



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
1 March 2013
English
Original: Arabic

Committee on the Rights of the Child

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention

Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of States parties
due in 2011

Jordan*

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not edited.

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I. Introduction

1. The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan hereby presents the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports which it has submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in accordance with article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and with the Committee's decision to invite the State party to submit a consolidated fourth and fifth report by 22 December 2011 (that is 18 months before the due date of the fifth periodic report). That decision was taken as an exceptional measure, due to the large number of reports received by the Committee every year. The present report, which covers the period from 2005 to 2011, provides comprehensive information on the measures that the Government has taken, including the changes that it has made to national legislation and the policies, programmes and strategies that have been established to implement the Convention. The report also responds to the comments in the concluding observations which the Committee adopted following its consideration of the country's third periodic report. As will be recalled, Jordan submitted its initial report in 1993, its second periodic report in 1998 and its third periodic report in 2005.

Reservations

2. The Government of Jordan maintains its reservations to articles 14, 20 and 21 of the Convention. It can confirm that the reservations do not detract from the rights of Jordanian children, as the matters addressed in the above articles are also covered by Jordanian law, first and foremost the Constitution.

3. The Constitution of Jordan establishes the right to freedom of thought, conscience and worship. The fact that children are prohibited from changing their religion is a form of protection that the law provides to safeguard children's religious rights.

4. The reservation to the provision on adoption still stands, although children retain the right to benefit from alternative family care under the Islamic system of *kafalah* and fostering arrangements established in accordance with the sharia. The rules and regulations on fostering and *kafalah* are intended to protect children to the fullest degree possible.

Publication of the Convention in the official gazette

5. With regard to the concerns that the Committee expressed in paragraph 12 of the concluding observations about the legal status of the Convention in Jordan, it should be noted that the Convention was ratified and published in the official gazette pursuant to Convention on the Rights of the Child Ratification Act No. 50 of 2006. The Act and the text of the Convention were published in issue 4787 of the official gazette on 16 October 2006. In keeping with the principle of the primacy of treaties, international treaties take precedence over national laws, coming second only to the Constitution in the hierarchy of laws established in Jordan. Thus, they rank above national laws. The Court of Cassation makes this abundantly clear in its case law.

6. As for harmonization of domestic law with the principles and provisions of the Convention, the laws of Jordan are in conformity with the Convention and there are no provisions that are incompatible with the fulfilment of the country's obligations as a party to the Convention. As already indicated, should there be a conflict between a national law and a provision of the Convention, the provision of the Convention will prevail in accordance with the hierarchy-of-laws principle. Many amendments have been made to a number of laws to bring them into line with the Convention.

7. These principles are reflected in the case law of the Jordanian Court of Cassation. For example, in ruling No. 945/2009, which the Court issued in connection with its legal

functions, the Court states: “Both sharia and ordinary law jurisprudence establish that the international treaties which States sign are at the pinnacle of the hierarchy of laws of those States and are considered to prevail, for the purposes of application, should there be a conflict between their provisions and those of a national law. The courts deal with questions pertaining to the application of international treaties and law. It is not for the parties in a dispute to select which treaty or law they wish to see applied. This is a contingent feature of the general system. All this is subject to the proviso that the treaties must have passed through the stages specified in the Constitution of the country in which the dispute in question is heard.”

II. Definition of the child

8. The definition of the child that is found in the Children’s Rights Bill of 2008 and now used by the institutions that deal with family and child-related issues is consistent with the one provided in the Convention. In article 2 of the Bill, a child is defined as “any person below 18 years of age”.

9. The Children’s Rights Bill drawn up in 2008 was withdrawn from the National Assembly after the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been published in issue No. 4787 of the official gazette on 16 October 2006 and ratified under Ratification Act No. 50 of 2006. The Bill needed to be redrafted to bring it into conformity with the Convention and to turn it into an effective mechanism for implementing the Convention at the national level, since the Convention became part of national law upon ratification and the promulgation of the Ratification Act. Explicit provisions need to be drafted to flesh out a number of rights, given that the Convention is couched in quite broad terms and leaves matters such as the age at which children are deemed to bear criminal responsibility to national laws and regulations. Moreover, there is a need to establish a set of procedures in connection with children’s rights, as there is no provision for them in the Bill.

10. Children (0–18 years old) account for 46.2 per cent of the population – 2,821,290 persons in total in 2010. The average number of children per family is 3.8 and 868,600 families currently have children in their care.

11. In paragraph 13 of the concluding observations the Committee recommends that Jordan expedite the enactment of the Children’s Rights Bill of 2008 and allocate all necessary human and financial resources for its implementation. In that connection, it should be noted that the Bill was withdrawn from the National Assembly, as it reproduced rights already provided for in the Convention and there was a need for a law to open the way for implementation of the Convention and to define the obligations of the different parties in that regard. When the State ratified the Convention and issued the Ratification Act, the Convention became part of national law. Explicit provisions need to be drafted to flesh out the details of a number of rights, given that the Convention is couched in quite broad terms and leaves it to national law to provide for their regulation. Moreover, there is a need for a set of procedures to deal with children’s rights, as there is no provision for them in the Bill. A new bill is being drafted in cooperation with the full range of institutions involved in child-related issues and with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

12. In paragraph 22 of the concluding observations, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to increase the proportion of the budget allocated for the realization of children’s rights. In this connection, in 2010, steps were taken to develop the form and the content of the Annual General Budget Act to keep with the introduction of results-based budgeting and accountability, transparency and post-evaluation approaches. A new budget model was designed and information was included on strategic goals and the tasks to be undertaken by each ministry so as to supply children’s needs and deliver their

rights, particularly in the areas of health, education, social welfare, and to ensure that they are fully taken into account during the preparation of the general budget. The intention here is to make sure that resources are allocated in a manner that is consistent with national strategies and plans, in particular the National Plan of Action for Children, 2004–2013. The goal of the National Plan of Action is to build a “Jordan Fit for Children”. The Plan comprises various thematic components, which are entitled: (1) “Securing a healthy life”; (2) “Development and capacity-building”; (3) “Protecting children in difficult circumstances”; (4) “The media”; and (5) “Monitoring and evaluation”. The Plan is designed to provide a general framework and a strategic road map to facilitate the shift from theory to action in regard to the components and topics that relate to children. It is intended to promote cooperation and partnerships between the governmental and non-governmental sectors so as to facilitate integrated planning founded on genuine participation by all and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Under the Plan, increased access is to be provided to quality services that offer a secure life to all children, regardless of their sex, age or social origin, and thus help to reduce the gender gap and geographical inequities. The components of the Plan should serve as a basis for conducting research and for monitoring and evaluation activities against the indicators and criteria established for each component.

13. The general budget for the 2011 financial year includes allocations for non-governmental organizations and associations that work directly with children and cater for their needs. These organizations include the Mubarra Um Al-Hussein Association, the Young Muslim Women’s Association for Special Education, the Cerebral Palsy Foundation, the Association to Support Persons with Autism, the Academy for Children with Visual Impairments, and the Children’s Museum. To facilitate tracking of the funding and services for children that are allocated each year under the General Budget Act, some of the models used to prepare the 2011 general budget were modified in line with the child-friendly budgeting approach. To ensure that all elements of this approach were taken into account, benchmarks were established to measure the performance and programmes of each ministry or department and against the strategic goals. All elements relating to children and their needs are incorporated into the key data provided about each ministry or department and the services that they provide. The idea is to ensure that the allocations for children will be clearly displayed in the programme budgets of ministries and government departments as of 2012.

14. The National Council for Family Affairs and UNICEF collaborated on a study conducted under a child-friendly budgeting project to analyse budget allocations for children in Jordan. This was the first study of its kind to be conducted in the Arab region and the world. The objective was to create a database for use in ongoing tracking of the budgets allocated for children in Jordan, based on an analysis of policies, plans and budgets that are linked to children’s rights in four areas (development, education, health and work). The data could then be used to secure support for efforts to give effect to these rights. The following table contains figures on spending patterns in government ministries in Jordan.

<i>Percentage of the national budget</i>	<i>2008 Estimated</i>	<i>2009 Budget</i>	<i>2010 Budget</i>	<i>2011 Budget</i>
Health	6.7	7.3	8.0	8.3
Education	7.9	8.9	8.8	8.7
Social development	1.5	1.9	1.9	1.9
Work	0.26	0.32	0.29	0.28

<i>Percentage of Ministry budget allocated for children</i>	<i>2008 Estimated</i>	<i>2009 Budget</i>	<i>2010 Budget</i>	<i>2011 Budget</i>
Health	36.4	37.1	36.4	36.8
Education	93.1	93.3	93.1	93.4
Family, welfare and persons with disabilities	12.5	10.3	13.4	14.6
Work	9.9	9.9	10.5	10.1

Source: Analysis of budgets allocated for children in Jordan, 2009.

Gender equality under the law and marrying age

15. In paragraph 27 of the concluding observations, the Committee expresses concern about the fact that girls as young as 14 and 15 may be married with the consent of a guardian and a judge. In that connection, the interim Personal Status Code (Act No. 36 of 2010), by which Act No. 61 of 1976 was abrogated, states (art. 14) that to be deemed to have the capacity to marry, the bride and groom must be of sound mind and must have reached the age of 18 Gregorian years. A judge may give permission for persons below the age of 15 Gregorian years to marry, provided that the Chief Justice also gives his permission and that the conditions in the directives that he issued in 2002 are met, namely:

- (1) The groom must be a suitable match for the bride in terms of his capacity to pay maintenance and the bride price.
- (2) The marriage must be intended to avert a wrongful deed or to prevent the loss of a genuine advantage.
- (3) The judge must ascertain that the bride has given her free consent and that the marriage is in her interests. If the bride or groom suffers from a mental impairment, a medical report must be produced to show that the marriage is in the partners' interests.
- (4) The marriage must be contracted with the guardian's consent, due regard being had to articles 6 and 12 of the Personal Status Code.
- (5) A document attesting to the fact that the judge has verified compliance with the above conditions must be produced. It will be used to draw up the marriage permit in accordance with the established rules and procedures.

16. Marriages of persons below the age of 15 are not [normally] permitted by law. The new law contains detailed criteria on the conclusion of such marriages. It states that the court must conduct an in-depth study to ascertain that there is a genuine interest and a compelling reason to allow the marriage to take place. Otherwise, the marriage will not be authorized. The Chief Justice must give his approval; the approval of the *cadi* is not sufficient on its own. This arrangement provides additional protection and safeguards to ensure that the marriage will be in the woman's interest.

