperium, and the infected woman and her newborn are followed up, while continuing to provide family planning services (birth spacing) and infertility treatment program services in primary health care institutions.

- Supporting mothers to continue breastfeeding. Guidance has been formulated regarding the continued breastfeeding of an infected or suspected mother. A hotline has been established; to provide consultations in obstetrics, gynecology and breastfeeding, respond to women's questions about Covid 19, in addition to implementing many awareness activities through the issuance of a number of awareness materials for women.

**Promising Practices**

**Answer to question 11:**

- On the legislative level, the Penal Code issued by Royal Decree No. (7/2018) affirmed the protection of women from all forms of physical violence, psychological violence, rape, indecent assault, defamation, deprivation of the legitimate right to inheritance, forced prostitution and prostitution. With the issuance of this law, the Omani Penal Code No. (7/74) was abolished.

- The Sultanate of Oman has worked to establish the Omani Human Rights Committee under the Royal Decree (124/2008), which deals with human rights issues and aims to promote fruitful and constructive cooperation between government authorities and civil society institutions in the country. The committee is composed of representatives of government institutions and civil society institutions.

- The National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking: The committee was established in accordance with Article (11) of Royal Decree No. (126/2008), where the committee developed an annual plan aimed at raising awareness among groups of society, and taking all measures to protect citizens and residents from human trafficking, as the concerned team is concerned with by following up on the racial discrimination agreement by following up on the implementation of the agreement and by preparing the periodic reports required under the provisions of this agreement.

- The Sultanate of Oman formed a committee to follow up on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women under Ministerial Resolution No. 348/2005, and it was re-formed by Ministerial Resolution (25/2021) to include in its membership representatives of the judicial and legislative authority, in addition to representatives from civil society institutions and the Committee National Human Rights.

**Answer to question 12:**

- The Sultanate has supported the participation of women in jobs and work in the government, private and civil sectors at all levels, and allowed women's participation in social, economic and political life, and built their capacities for leadership and decision-making. It enabled Omani women to join various fields of work, including work in the military and security corps.

- Omani women have equal rights with men to participate in civil society and establish NGOs, especially the Omani women’s societies, which numbered (65) societies distributed over the governorates and states of the Sultanate of Oman, in addition to their active participation in charitable and professional societies.

- Allocating study seats for the children of beneficiaries of the social security program to enroll in higher education institutions, and providing social housing for people with limited incomes.

- The Ministry of Social Development has prepared a series of publications concerned with educating and raising women’s awareness of their rights, including explanatory notes on legal articles related to women, and has worked to publish these notes in all governorates of the Sultanate.

- Intensifying awareness-raising programs and campaigns directed at women and girls and community members on combating violence against women and girls, in addition to providing care, legal, health and living services for women and girls exposed to violence.

Answer to question 13:

- The Ministry of Social Development provided a package of facilities and advantages to support the social security segment, including:

1. Facilities in the form of exemptions: in the field of health and housing fees, civil and municipal status, manpower, and court litigation exemptions.

2. Facilities in the form of financial aid: where monthly or lump sum sums of money are disbursed for one time, such as school allowances for school and university students, sick allowances, the two Eid grants, a sum of sympathy upon death, and sums for pilgrims.

3. Enabling facilities that elevate the family and its status, such as employment, training and empowerment on productive projects, internal educational missions, maintenance and restoration of homes, and in-kind facilities such as providing food, bedding, computers for children of social security families, land, provision of aids and compensatory devices, and so on.

**Answer to question 14:**

- Oman’s 2040 vision included a strategic direction entitled “a decent, sustainable life for all.” This direction aims to create a society covered by insurance with an effective, sustainable and just social safety net, and a conscious, cohesive society that is socially and economically empowered, especially women, children, youth, people with disabilities and the most needy groups, as the cohesion of societies and strength, and the achievement of societal peace, requires achieving equity and social justice by providing decent livelihoods, maintaining the sustainability of the quality of social welfare services, such as health and education services, and providing social safety nets that provide the sustainability of decent livelihoods for current and future generations alike.

-The Social Action Strategy (2016-2025) also included in its components a number of strategic directions regarding the implementation of the rights of children, women and persons with disabilities, and adopted a human rights-based approach and a human rights approach to ensure the rights of women, children and persons with disabilities, and incorporated the gender perspective. Where gender indicators and gender-responsive budgets formed the basis for the implementation plans of these strategies for the years.

- The Sultanate of Oman has paid great attention to the issue of food security and food provision, and the government has developed many plans and programs that are concerned with this aspect to provide food to citizens and residents on the territory of the Sultanate of Oman The Ministry of Agricultural Wealth, Fisheries and Water Resources has adopted the investment plan to ensure a safe and sustainable future for food production, as it is the main pillar of the food security system, and through it the necessary and complementary measures are taken for the elements of this system, whether in natural or exceptional cases.

**Answer to question 15:**

- Through participation in the development and formulation of national strategies and plans that support the social and economic aspects, and the membership of women in the State Council and the elected councils has an active role and promoted participation in the development of national policies.

- The Omani women's associations spread across all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman play an important and effective role in the participation of women in all fields and in communicating their needs and requirements within the national strategies and programmes.

**Answer to question 16:**

- This lies in identifying basic needs, developing effective plans and granting facilities and training necessary to set up projects at the individual or group levels. Solidarity and societal integration and the participation of all sectors (governmental, private and civil) play a key role in supporting these groups.

**Answer to question 17:**

- Strategies, policies, national action plans and programs aimed at addressing any form of discrimination, and working to take into account low-income groups and social security families, and place them among national priorities, while targeting them with enabling programs commensurate with their conditions, ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities for social, economic and educational rights. In addition to focusing on educational and awareness programmes.

**Answer to question 18:**

- Stimulating the active participation of women, enhancing their role in the development and development of society, supporting their participation in political life, and raising societal awareness of the importance of women's participation and their vital role in the sustainable development process.