17. Article 279 of the Criminal Code, as amended by Act No. 8 of 2011, states that a term of between 1 month and 6 months in prison will be imposed on anyone who performs or takes part in a marriage ceremony that is conducted in breach of the Personal Status Code or any other applicable law.

18. According to the figures provided by the Department of the Chief Justice, 5,349 brides out of the 64,738 who married in 2009 were under the age of 18 (8.2 per cent), as compared with 180 grooms (0.27 per cent). In 2010, the median age at first marriage was 27.8 years: 29.5 years for men and 25.9 years for women (Department of the Chief Justice).

Poverty

19. In paragraph 28 of the concluding observations, the Committee recommends that the State party address the poverty-related pressure on girls to marry at an early age. In fact, and as the figures show, the poverty ratio has fallen over the past three years – from 13.7 per cent in the period between 2004 and 2008 to 13.3 per cent in 2008. Moreover, the poverty gap ratio decreased from 3.4 to 2.6 in the period between 2005 and 2010. This is the result of an overall improvement in the living conditions of the poor. Jordan has met the development goal of halving the proportion of the population that suffers from hunger by 2015. The number of people living in extreme poverty fell from 32,000 to 15,000 between 2006 and 2008. This result was achieved ahead of the established deadline.

20. Jordan has made great strides in combating poverty and hunger, not just by international standards (one dollar per day per person) but also according to national poverty indicators. The proportion of the population living below the extreme poverty line fell from 6.6 per cent in 1992 to less than 1 per cent in 2008. The poverty gap narrowed and the share of the poor in overall consumption increased. However, the overall economic participation rate and the female participation rate (40.1 per cent and 14.9 per cent respectively) remain too low and while unemployment rates among young persons and women have declined, unemployment remains a major challenge.

21. Although growth has been achieved overall, the impact of the global economic and financial crisis means that it will be difficult to preserve the gains that have been made. A large proportion of Jordanian families are living close to the poverty line and are likely to slip below it.

22. On the subject of national poverty eradication programmes, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour is implementing the “Community development and poverty eradication” programme whose focus is on the living standards of individuals, households and communities. The idea is to invest in the human and financial resources available in these communities, foster the development of volunteer organizations — charities and community development centres — establish an infrastructure that will help to eliminate poverty by providing financing for productive family projects, credit funds and production enterprises, and support charities to enable them to meet their goals. Between 2005 and 2010, the Ministry supported 1,199 productive family projects, at a total of 2,054,266 Jordanian dinars (JD). The Ministry has established and maintains housing that offers poor families a safe and healthy place to live and thus helps to increase their productive capacity. The Ministry has been running the programme since 2000. It completed work on 11.73 per cent of the homes needed between 2003 and 2010 (249 homes on average per year). Jordan has adopted socioeconomic policies to combat extreme poverty and hunger. The goals of these policies are to:

- Establish a comprehensive and effective social safety network for the poor;
- Empower the poor economically, create sustainable local economies for impoverished people and areas, and increase public participation in related programmes;
- Provide social welfare services in line with international best practices, and strengthen the role of civil society organizations in their development;
- Involve the governmental and non-governmental sectors more fully in efforts to empower persons with disabilities, provide them with suitable services and maintain the quality of those services;
- Improve mechanisms for targeting the beneficiaries of poverty eradication and social welfare programmes and projects.

23. Under a royal grant scheme, more than 2,000 households with modest incomes in various parts of Jordan were connected to the water and electricity supply, while, under a home construction and maintenance programme for poor households, the Department of Buildings and Housing of the Ministry of Social Development connected over 1,300 homes built by the Ministry to water, sanitation and electricity services. The living conditions of the families concerned improved, as their poor living environment was transformed into one that was healthy, safe and stable.

II. General principles

A. Non-discrimination

24. With regard to the Committee's recommendation in paragraph 30 of the concluding observations concerning children born outside of wedlock, in accordance with the above-mentioned law, the Department of Civil Status and Passports registers births of Jordanian nationals in Jordan and abroad and of foreign nationals born in Jordanian territory. It also issues birth certificates. Children have a natural right to a name. To ensure that people do not suffer because of their name as they are growing up, the law prohibits the registration of children's names that are incompatible with respect for religious and social values and with the maintenance of public order. In order to safeguard children's identity, the law states that when a birth is reported full information must be supplied about the child's sex and name and the names, nationality, place of residence, occupation and religion of the parents. The Department issues identity cards to minors after obtaining the guardian's consent.

25. Under the above-mentioned law, children born out of wedlock may be registered at any time without reference to any statutory time limits for birth registration. Children born outside of wedlock are recognized as persons before the law. The Department registers their names on the civil register and issues them with national identity numbers. It adds their names to the family register and issues them with identity cards and passports. There is nothing distinctive about the national identity numbers that they are given. The numbers do not contain any elements suggesting that they were born out of wedlock. In 2002, the legislature introduced an amendment to the Personal Status Code granting the departmental committee responsible for correcting names the power to correct the name of a child born outside of wedlock or a foundling.

26. Under Jordanian law, rights provided for in the sharia are extended to children of unknown parentage, and such children are entitled to protection, care and education, among other rights. Thus, children of unknown parentage enjoy rights afforded under the sharia, such as the right to maintenance, the right to own property, the right to receive care, the right to education and health and also the right to inherit, if the identity of one of the parents is known. These children are deemed to have full capacity, even when they are in the womb. According to the sharia, a child's filiation may be established according to criteria that are very straightforward, easy to meet and formulated in such a way as to protect children's rights. No one may deny a child's filiation, once it has been established.

27. Article 157 of the interim Personal Status Code (Act No. 36 of 2010) provides:

- “(a) The child's descent from the mother shall be established at birth.
- “(b) The child's descent from the father shall only be established based on:
 - “(i) Proof of marriage;
 - “(ii) Acknowledgement of paternity;
 - “(iii) An evidentiary document;

“(iv) Incontrovertible scientific evidence and proof of marriage.”

28. Children born outside of wedlock are cared for by foster families under special conditions. Background checks must be conducted to verify the spouses’ social and living circumstances and level of education and check that they are healthy in mind and body and thus able to raise a child properly. The family must provide all necessary forms of care (childraising, education, health, and psychological, material and social support) and meet the conditions established by the Ministry of Social Development.

29. The next table provides figures on the number of children of unknown parentage who were living in welfare institutions (Al-Hussein Social Institute) between 2007 and 2012.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of foundling children</i>	<i>Number of children whose mothers’ identity is unknown</i>	<i>Number of children fostered and entrusted to foster families</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
2007	31	39	26	
2008	21	50	53	
2009	30	38	77	
2010	26	62	45	

Source: Ministry of Social Development.

B. The child’s right to life, survival and development

30. The child’s right to life is fully protected under Jordanian law, which makes it an offence to harm children from the time when they are in the womb until they reach the age of 18. In this way it protects children’s lives and physical integrity. The Criminal Code, as amended (Act No. 16 of 1960, art. 321), states that any woman who uses any method to perform an abortion on herself or who consents to an abortion performed on her by another person will face a term of from 6 months to 3 years in prison. According to article 322, any person who uses any method whatsoever to perform an abortion on a woman with that woman’s consent will be subject to a term of between 1 and 3 years’ imprisonment.

31. The law amending the Criminal Code (Act No. 8 of 2011) increased the penalty for intentional homicide (art. 326) from 15 years with hard labour to 20. The penalty for the offence of assault causing death (art. 330) was also increased to a minimum of 7 years’ imprisonment, as compared with a previous tariff of 5 years. The minimum penalty is 10 years, if the victim was below the age of 15 or a girl or woman of any age.

32. Article 340 of the Criminal Code was amended to allow for mitigating circumstances, as opposed to exculpatory circumstances, to be taken into account in cases where a murder is committed by a person who catches a relative in the act of having sexual relations outside of marriage. Similar wording was used to that found in the amended interim Code (Act No. 86 of 2001).

33. The Committee recommended that Jordan should review the provisions of the Criminal Code with a view to eliminating all provisions that allow for reductions in sentence for “honour” crimes and that it should take steps to prosecute such cases more effectively. In that connection, the Jordanian courts apply article 98 of the Criminal Code, which states that mitigating circumstances may be taken into account in respect of all offences. This is a matter of legal principle. The article provides: “The perpetrator of the offence shall benefit from consideration of mitigating factors, if he or she committed the offence in a fit of rage that was a reaction to a grave and wrongful act on the part of the victim.” This article therefore establishes that mitigating factors may be taken into

consideration where offences are committed in such circumstances. If mitigating factors are taken into account, the penalty will be reduced, in accordance with article 97 of the Code, to at least 1 year's imprisonment for homicide offences that carry a penalty of death or perpetual hard labour or life imprisonment, and from 6 months to 2 years in prison for other serious offences, including intentional homicide, which carries a penalty of 20 years' hard labour. If the offence is less serious, the penalty will be up to 6 months' imprisonment or a fine of JD 25. The victim's family will forfeit the right to sue for damages in civil proceedings.

34. To provide additional protection, article 345 bis was introduced into the Code. It states that, due regard being had to the provisions of articles 340, 341 and 342 on mitigating circumstances and to [the right to] a legitimate defence, the mitigating circumstances referred to in articles 97 and 98 of the Code will not be taken into consideration in respect of the offences listed in part I, section II, of the Code, if the victim was a boy or a girl under the age of 15. In this way, greater protection is afforded to children in this age group, and deterrent penalties are prescribed for killing or physically harming a child.

C. The best interests of the child

35. The principle that the best interests of the child should be the paramount consideration is spelled out in the Children's Rights Bill. Article 4 provides that the State must safeguard childhood and motherhood, provide for the welfare of children and create conditions conducive to providing children with a proper education from every point of view in a free, dignified and humane setting where due account is taken of their best interests. As for legislation, administrative measures and amendments to the laws to ensure that account is taken of the best interests of children, a regulation (No. 49 of 2009) was issued on the licensing and management of children's homes. The purpose of the regulation is to establish procedures for dealing with children in homes and for ensuring that the children's best interests are the primary concern. Article 17 of the regulation states: "The home shall carry out the following tasks:

- (a) Take all steps to safeguard the health, development and well-being of children;
- (b) Protect children from abuse or violence of any kind in the home, under pain of prosecution;
- (c) Inform children's relatives, the Ministry and other reference persons if children are ill or if their safety or well-being is at risk;
- (d) Devise alternatives to institutional care for children based on a comprehensive plan that focuses on the best interests of the children;
- (e) Review the factors behind placement of children in the home every quarter to determine whether institutional care arrangements could be replaced with care in the original family or a different family, and develop rehabilitation programmes for children's families or foster families;
- (f) Refrain from publishing, exploiting or using images of the children other than for official business and in cases of necessity, as defined by a case study panel, so as to safeguard the children's best interests;
- (g) Establish and maintain administrative and financial records at the home for inspection by the authorities and Ministry officials;
- (h) Create a confidential file on each child and only allow authorized persons to consult it or discuss its contents, on pain of prosecution;

(i) Provide the Ministry with figures and information every month about the children at the home.

36. Details of the number of boys and girls who have been in care institutions are provided below.

Number of boys and girls in institutions, by year:

- 2005: 766 children (345 boys and 421 girls);
- 2006: 977 children (489 boys and 488 girls);
- 2007: 886 children (445 boys and 441 girls);
- 2008: 756 children (370 boys and 386 girls);
- 2009: 738 children (368 boys and 370 girls);
- 2010: 870 children (420 boys and 450 girls).

37. According to the Children and Institutions Department of the Family and Child Directorate at the Ministry of Social Development, there were 28 care institutions in Jordan in 2011. These included two government institutions, an institution of the Royal Court voluntary institutions in the capital and in the governorates of Zarqa, Irbid and Aqaba.

38. The interim Personal Status Code (Act No. 36 of 2010) includes provisions that address many family-related issues and new issues in the area of personal status. One key subject that is covered in detail is that of care of young children (*hadanah*). The principle of the best interests of the child is one of the key standards that the Act applies in relation to the question of *hadanah*. In accordance with this principle, the Code defines conditions that must be met by persons who are entrusted with the care of small children. Failure to meet these criteria bars a person from caring for a small child under the *hadanah* system, as the arrangement might not be in the child's best interests. The person must not have a contagious disease or an illness that could jeopardize the child's well-being. He or she must not neglect the child and the home environment must be suitable for the child. Article 171 of the Personal Status Code provides: "To be entitled to care for a young child, the carer must be an adult of sound mind who is not suffering from a serious, contagious disease. He or she must be the child's custodian and must be able to provide the child with a religious and moral education and to safeguard his or her health. The child must not be neglected in the home, because the carer is preoccupied. He or she must not be kept in a house of ill repute or of a person who will do him or her harm and the carer must not have converted to a different religion."

39. Article 173 states that the mother will retain the right to care for her children up until they reach the age of 15. Persons other than the mother will do so until the children reach the age of 10. After a child reaches the age specified in paragraph (a) of the article, he or she can choose whether to remain with the mother until reaching his or her majority. The time limits on care by a woman will be extended if this is necessary owing to an illness on the part of the male carer – unless the alternative is in the child's best interests.

40. As for administrative proceedings in the sharia courts, training courses have been held for sharia judges, assistant judges and court officials countrywide. The courses provide detailed explanations on children's rights, as set forth in the Jordanian Personal Status Code (Act No. 36 of 2010). The main topics discussed at these courses and seminars are child maintenance, the costs of children's education and health care, *hadanah*, visiting rights, travel with a minor, and how to ensure the best interests of the child in all these areas. At several events and workshops run jointly with local non-governmental organizations, in-depth discussions have been held on the main provisions of the Code that deal with these

topics and on how to apply the provision on situations and disputes in which children are adversely affected.

41. As for administrative and judicial procedures in the regular courts, court divisions have been established to deal with family cases, particularly cases of domestic violence. The law states that a public prosecutor or a court may decide, based on a reasoned argument, that it is necessary to use modern technology to protect a witness below the age of 18 while he or she is giving testimony. The opposing side must be able to use the technology to question the witness during the proceedings. Testimony provided in this way is deemed to be admissible evidence. The purpose of these measures is to preserve confidentiality and to shield children from unwanted intrusion and from having to confront the accused. The relevant provisions on the subject are found in article 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

42. A curriculum on young people and domestic violence, particularly violence against children, was included in the Judicial Institute's syllabus so that account would be taken of the best interests of the child. The Judicial Institute has carried out juvenile justice reform projects that introduce new measures relating to restorative justice and alternatives to custodial penalties that are in the best interests of children. Judges participate in all the committees that review draft laws, particularly those concerning children. The focus of their work is on the introduction of new concepts that serve the best interests of the child. If a child is assaulted by a close relative, the Office of the Public Prosecutor will act as his or her representative. This arrangement will be made in accordance with the provision which states that there must be no conflict of interest between a child and the representative of that child.

43. The Juvenile Police Department was established in 2011 to provide young people in conflict with the law and children in need of protection and care with the best possible services; to help them to escape from delinquency; to facilitate their participation in rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes; and to prevent young people who are at risk of delinquency from becoming involved in criminal activity. The Department was established pursuant to the Jordanian Juveniles Act of 1968, as amended, and the Juveniles Bill of 2011, and began its work in early 2012. Articles 10 and 14 (a) state:

“(1) A juvenile police department shall be established pursuant to this Act.

“(2) The juvenile police shall settle complaints concerning petty and major offences that are committed by young first time offenders and that carry a penalty of up to 2 years. It shall issue the juvenile with a caution for committing a petty offence and, in the case of a major offence, it shall require the young person's guardian or carer to give a personal pledge or guarantee that there will be no repetition of the offence.”

44. Reference is made to the establishment of such a department in the Jordanian Youth Supervision Act of 2006, the Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 9 of 1961, as amended), the Jordanian Criminal Code (Act No. 16 of 1960), as amended, the Public Security Act No. 38 of 1965, the Crime Prevention Act No. 7 of 1954, and the international treaties that Jordan has ratified.

45. The Juvenile Police Department was established to support the restorative justice process, in which rehabilitation and social reintegration of young offenders is a central element. It also works with victims and compensates them and society for damage suffered. It eases the burden on the justice system through its dispute resolution process, which obviates the need for prosecutions of young offenders. In keeping with the requirements of international treaties and child rights principles, the Department employs skilled specialists who are trained to deal with juvenile cases. As a result of these efforts, greater sensitivity to the importance of children's dignity and of ensuring respect for their humanity in dealings

with young offenders. Legal safeguards are provided in juvenile cases and the principle of the best interests of the child, as recognized in the Constitution, national legislation and the international treaties that Jordan has ratified, is upheld. The principle that juveniles must be held separately from adults in order to prevent them from learning criminal behaviour that will lead them to offend in the future is applied.

46. The Juvenile Police Department provides a range of legal, social, psychiatric and other services and runs prevention programmes and related services. In terms of its presence on the ground, as of the end of 2012, it was operating in the capital governorate, the Zarqa governorate and the province of Al-Rusayfa. The table below contains figures of crimes committed by young people in 2009–2010.

<i>Type of offence</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>
Serious and major offences against the person	52.5%	26.7%
Breach of trust offences?	0.1%	0.1%
Property offences	7.59%	57%
Offences against religion and the family	0.1%	0.04%
Offences against the public administration	2.7%	3.2%
Administration of justice offences	0%	0.02%
Endangerment of public safety	2.6%	3.4%
Vice and public indecency	5.4%	5.29%
Other offences	4.2%	4.29%
Total number	4 258	4 573

Source: Juvenile Police Department.

47. Jordanian law fully protects the child's right to life in the framework of a comprehensive system of legislation that makes it an offence to harm children from the time that they are in the womb until they reach the age of 18. Thus, the child's right to life and to protection of physical integrity is assured. The Criminal Code, as amended (Act No. 16 of 1960, art. 321), states that any woman who performs an abortion upon herself or consents to one being performed on her by another person will face a term of from 6 months to 3 years in prison. According to article 322, any person who uses any method whatsoever to perform an abortion on a woman with that woman's consent will face a term of between 1 and 3 years' imprisonment.

D. Respect for the views of the child

48. With regard to the Committee's recommendation that the State party continue to promote and facilitate respect for the views of children and their participation in all matters affecting them, in the first initiative of its kind, Jordan is having a national report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child prepared by Jordanian children. The National Council for Family Affairs and UNICEF are working together on the preparation of the report by adolescent boys and girls. These young people will express their views on the efforts by the State to uphold, protect and give effect to children's rights. They will thus have the opportunity to express their views on matters affecting them, in exercise of the fundamental right enshrined in article 12 of the Convention, namely, the right to participate and to express their views freely on matters affecting them, and in keeping with the obligation of the State to take their views into consideration.

49. In 2010, the National Council for Family Affairs, in cooperation with UNICEF, established a group made up of young people between the ages of 14 and 21 from all regions of the country – north, centre and south. The members included people who were involved in community activities, those who had opinions to share based on their experiences and adolescents who were able to talk about the issues that affected their generation. The group included children with special needs and child workers.

50. As part of the preparation process, a number of workshops and meetings were held and various methods were employed to obtain information and build capacities so as to produce a comprehensive report that accurately reflected the situation of young people. Steps were taken to build the capacities of the young people involved, raise their awareness of what the concepts of freedom and dignity imply, explain the legal safeguards established to protect human rights and prevent them from being infringed or threatened and to create a free and safe space in which young people could express themselves and talk about their aspirations and opinions.

51. In 2010, in the first phase of the project, a desk review of documents and reference materials pertaining to the Convention, as well as the country's periodic reports and the procedures for preparing them was conducted and simplified information was provided so as to take account of the specific needs of the young people. A series of workshops was held to provide the group of adolescents and young adults with intensive training on the relevant conceptual issues and research skills.

52. In the second phase of the process, representatives of the group took part in meetings of the official committees that were responsible for preparing the fourth and fifth periodic reports of Jordan. This was an important step towards establishing partnership between the young people and the adults and ensuring greater transparency in the work done by all sides.

53. During the research phase, the young team used various research tools and techniques to gather information about the views of adolescents and young adults from different parts of the country. The information and views were analysed under the supervision of a project team. Social media tools were used to reach out to as many young people as possible in Jordan.

54. The Ministry of Education works with the Save the Child organization on the Child-to-Child Programme. The Programme is designed to provide children with an opportunity to talk about their concerns, needs and aspirations in an environment that is conducive to the formation of partnerships with all stakeholders, including families, schools and local communities and thus helps to make children's voices heard. The approach taken focuses on improving students' ability to analyse the problems that are around them, to gather information from sources and organizations that deal with the problem that they are researching and to present the problem using active learning methods, including theatre, drama and other vehicles of expression. In addition, planning processes offer students a chance to learn about potential errors and to assess actions to be taken to convey ideas, draw attention to problems and make recommendations on how to resolve them.

55. The Ministry of Education and UNICEF are working together on a project on student parliamentary councils and parent-teacher councils that is designed to improve the quality of education. The Ministry devises developmental plans and strategies to turn schools into a building block in the development process and thus transform their role from an operational role to a leadership role, based on awareness of schools' real needs and situation. In this way, schools will implement appropriate plans that will help them to provide a developmental and educational environment that supports students' learning and development. This kind of role cannot be played without the involvement of students, parents and civil society organizations, because the role of schools in preparing a

generation to participate in the development of society and the nation complements that of parents.

IV. Civil rights and freedoms

56. The Nationality Act of 1954, as amended, includes provisions on reducing cases of statelessness and dual citizenship. Adult women are entitled to change their nationality and there is nothing arbitrary about the arrangements for revoking a woman's citizenship on account of marriage, the dissolution of a marriage or a change of citizenship by the husband or father. The Act provides that a person of unknown parentage who is born in Jordan shall be deemed to be a Jordanian citizen. Foundlings are deemed to have been born in Jordan, unless there is evidence to the contrary. The Act deals with the effects of marriage on the husband, wife and children. In cases where a Jordanian man marries a foreign woman, the basic rule applied is that the Jordanian citizenship can only be imposed on the woman with her written consent and at her explicit request. Minors (boys and girls) who are children of a Jordanian father retain their Jordanian citizenship, if their father acquires foreign citizenship.

57. On the question of whether a Jordanian mother can transmit her nationality to her children, the Jordanian Nationality Act states that children of a Jordanian mother and a non-Jordanian father have the right to Jordanian nationality if they were born in the Kingdom and the father's nationality is unknown or if he is stateless or paternity has not been legally established. However, the Jordanian Passports Act of 2003 grants the Minister of the Interior the power to issue an ordinary passport valid for a period of up to five years to the children of a Jordanian woman. This is subject to the approval of the Prime Minister. An application for naturalization from the children of a Jordanian woman will be treated like any other application, provided that the conditions laid down by law are met.

58. Children and spouses of Jordanian women are exempted from paying fines of any amount for breaching the law on residence in Jordan. In order to ease the financial burden borne by students, all students were exempted from paying school fees in the 2009/10 academic year and the preceding year. Children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians were included in this exemption scheme. The Ministry of the Interior issues children in such families with annual resident permits, if the situation dictates that the children must be cared for by the mother. The Complaints Bureau of the Jordanian National Commission for Women is drawing up a questionnaire for Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians to identify the difficulties that they face and the assistance and facilities that could be provided.

59. Under the above-mentioned Act children have the right to acquire the nationality of their father. Article 3, paragraph 3, of the Act states that a Jordanian national is a person whose father is a Jordanian national. Article 9 provides that the children of a Jordanian man will be deemed Jordanian nationals, regardless of where they are born. The Jordanian legislator protects children from statelessness. Paragraph 4 of the article states that a child will be deemed a Jordanian national if he or she is born in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to a mother who is Jordanian and a father whose nationality is not known or who is stateless or whose paternity has not been legally established. Article 10 provides that minors will retain Jordanian nationality, even if their father acquires a foreign nationality.

60. There is nothing in Jordanian law that obliges parents to use a particular type of name for their children. However, the Civil Status Code was amended in 2011 with the addition of wording to article 15 to the effect that the name must not be incompatible with religious and social values or with the maintenance of public order. The sharia urges parents to choose good names for their children. A child can apply to a court to have his or

her name changed. The child will be represented by the guardians in the hearing. As for the identity of a child, article 15 of the Personal Status Code provides that when a birth is registered full details must be given of the child's sex and name and the parents' full names, nationality, place of residence, occupation, and religion and the place where they are registered. Further to the amendment made to the Criminal Code under Act No. 8 of 2011, the penalty for making a fraudulent declaration regarding the parentage of a child was raised to temporary hard labour, instead of a term of from 3 months to 3 years in prison. The Act also made it an offence to declare a child to be the offspring of someone other than the father; previously, reference was made only to the mother. Hence, article 287 of the Criminal Code now reads: "Any person who carries out an act whereby a minor is presented as the offspring of a woman who did not give birth to him or her or of a person who is not the child's father shall be liable to a penalty of temporary hard labour."

61. In order to give effect to the child's right to peaceful assembly, Jordan has organized several youth gatherings, including those listed below.

62. Conference of Children, Municipalities and Society: This event was organized by the Family and Child Protection Society and was held in Irbid in 2007. Several institutions and children took part. The role that municipalities can play in establishing budgets for children and in combating child labour was discussed, together with the problem of children who are living in a situation that places them at risk. Several recommendations were issued, the main ones focusing on how to ensure that these problems are taken into account in the work of municipal authorities.

63. Arab Child and Youth Forum 2009: This event was organized by the Jordan River Foundation to mark the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse. It was attended by 80 young people representing nine Arab countries — Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan — and by national and regional children's organizations. The objective of the three-day meeting was to draw attention to the fact that child abuse occurs in all countries and must be eradicated and addressed both on a case-by-case basis and collectively. It was also stressed that children must be encouraged to participate at the national level and in the Arab world and must be given a safe space in which to talk about their ideas on child protection. They must also be given the chance to learn from the experiences of other countries. The participants in the forum discussed the establishment of an e-network that child participants could use to exchange information about their experiences with children in other countries and thus share their opinions and ideas.

64. The Jordanian Constitution guarantees the rights set forth in article 16 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to all persons, regardless of their age. Thus, children and their parents are afforded protection in accordance with the requirements of this article. Article 7 of the Constitution, as amended in 2011, states that personal freedom is assured. A paragraph was added to that article providing that any infringement of public rights and freedoms and any encroachment on the privacy of Jordanian citizens shall be deemed a legally punishable offence. Further to an amendment made to article 18, a court warrant must be obtained in order to intercept or monitor postal correspondence, telegrams and telephone conversations. The amended article reads: "All postal correspondence, telegrammes, telephone conversations and other forms of communication are confidential and they may not lawfully be placed under surveillance, monitored, intercepted, or appropriated without a court warrant." Article 10 of the Constitution states that homes are sacrosanct and may not be entered under any circumstances or any procedures other than those specified in the law. These provisions have been incorporated into the law; the Code of Criminal Proceedings enumerates the conditions and procedures for undertaking searches of homes and persons and for seizing correspondence (arts. 81–98).

65. Article 181 of the Criminal Code provides: “1. Any public servant acting in an official capacity who unlawfully enters a person’s home or an annex to a person’s home shall be liable to a term of from 3 months to 3 years in prison and a fine of from 20 to 100 dinars. 2. If, in addition to this offence, the official searches the premises or carries out any other arbitrary act, the penalty shall be not less than 6 months’ imprisonment.” Moreover, a term of from 1 month to 1 year in prison and a fine of from 5 to 20 dinars will be imposed on an official who carries out such an act without following the established legal procedure. Any public servant acting in that capacity who enters private premises such as a business or a management facility illegally or without following the established legal procedure will face a term of up to 6 months in prisons and a fine of up to 50 dinars.

66. The Communications Act No. 13 of 1995 states that private telephone conversations and communications are confidential and there may be no intrusion on them on pain of prosecution. Any person who divulges or disseminates the contents of any communication via public or private communication networks or of a telephone message to which that person has access by virtue of his or her occupation or who illegally registers such a message shall be subject to a penalty of from 1 month to 1 year in prison and/or a fine of from 100 to 300 dinars.

67. On the subject of respect by the media for children’s privacy, article 4 of the Print and Publishing Act No. 8 of 1998 provides: “The press freely carries out its work of providing news, information and commentary and helping to disseminate ideas, culture and scientific information within the limits set by law and in a framework designed to ensure that freedoms, rights and public obligations are maintained and that privacy is respected.” The Print and Publishing Act prohibits the publication of material that undermines people’s dignity or civil liberties of persons or conveys factitious information or claims about them. This prohibition is intended to offer the maximum protection to children vis-à-vis the press and to shield them from media exploitation. The Act and the amendments introduced to it by Act No. 27/2007 state that it is prohibited to publish court transcripts or to report on their contents, if the court in question issues a publication ban in order to safeguard the rights of an individual or a family or public order and public decency.

68. Case law establishes that invasion of privacy constitutes an offence: “It follows from articles 4 and 46 (c) of the Print and Publishing Act that if the press engage in misconduct of the kind specified in article 4 of the Print and Publishing Act, whether by intruding in areas relating to public duties, freedoms and rights or by failing to respect the freedom or privacy of others, this is deemed to be a criminal offence under article 46 (c) of the Act” (Amman Court of Appeal, Third Division, ruling 3827/2009 of 2 March 2009). The case law of the Appeal Court defines privacy in the following terms: “In order to determine the culpability of the accused, it is necessary to establish whether or not the published article invaded the privacy of the individuals concerned. Hence, the concept of privacy and of the inviolability of privacy must be defined. There is no such definition in the law, which leaves this matter to be determined in the jurisprudence of the courts. The concept of privacy encompasses married life, emotional life and family life and also events pertaining to personal life. It is a sphere which the individual considers to be private from others. Individuals are therefore entitled to prevent others from interfering or intruding in this sphere so that they may be allowed to enjoy peace of mind. The subject of the press article represents an invasion of the complainant’s privacy. It has been proven that there is no justification for divulging such items of news and thus the actions of the accused constitute an offence under articles 5 and 7 of the Print and Publishing Act” (Amman Appeal Court, Third Division, ruling 333568/2009 of 21 June 2009).

69. With regard to public vilification that is damaging to the honour or reputation of an adult or a child, the Criminal Code prohibits defamation, slander and denigration of persons (arts. 358–367).

70. As for legal protection, article 347 of the Print and Publishing Act — which refers to intrusion in a home, private premises and in people’s privacy — states: “1. Any person who enters the home or an annex to the home of another person without that person’s consent or who remains there against the wishes of a person who is entitled to remove him or her shall be subject to a penalty of up to 6 months in prison. 2. The penalty shall be a term of from 3 months to 1 year in prison if the offence was committed at night or a term of from 3 months to 2 years in prison if violence, breaking and entering or weapons were used in the commission of the offence or the offence was committed by a group of persons. 3. There shall be no prosecution of an offence under paragraph 1, unless the other party lodges a complaint.” Article 355 of the Criminal Code makes it an offence to disclose confidential information obtained in a work setting. It states: “A term of up to 3 years in prison shall be imposed on any person who: 1. Has access to official secrets by virtue of his or her job or official status and discloses them to a person not authorized to have that knowledge or a person with whom that information should not be shared, in the public interest, owing to the nature of his or her occupation; 2. Previously held a public post or performed government service and has held on to confidential documents, images, plans, forms or copies thereof without being entitled to do so or this being warranted by his or her occupation; 3. Learned of a secret in the course of his or her work and disclosed it without having any scheme in mind.”

71. An article (art. 348 bis) that prescribes penalties for [unauthorized] audiovisual surveillance operations was added to the Jordanian Criminal Code pursuant to Interim Act No. 12 of 2010. The article states: “Subject to a complaint being lodged by the aggrieved party, a penalty of up to 3 months in prison shall be imposed on any person who invades the privacy of others using audiovisual surveillance techniques of any kind, including sound recordings, photography and observation using binoculars. The penalty shall be doubled in the case of a repeat offence.” The House of Representatives adopted this provision as part of the law amending the Criminal Code (Act No. 8 of 2011), which replaced the Interim Act.

72. With regard to article 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Ministry of Culture shares interesting information and ideas with children and instils in them a sense of national pride and of respect for noble humanitarian values. In conjunction with the audiovisual and print media in Jordan, it offers them a wealth of information about all kinds of subjects. It fosters children’s access to media information through: its Media Unit and media advisor and spokesperson; the books that it publishes, acquires and gifts; the annual Jordanian Family Library Project; its production of low-priced publications and publication of around 20 children’s books a year; and through *Wisam*, a monthly cultural magazine for children. The Ministry also runs training courses and organizes cultural festivals and evening events for children. This information relates to paragraphs (a) and (c). With regard to paragraph (b), the Ministry’s Cultural Exchange Department constantly looks for opportunities to establish cultural cooperation with other countries so as to familiarize children with world cultures and other traditions, values, ideas and customs. It organizes exchange visits and other events and activities to this end. With regard to paragraph (d), the Ministry produces books and publications, notably the regular (monthly) *Wisam* magazine, on children’s language and how to enrich children’s vocabulary and linguistic knowledge. Training workshops are also run to develop children’s language skills. With regard to paragraph (e), one goal of the National Library and the Department of Printing and Publishing is to shield children from exposure to inappropriate information through the development of legislation that makes it an offence to submit material and information that is not fit for publication, because it would result in an abuse of children’s rights or offend against national and religious norms, values and traditions. Author’s rights are respected and pirated material is confiscated.

73. The Higher Council for Youth organizes children's camps that offer opportunities to play games, relax and engage in various activities. Through these camps and through youth centres children are encouraged to participate in culture and the arts.

74. With regard to paragraph 8 of the concluding observations and the Committee's comments that earlier recommendations regarding the age of criminal responsibility, among other subjects, have not been sufficiently addressed, while article 36 of the Juveniles Act No. 24 of 1968, as amended, states that no one below the age of 7 may be prosecuted, it also states that a child between the ages of 7 and 12 cannot be punished for an offence, but may only be subject to protection measures such as supervision by a parent or legal guardian or family member. Moreover, a court may issue a child supervision or monitoring order.

75. Under the new Juveniles Bill, the age of criminal responsibility has been raised to 18 years. The text is currently being reviewed and the adoption process is under way.

76. The maximum penalty that a young person between the ages of 15 and 18 can face under the Juveniles Act No. 24 of 1968 is 12 years' imprisonment, even if he or she commits what would be considered a capital offence if it had been committed by an adult. A criminal court of first instance that hears such a case will be made up of only two judges, since the penalty that the law prescribes for young offenders in these cases determines how the court is to be constituted.

V. Family environment and alternative care

77. The table below shows the number of people admitted to and discharged from social welfare institutions as of 2009.

No. Institution	<i>Carried over from 2007</i>		<i>Entry</i>			<i>Transfer</i>			<i>Placement</i>			<i>Current number of residents</i>
	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	
1. Dar al-Aman	8	19	23	18	41	3	0	3	16	23	39	29
2. Ma'daba Children's Home	39	0	115	0	115	9	0	9	127	0	127	27
3. Shafa Badran Welfare Home (opened on 9/7/2008)	38	0	37	0	37	10	0	10	19	0	19	46
4. Welfare, Al-Rasifa Education and Rehabilitation Home for Girls	0	37	0	0	129	1	1	0	0	112	112	54
5. Family Reconciliation Home	0	23	0	806	806	0	14	14	0	744	744	48
Total	85	79	175	824	1 128	23	15	36	162	879	1 041	204
Grand total	208		716			29			742	1 484		306

78. The National Council for Family Affairs and the Greater Amman Municipality set up three family counselling offices in the capital governorate. The offices are located in Al-Nuzhah, Sahab and Sweileh and provide families with counselling on social, economic and legal problems. In order to ensure that access to this service is provided across as much of the country as possible, steps have been taken to establish centres in the northern and southern governorates, namely, Irbid, Karak and Aqaba. The Council has produced a training manual for staff family counsellors and those who will be employed at the centres were given training in the best techniques for dealing with the problems that they will face

in their work. Counselling training has been provided to around 2,225 people, including Ministry of Education counsellors, Ministry of Social Development social workers, representatives of civil society organizations and academics from all State universities.

79. The Family Education and Counselling Centre provides free psychosocial, legal and health advice to children, women and all victims of violence and abuse. Moreover, the Family and Child Protection Society provides advice to children, married couples, older persons and people who are victims of violence or in a situation that puts them at risk. The Family Development Association also offers free psychosocial advice and information to women, children and other members of local communities.

80. Dar al-Aman, which is part of the Jordan River Foundation, provides temporary residential care to child victims of abuse, together with psychosocial services for them and their families. It also offers psychosocial counselling to children and families who need this type of intervention. The Foundation's Safe Family Unit provides psychosocial services and legal advice. The Foundation targets abused children who are referred to it by the authorities and their foster families and adolescents suffering from psychosocial problems and their families. It operates in one district of Amman (Maraka South).

81. The Integrated Services Centre/Family Reconciliation Home of the Ministry of Social Development will provide free social advice and psychological and family counselling services as well as rehabilitation support for victims of abuse.

82. The National Council for Family Affairs carried out a project to improve services for children from birth up to the age of 4. Guidelines were drawn up on the establishment and licensing of nursery schools. The guidelines cover matters relating to safety, health, hygiene, food, the qualifications of the staff that work with children, staff-child ratios, administrative procedures for registering children, and record keeping.

83. As part of the project, measures were taken to develop the institutional structures of nursery schools. To that end, a study of their oversight and monitoring procedures was conducted in 2009. The purpose of the study was to assess how the Ministry of Social Development and partners manage these institutions and to develop the Ministry's oversight and monitoring procedures in line with updated directives. Based on the findings, a manual was produced containing guidelines, tools and information on procedures for monitoring and evaluating these institutions so as to protect the health and safety of the children who attend them and to verify compliance with minimum licensing standards and conditions. The process for monitoring and overseeing these institutions and verifying compliance with licensing conditions is described in the manual.

84. In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development, the Council designed an assessment tool for nursery schools to help care providers, owners and managers to create a safe environment for the delivery of comprehensive childcare and to sensitize them to the difficulties that may need to be addressed in order to create an ideal care environment.

85. In 2010, in the second phase of the project, a general framework was established setting out general educational outcomes for Jordanian children, including behaviours that a child might be expected to exhibit after going through a proper educational process. The parameters are perfectly aligned with age criteria and are tailored to take account of the situation of children in different socio-geographic areas. All aspects of child development, including physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and communicative development, are included in the framework.

86. Given that children begin to learn from the minute they are born, suitable learning activities need to be designed and delivered immediately after enrolment in nursery schools so as to foster their full development. Children learn from playing and from actively exploring their environment. The Council has established benchmarks for educational

outcomes for Jordanian children and produced a handbook for educators on activities for children between 0 and 4 years of age. The handbook is designed based on an integrated development approach and lists expected outcomes for each age group, together with suitable activities, accompanied by illustrations, that care providers can use to support children's full development. The idea is to ensure that the outcomes are achieved and to measure the impact on children so as to help develop their full personality and build their capacity to adapt to school and to face the future. A safe and supportive environment that fosters the mental, physical, emotional and social development of children is provided. The handbook comprises two-week modules. A range of practical activities are suggested for each week and the handbook is divided up into four parts, each tailored to a different age group. At the end of each section, an assessment test to measure the child's learning is included.

87. The Council distributed a booklet on the contents and rights established in the Convention to raise awareness among the young people working on the preparation of their report on children's rights. It also distributed the booklet to policymakers who deal with children's issues and rights.

88. The Interim Personal Status Code (Act No. 36/2010) provides that the biological mother has a primary right to be entrusted with care of her young children, whether she is still married or has separated from her husband. Preference is then given to the maternal grandmother, the paternal grandmother and the father, in that order. A court may decide to have a child placed with a more distant relative, if it is presented with evidence that such an arrangement is in the child's interests.

89. In order to protect children and ensure that they receive appropriate care, conditions have been included in the Act stating that those granted the right to care for young children must be adults who are of sound mind not suffering from an infectious or serious illness. The carer must be able to raise and maintain a child (Personal Status Code, arts. 170 and 171).

90. The law provides protection for young children. It states that the care arrangement (*hadanah*) will be considered null and void if the child is lodged with a person who has been stripped of the right of care owing to his or her bad conduct.

91. The Act states that the father's mother, father and grandfather may see the child and invite the child to visit, if the father is absent. They may go out with the child once a week and talk to him or her using modern means of communication. Grandparents may see a child once a month so as to maintain a personal relationship and direct contact with the child. However, the Personal Status Code affirms that visits and outings will only be arranged with due regard in all cases to the best interests of the child.

92. Jordan ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in 2006. The text was published in issue 4787 of the official gazette on 16 October 2006. Moreover, Jordan has not entered any reservations to the Optional Protocol and its ratification decision shows that it is committed to upholding the highest standards of child protection and to providing all forms of protection and care to ensure the safety of children.

93. The National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking was launched on 2 March 2010, together with a framework for action. The strategy focuses on four thematic areas: prevention, protection, legal proceedings and local, regional and international partnerships. It follows a rights-based approach that is consistent with international norms as they relate to protection and assistance for victims and persons adversely affected by human trafficking offences, notably children. Account is taken of children's best interests.

94. Article 9 of the Human Trafficking Act No. 9 of 2009 defines human trafficking as: “1. The recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation; (2) The recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of a person under the age of 18 for the purpose of exploitation, even if such exploitation is not carried out by means of the threat or use of force or by the other methods enumerated in paragraph (1).”

95. Article 3 of the Human Trafficking Act defines exploitation as: “The exploitation of others in forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs or prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation.” This also includes recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of a person under the age of 18 for the purpose of exploitation, even if such exploitation is not carried out by means of the threat or use of force or by the other methods enumerated in the Act.

96. Act No. 6 of 2008 on protection from domestic violence states that, besides offences that fall within the purview of the criminal courts, an act of violence by a family member against another family member shall be deemed domestic violence and classified as an offence against the person.

Criminal Code (Act No. 8 of 2011, as amended)

97. Jordan enacted a law containing a set of amendments the Criminal Code which increased penalties for offences against families, women and children. The age of protection under criminal law with regard to sexual assault and indecent offences against girls was raised to 18 years in line with the international instruments on children’s rights. The law introduced tougher penalties for such offences. In given circumstances, the fact that the victim of the offence is a minor is defined as an aggravating circumstance in the law. Hence, the law protects children from physical abuse and sexual exploitation. It states that no person may perform an abortion on a woman other than in extraordinary circumstances and under the conditions laid down in the law. Otherwise, those involved will be deemed to have carried out an illegal abortion. The law provides additional safeguards for children, prescribing a maximum penalty of death for rape of a girl below the age of 15 years and raising the penalty to hard labour for rape of a girl aged between 15 and 18. If the perpetrator is an ascendant of the victim or close kin, the penalty will be increased. The law also deals with cases of children living in a brothel, incitement of children to engage in depravity or immoral acts and child sexual assault. It prescribes penalties for child abandonment and for depriving children of food, clothing or other necessities.

98. The elements of the State’s comprehensive strategy are described below.

National Strategic Plan on Family Protection and the Prevention of Violence, 2005–2009

99. The focus of the strategic vision is on supporting the family as a cohesive and close-knit unit whose members enjoy the right to psychological, mental and physical well-being by creating a social, cultural and legal environment that keeps them safe, protects them from family breakdown and shields their members from violence. The vision includes a component on prevention that revolves around the goals of preventing domestic violence; encouraging healthy behaviours in families; addressing sociocultural risk factors; identifying cases of domestic violence at an early stage; and containing them and establishing measures to put an end to the problem through education and awareness-raising programmes. The component on protection highlights the need for action to ensure

that communities and governmental and non-governmental organizations provide quality services to respond more effectively and more promptly to cases of domestic violence. The organizational capacities of these institutions need to be enhanced so that the best possible services can be supplied to deal with cases of violence. The component on human and material resources covers matters such as human resources development and institutional capacity-building for entities that work in the area of family protection and family security. The component on legislation, policies and legal issues relates to the Government's commitment to instituting laws to prevent domestic violence and to provide protection in that domain. The partnership and coordination component focuses on the need for comprehensive and integrated programmes, policies and laws to deal with domestic violence based on multisectoral approaches. The component on studies and research draws attention to the need for further research into domestic violence in order to define priority areas, identify the causes and costs of violence and assess the effectiveness of programmes.

National Framework for Protection of Families from Violence

100. The National Framework for Protection of Families from Violence is the mechanism that Jordan has established to deal with the problem of domestic violence. The first steps were taken in 2000 to implement the national family protection project, in which various governmental and non-governmental organizations work in partnership with one another to offer the best services to victims, offenders and their families. There is clearly a need for stronger partnerships and coordination among all the entities and institutions that work on family protection issues and for efforts to be made to tackle the problem of violence based on a multi-institutional approach. It was for that reason that the National Council for Family Affairs was selected to serve as an umbrella organization for coordination of programmes and activities to develop the National Framework for Protection of Families from Violence and to define, in cooperation with all partners, the roles and responsibilities of all entities that deal with victims of domestic violence. The decision was endorsed by the Council of Ministers and the relevant entities were asked to put it into effect.

101. The Ministry of Education conducted the "Together ... for a safe school environment" campaign, in cooperation with UNICEF, to encourage all teachers in State primary and secondary schools and schools run by the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) to choose educational techniques, as opposed to corporal punishment and other forms of psychological punishment to correct students' behaviour. The main outcomes were the production of a training manual on how to create a safe school environment that is free from violence and the delivery of training on the subjects covered in the manual to a focus group consisting of heads of educational guidance departments in the Ministry itself and in educational directorates, as well as representatives of the relief agency and of military colleges (a total of 60 participants).

102. With regard to the concern expressed by the Committee about corporal punishment being viewed as a culturally acceptable practice in the family setting, according to article 62 of the Criminal Code, parents may discipline their children within the parameters established by general custom. The Committee recommends that Jordan prohibit by law all forms of corporal punishment in the home as well as in all other settings, including private and public institutions, and effectively enforce this ban. It should be noted that article 62 of the Criminal Code has been amended. A clause stating that the punishment must not cause any harm or injury was added to ensure that parental discipline of children is justified, subject to the condition that the punishment is permitted according to general custom.

103. With regard to the banning of corporal punishment, the Civil Service regulations were amended to prevent those who abuse children, particularly young children, and thus do them harm in breach of prevailing regulations and norms from working with children. Tougher disciplinary sanctions were introduced for inflicting any form of corporal

punishment or injury on a child in an educational or training institution or a welfare home or shelter. Provision was made for the establishment of a panel, to be chaired by a representative of the Ministry of Justice and with members from the relevant ministries and the Civil Service, to conduct investigations, draw up detailed reports on its findings and make recommendations to the Minister on appropriate sanctions for civil servants who commit abuses or on cases which should be referred to a disciplinary panel. There is also a provision that explicitly states that a civil servant who was dismissed for such conduct may not be re-employed in any department where children may be present.

Social reintegration

104. In a circular issued in 2000, the Ministry of Social Development defined three categories of children of unknown parentage: foundlings whose parentage is unknown; victims of lascivious conduct, meaning children conceived as a result of sexual intercourse between individuals who are close blood relations; and illegitimate children whose mothers' identity is known, that is children conceived as a result of illicit sexual relations where on or both of the parties has been sanctioned by a court for their conduct. Normally, there are disputes over the parentage of these children.

105. In 2009, 77 children were fostered, as compared with 13 between 1 January and 30 April 2010.

106. The next table shows the number of children of unknown parentage who had been identified as of 2007. The figures are taken from the records of the Al-Hussein Social Institute.

Year	Group			Total
	Foundlings	Victims of lascivious conduct	Mother's identity unknown	
2007	32	3	35	70

Source: Ministry of Social Development, 2008.

107. The Ministry of Social Development makes arrangements to ensure that children of unknown parentage are cared for by families in accordance with Child Welfare Regulation No. 34 of 1972. Article 3 of the regulation states that alternative or foster families and host institutions discharge the obligations normally performed by natural families, subject to oversight by the Ministry. Their job is to look after the health, safety, well-being and education of the children concerned and they are given the right to supervise children in the same way as parents would do for a period to be determined by the Minister or a court.

108. Regulation No. 49 of 2009 on the licensing and management of children's homes states that these homes must create an environment that is conducive to the development of children and provide a secure family setting where children can enjoy excellent physical and mental health and thus develop the social, emotional and other capacities that they need to learn. These arrangements are used when there is no possibility of housing a child with a family member or a suitable alternative family.

Dar al-Aman

109. Dar al-Aman is a residential therapeutic centre that offers protection and treatment to abused children and training for their families. An institution of the Jordan River Foundation, since it opened its doors in 2000 it has dealt with hundreds of cases, providing accommodation, care, assistance with behavioural change and advice and organizing family visits. It works with boys aged between 0 and 12 years and girls from 0 to 13 years of age.

110. This is the only centre of its kind in Jordan and the Arab world to provide psychosocial therapy and recovery services. It provides therapy to children living in the home and those who do not need to be separated from their families and admitted, because the abuse that they are facing does not warrant it. The centre also follows up on children who are returned to their original family or placed with an alternative family or a shelter or welfare centre.

Ministry of Social Development/Family Reconciliation Home

111. The Family Reconciliation Home was established pursuant to Regulation No. 48 of 2004 on family welfare homes, which was issued pursuant to Article 4 of Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour Act No. 14 of 1956, as amended. The Home was founded pursuant to a decree of the Minister of Social Development based on an instruction of the Ministry's Secretary-General. It was given the name of the Family Reconciliation Home and was opened on 17 January 2007.

112. The Home offers personalized services and advice to the women and girls that it accommodates and assists them in resolving problems and difficulties that they encounter. It also takes in accompanying children of up to 3 years of age. In special circumstances, a child over the age of 3 and under the age of 5 may stay there for up to one month, subject to a decision by the relevant panel.

VI. Basic health and welfare

A. Children with disabilities

113. Regarding the Committee's recommendation concerning the de facto discrimination faced by children with disabilities, the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities was established pursuant to Persons with Disabilities Act No. 31 of 2007. It is a body corporate that offers persons with disabilities all kinds of support and assistance with socioeconomic integration. It also follows up on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, reviewing legislation and preparing amendments to laws, including the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 31 of 2007, to bring them into line with the Convention. It furthermore formulates policies, and plans, coordinates, monitors and supports a full range of activities to assist persons with disabilities. It carries out this work based on the principles of partnership, good governance, accountability and transparency.

114. In part 5 of chapter VI of the Jordanian National Charter specific reference is made to persons with disabilities. The text states that persons with disabilities who are members of Jordanian society are entitled to be provided with special care, education, training, rehabilitation and access to employment so as to help them to overcome the difficulties that they face and to live their lives as productive members of society.

115. The right to equality, protection from discrimination on the grounds of disability and full integration into all stages of education is established in the Persons with Disabilities Act. Article 4 of the Act provides that persons with disabilities are entitled to a basic and a higher education. The national strategy on persons with disabilities includes a component on education and higher education for persons with disabilities. The goal is to afford them the right to education through the creation of an appropriate learning environment for all persons with disabilities across the country, both males and females.

116. The Ministry of Education has a special department that designs educational programmes for persons with disabilities. It comprises the following sections: the Learning

Difficulties and Speech Disorders Section; the Sensory Disabilities Section; the Mental Disabilities Section; and the Guidance Section for Students with Disabilities.

117. The Ministry of Education strategy includes plans and programmes to foster the social integration of persons with disabilities and afford them their rights. Using the budgetary resources at its disposal, the Ministry supplies hearing aids, optical devices, wheelchairs and material printed in Braille and large font. There are also resources rooms for persons with learning difficulties or mental disabilities and for the deaf.

118. Four literacy centres have been established in different areas to offer persons with disabilities who have not had the chance to enrol in school the chance to complete their studies. The Ministry is in the process of setting up similar classes based on the needs that have been identified.

119. Some school buildings have been adapted to facilitate access for persons with disabilities. Passageways for persons with motor disabilities have been created, health facilities installed and classes moved to the ground floor to cater for students with motor disabilities. Modern vehicles have been bought and the transport fleet has been replaced with 50 new buses that are specially adapted to students' needs. The buses are used by more than 1,500 students with auditory or visual impairments or mental disabilities.

120. The Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities carries out the following educational programmes:

- (1) A project entitled "Design and development of general standards for special education programmes and institutions". The goal of this project is to establish national standards for the programmes and services that are offered to persons with disabilities in Jordan so as to regulate and improve the quality of those services. The general standards were adopted in 2009, while those for programmes for persons with autism, and mental disabilities and for diagnostic centres were adopted in 2010;
- (2) A project to provide persons with disabilities with access to Ministry of Education resources centres for students with learning difficulties. The project was conducted in coordination with the office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Ministry of Education. The Council set up six resources rooms in Ministry of Education schools and provided 62 resources room teachers, 35 from the capital governorate and 27 from Karak governorate, with training about learning difficulties and related subjects;
- (3) Capacity-building for staff of autism centres organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development. The Council contributed to the establishment of seven classes for students with autism, five run by the Ministry of Social Development and two by the voluntary sector. Twenty-five persons who work in these classes were trained, as were 25 trainers at an autism diagnosis centre;
- (4) A project to support persons with disabilities attending regular schools. The Council paid 60 per cent of the school fees of 516 disabled students who were living with their families;
- (5) A project to procure educational, training and rehabilitation services for institutions that serve persons with disabilities. Agreements were signed with 82 such institutions, 50 of them associations with 9 boarders and 1,451 day pupils and 32 special education centres with 161 boarders and 812 day pupils. A total of 2,433 persons with disabilities received assistance from the Council in 2009.

National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2007–2015)

121. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2007–2015) was established to realize the royal vision of creating a national community in which persons with disabilities live a decent and sustainable life and participate actively on the basis of equity and respect. Following the adoption of the strategy, the Disabled Persons' Welfare Act No. 12 of 1993 was abrogated and the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 31 of 2007 was adopted. The Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities was established pursuant to the latter Act.

122. The second phase of the strategy (2010–2015) includes a component on violence, exploitation and abuse of persons with disabilities. The goal is to eliminate practices that could result in persons with being subjected to violence, abuse and exploitation and to reduce frequency of such cases based on carefully designed and systematic plans that focus on children in particular. The Higher Council has carried out several projects on children's health. They include the following:

(1) The "Early detection of disabilities" project was run in cooperation with the Ministry of Health. The procedures for recording children's growth and development were updated and refined to enable staff at mother and child centres to identify problems with delayed growth early on and to intervene quickly, providing services to help mitigate the impact of the disability. Six leading health centres were selected to run this programme;

(2) The "Early intervention" project involved the establishment of the "Protégé Programme", an early intervention educational programme for children with disabilities aged between 0 and 9 years. At the end of the first phase, the programme was updated and the "Protégé early learning manual" was issued. Eighty-eight volunteers who take part in community training programmes, together with kindergarten teachers were trained to implement the programme. Six training courses were held in various governorates to build capacities of the people who work in this domain;

(3) The "Assessment of diagnostic centres in Jordan" project was established to evaluate the services provided at diagnostic centres run by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development and the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities. The aim of the study was to review and analyse the services offered to persons with disabilities in existing centres. The findings of the study and the recommendations made have been turned into a plan of action.

123. As for the media and public information, a media committee was formed to help formulate awareness and information policies on disability issues and the rights of persons with disabilities. The committee comprises a group of highly regarded Jordanian journalists from the Jordanian News Agency, Jordanian television, Jordanian radio and local newspaper outlets. A media plan was devised to cover all news outlets and awareness-raising forums. A network of journalists who deal with disability issues was formed to familiarize other journalists with the rights of persons with disabilities and establish cooperation with them in order to follow up on and resolve problems raised by persons with disabilities. Jordanian satellite channels and media outlets are enlisted in this work. Activities are undertaken in coordination with satellite broadcasters, including Jordanian television and Jordanian radio, to disseminate information on subjects relating to the work of the Council and disability issues. The assistance of several Arab newspapers and satellite channels has been enlisted to cover news items pertaining to the Council, including stories about persons with disabilities and information about their rights.

124. The following training and educational activities were undertaken:

- A series of training courses were run in 2009 for a group of persons with disabilities and for a number of institutions that work in this area. The subject of the training was the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 31 of 2007;
- A series of sessions were held to raise awareness of the fact that it is prohibited to perform a hysterectomy on women with mental disabilities. The sessions were held for family members of persons with disabilities at three centres for the disabled;
- A women's committee was formed to raise awareness of the rights of women with disabilities. The committee includes a group of women;
- Workshops entitled "Proposal writing" were held to empower persons with disabilities. The events were run in the central, southern and northern governorates, with the participation of local club partners.

125. The Supreme Council for Persons with Disabilities makes every effort that articles 2 and 4 of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 31 of 2007 are applied to ensure such that persons with disabilities are afforded their rights. The Act states that persons with disabilities will be granted a one-off exemption from customs duty and from sales tax on a vehicle that they buy for their personal use. A draft regulation on customs exemptions was drawn up and submitted to the Ministry of Social Development for comments. It was then submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister for endorsement.

B. Health and health-care services

126. With regard to the right to health and health services, the reduction of maternal mortality is one of the targets in the Millennium Development Goals that were adopted at the Millennium Summit in 2000, when the international community undertook to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters between 1990 and 2015. According to a study conducted in 1995–1996, the maternal mortality rate in Jordan was 41.4 per 100,000 live births; attaining this target, therefore, represented a challenge. In view of the dearth of recent national data on maternal mortality, the Higher Population Council conducted a national study in conjunction with a specialist research team in 2007–2008 to assess the maternal mortality rate, to identify the direct and indirect causes of maternal mortality, to identify potential means of preventing maternal mortality and to assess the adequacy and completeness of hospital, medical and vital records. The study showed that Jordan had exceeded all expectations and had achieved the goal that it had set for itself seven years ahead of schedule. According to the study, the maternal mortality rate in Jordan had decreased considerably to 19.1 per 100,000 live births; the downward trend not only underscores that Jordan has succeeded in meeting its priorities under the Millennium Development Goals but also serves to justify the major investment in maternity made by the governmental and other sectors during the past decade, as the results indicate that Jordan has come close to achieving the low maternal mortality rates typical of developed countries.

127. While significant progress has been made that can be attributed to effective, comprehensive health policies, further efforts are needed in respect of the under-5 mortality rate, which decreased from 39 deaths per thousand live births in 1990 to 28 per thousand live births in 2009 – an annual decrease of 0.55 deaths per thousand live births. Jordan needs to redouble its efforts and reduce the rate by 2.5 deaths per thousand annually in order to achieve the target in the Millennium Development Goal by 2015; if it maintains the present rate of decrease, it will not be able to do so.

128. The infant mortality rate (deaths of children during the first year of life) decreased from 34 deaths per thousand live births in 2009, at the same rate of decrease as the under-5 mortality rate, namely, 0.55 deaths per thousand live births annually. More programmes and large-scale strategic interventions focused on neonatal mortality and its causes and on geographical discrepancies are needed in order to reduce the infant mortality rate by an annual rate of at least 1.95 deaths per thousand live births, if Jordan is to achieve the target by 2015.

129. The reduction of under-5 and infant mortality rates can be attributed to comprehensive health policies and health insurance programmes and compulsory mass vaccination programmes for children, combined with maternal education. However, challenges remain: these require more effective policies and programmes which target, in particular, those areas and groups in which child mortality rates remain high.

130. The following factors have contributed to the reduction of the maternal mortality rate in Jordan:

(a) Better quality and more efficient health services. Health services have been improved as a result of:

- Increased geographical coverage of health services, including in remote areas. During the period 1991–2009, the total number of hospitals in the various health sectors increased from 74 to 108 and the number of Ministry of Health hospitals increased from 22 to 31, including 25 obstetrics and gynaecology departments;
- The increase in the number of health-care centres during the period 1996–2009. Primary health-care services are provided by health-care centres overseen by the Ministry of Health. During the period 1996–2009, the number of comprehensive health-care centres increased from 41 to 70, the number of primary health-care centres from 323 to 378 and the number of mother and child centres from 307 to 431. In addition clinics are run by the Royal Medical Services, the Jordanian Association for Family Planning and Protection, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and the private sector;
- Staffing increases. Staffing numbers in Ministry of Health districts and hospitals increased from 10,002 in 1996 to 14,868 in 2009. In addition, the number of trained and specialized health-care personnel in obstetrics and gynaecology departments has increased and there are now four specialists in every department;
- Availability of manuals and protocols for dealing with women with high- and low-risk pregnancies and protocols for perinatal visits, in addition to staff training on the implementation of the relevant protocols. The protocols were developed by the Ministry of Health in 2004, with support from donors, and were updated in 2006;

(b) Increase in the number of medically supervised births and decrease in the number of home births due to availability of medical facilities: in 2009, 99 per cent of births took place under medical supervision, in comparison with 97 per cent in 1997;

(c) Increase in the level of prenatal care, through follow-up visits for pregnant women, early detection of complications in pregnancy, and delivery and postnatal care. The perinatal visit rate was 68 per cent in 2009, in comparison with 35 per cent in 1997;

(d) Effective family planning programmes. These programmes have contributed to pregnancy spacing practices and to the avoidance of rapid repeat pregnancies. The birth control usage rate increased from 52.6 per cent in 1997 to 59 per cent in 2009;

(e) Grass-roots interventions relating to maternal health. Through such interventions, communities play an active and effective role in maternal health care, early detection of danger signals and adoption of preventive measures to promote maternal health. The intervention include training programmes on family health for male and female instructors, community outreach programmes, and national media campaigns. They have served to raise women's awareness of the importance of spacing pregnancies, of undertaking prenatal and perinatal visits and of attending to nutrition and personal hygiene;

(f) Increase in educational levels among women. The female illiteracy rate decreased from 20.9 per cent in 1996, to 10.8 per cent in 2009;

(g) Decline in early marriage rates and the consequent decrease in young motherhood rates (married girls in the age group 15–19 years who have given birth to their first child) from 6 per cent in 1997 to 3 per cent in 2009;

(h) Empowerment of women through measures to increase their economic and legal participation and enable them to exercise their reproductive rights as established by law.

131. In addition, the Higher Population Council developed a policy document on the demographic window of opportunity, which sets out policies for making the transition to a period of demographic opportunity. The aim of the second phase (2008–2012) of the National Plan of Action for Reproductive Health was to improve reproductive health/family planning in Jordan by improving mother and child health and this with a view to speeding progress towards the time when the demographic dividend will come into play. This will be achieved based on the following strategic objectives: improving the policy environment for reproductive health/family planning; increasing support for decisions on reproductive health/family planning; increasing support for reproductive health/family planning; increasing access to reproductive health/family planning services; to improving the quality of reproductive health/family planning services; and raising awareness of reproductive health/family planning issues.

132. In addition, the Ministry of Health established a domestic violence unit in the Woman and Child Health Directorate to protect children from violence and abuse. With the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the unit trains health staff in the early detection of child abuse and violence against children and in taking the measures required for their protection.

Role of the Ministry of Education in AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) education and awareness

133. In cooperation with the National AIDS Programme, the Ministry conducts training courses for district school health officials to provide them with information on how AIDS is spread, the symptoms and methods of prevention. It does this by:

- Holding workshops for teachers and school health educators at local State schools in Jordan on the development of a plan for the inclusion of information about AIDS in the school curriculum;
- Participating in the celebration of World AIDS Day, which is observed on 1 December, by circulating an educational leaflet bearing the World AIDS Day slogan to all schools as a way of raising AIDS awareness among students;

- Participating in the development and discussion of the final version of a national AIDS strategy;
- Raising AIDS awareness, through educational counsellors, among students in grades 10–12 by means of collective guidance, educational leaflets, lectures and seminars, and participating in reviews of AIDS-related manuals prepared by international organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in the preparation and distribution of leaflets and brochures on AIDS.

C. Social security

134. The Social Security Corporation endeavours to improve and extend existing forms of social protection for all sectors of the community, including children, in order to contribute to the economic development and the psychological and social stability of workers and members of their families, in particular children. In that context, the Interim Social Security Act No. 7 of 2010 affords children the right to the social security benefits described below.

Benefits

135. Under the Social Security Act, dependent children of 16 years of age and under are entitled to a share of a parent's retirement pension. The retirement pension is increased by a specific amount, if the retiree is responsible for supporting a child. This is done in accordance with the established rules and conditions. A total of 85,806 persons were eligible for shares of retirement pensions paid out by the Social Security Corporation as at the end of April/May 2011.

Allowances for heirs

136. Under the Social Security Act, child heirs are entitled to a share of the retirement pension of the insured/deceased retiree or to compensation based on the rate established by law. There were 12,858 child heirs of 16 years of age and under as at end April/May 2011.

Social insurance inclusion

137. The Social Security Act provides that apprentices who join the labour market when they are under 16 years of age shall be covered by work injury insurance. This provision is intended to protect this group from social risk. It ensures that apprentices are entitled to receive the equivalent of a retirement pension or compensation should they sustain an injury at work and this in accordance with the conditions established for this purpose. It should be noted that, while the Social Security Corporation does not encourage child labour, it endeavours to guarantee children's rights and protect children from workplace risks when they do work as apprentices.

138. With regard to social security and pension systems, the Government raised the early retirement age to 50 years in line with the target set for 2012. As a result of amendments made to the Social Security Act, 50 per cent of the total labour force is now covered by social security; the most significant amendments have been raising the early retirement age and the option given to enterprises that employ fewer than five persons to join the social security system. In addition, in 2006, the Government established the Coordination Commission for Social Solidarity, which commenced work in 2008.

VII. Education, leisure and cultural activities

139. With regard to the recommendation made by the Committee in paragraph 32 of the concluding observations concerning discrimination against girls in education in rural areas, the Ministry of Education has taken steps to make qualitative improvements and eliminate the gender gap at the level of policies, plans and programmes. It has mainstreamed gender in all policies, programmes and practices developed in the framework of the national vision and mission for education and has devised techniques for selecting, supporting and empowering educational leaders to promote gender equity in governance, management and leadership frameworks. In addition, it has focused attention in school curricula and textbooks on the impact of gender roles on overall national development.

140. Moreover, the Ministry has launched an ongoing study on effective, gender-sensitive educational environments. It has explored opportunities to establish partnerships with other stakeholders involved in educating young men and women with a view to sharing the financial costs of the education system in a financially responsible and accountable manner. As part of the expected outcomes for vocational and technical education, it has developed gender-sensitive programmes and plans that are responsive to labour market demands and technological developments.

141. Furthermore, in the context of the expected outcomes for lifelong education, the Ministry has encouraged the private sector to expand cultural and literacy centres that offer men and women training that is geared to the needs of the market.

142. An executive team and a technical team were formed to mainstream gender in policies, regulations and laws. Training in communication and leadership skills, advocacy, gender analysis and planning, was provided to enhance the capacity of the technical team to mainstream gender in activities relating to policies, plans, programmes and projects. These included the National Education Strategy; the Vocational Education Development Plan; the National Professional Standards for Teachers; general and specific educational outcomes for the early childhood stage; the media campaign; training standards for educational leadership; professional succession planning; the "School Development Unit" project; and the "whole district and whole school" improvement performance project.

143. The technical team on gender mainstreaming took up the recommendations made and developed the content and form of curricula, textbooks and teachers' manuals so as to convey a balanced and realistic image of women that challenges stereotypes.

144. A gender analysis was conducted of the modules written for secondary school textbooks after meetings had been held with coordinating authors and author teams to raise their awareness of gender issues and of the mechanisms for mainstreaming the gender perspectives. Those in charge of panels of teacher manual authors were also provided with information on gender concepts and how to incorporate them into manuals. In addition, gender indicators were drawn up and presented to author panels for use in textbook design and authors were provided with information about women who serve as role models in all spheres of life for inclusion in secondary school textbooks.

145. The Ministry of Education has contributed to efforts to achieve equality of opportunity in education by:

- Improving the quality of basic education and highlighting the fact that it is compulsory in order to reduce the school dropout rate among girls and boys, particularly in rural areas; developing the necessary plans; and publicizing the criteria and instructions relating to student admissions and transfers, in addition to the admission criteria for first-grade students, non-Jordanian students and the children of Jordanian mothers;

- Drawing attention to the importance of political and civic education in the educational system; promoting democratic concepts and practices in the framework of national guidance; and applying the principles of participation and justice in school life through various projects, such as the project on the election of children's municipal councils, conducted in cooperation with Greater Amman Municipality, and the "Journalism in education" project, conducted in cooperation with the Centre for Defending Freedom of Journalists.

146. There are 1,098,889 students in basic and secondary education, and the school enrolment rate in Jordan is 100 per cent. In the academic year 2007/08, there were 3,268 government schools, not including kindergartens, in Jordan – 73 more than in the previous academic year.

147. The fact that the school dropout rate in the academic year 2007/08 was less than 0.004 per cent can be attributed to a number of factors. Ministry of Education studies indicate that the underlying causes of the school dropout problem include economic issues such as child poverty and unemployment and educational issues relating to school curricula, teaching methods and examinations. The Ministry of Education has taken the necessary measures to reduce the school dropout rate by improving the quality of basic education, highlighting the fact that basic education is compulsory — which has helped to lower the school dropout rate for girls and boys, particularly in rural areas and underprivileged areas — and by strengthening the important role played by school governors in this regard. The measures taken include:

- Enactment of tough criminal legislation that includes material and other penalties for parents who fail to send their children back to school;
- Enforcement of legislation prohibiting the employment of persons of school age (basic education) by any government authority so as to eliminate child labour (children under 16 years of age);
- Development of support programmes for students who are falling behind academically, and expansion of resource rooms for students with learning difficulties in the basic education stage;
- Establishment of summer study programmes to prepare catch-up programmes for students who fail their year and of enrichment programmes that outstanding students can follow during the summer holidays;
- Development of educational and vocational advice services to help students to make appropriate educational choices;
- Quantitative and qualitative development of educational services for students with special needs and enhancement of coordination with non-governmental organizations involved in this area of activity;
- Development of a national strategy for informal education that takes into account the need to integrate informal with formal education programmes and to ensure their relevance, to every day life, and provision of additional support for cultural programmes for school dropouts and community centres;
- Enhancement and expansion of private sector investment in all stages of education, creation of a climate of mutual trust and cooperation, and promotion of exchanges of experience and expertise between the public and private sectors with a view to developing the educational system;
- Diversification of school evaluation methods to ensure that students' achievements are assessed using a range of methods and techniques that contribute to reducing repetition rates and, thus, increase students' motivation to remain in school;

- Implementation, in cooperation with a number of partners, of a Ministry project to combat child labour through education. The project objective is to protect 4,000 working children at risk of dropping out of school by means of various educational methods, including the introduction of extracurricular activities, raising their levels of academic achievement, encouraging them to engage in continuous learning, improving their sense of self, and building their confidence in their abilities and potential;
- Improvement and development of school curricula and educational programmes through the introduction of educational activities that support the curriculum and involve students in planning of educational activities and identification of learning needs;
- Introduction of parallel educational programmes to allow those who have left school and are unable to return, to catch up with their studies. These programmes include, for example, home study programmes, evening classes, literacy classes and a cultural programme which enables students who drop out of school to enrol in educational centres that operate outside school hours so that they can continue to work. This programme has been included in the set of informal education programmes that are on offer;
- Encouragement for students to participate actively in various educational activities pertaining to social services and public safety; encouragement of initiative, curiosity and inventiveness, and instruction in basic life skills through work in student and parent and teacher councils;
- Creation of a social environment in schools that lends itself to development of education, through the formation of joint committees that represent schools and communities and are composed of persons actively involved in schools as well as interested stakeholders and volunteers. The goal is to engage schools and establish links between them and the local community.

148. In the field of educational services for children with disabilities, the following has been achieved:

- (i) General accreditation of special education programmes and institutions: national standards for the accreditation of programmes and services for persons with disabilities in Jordan were drawn up to regulate and improving the quality of services. Standards for the accreditation of programmes to deal with autism and mental disability and for diagnostic centres will be introduced in 2010;
- (ii) A project was launched to provide persons with disabilities with access to Ministry of Education resource rooms for students with learning difficulties;
- (iii) Capacity-building for staff at autism centres: In cooperation with the Ministry for Social Development, the Council has provided support for the creation of seven new classes for persons with autism. Twenty-five staff members at the autism diagnosis centre have been trained;
- (iv) Project to support persons with disabilities in integrated schools: The Council has provided support to 516 persons with disabilities attending integrated private schools by paying 60 per cent of their school fees;
- (v) Project to procure rehabilitation, training and educational services for institutions that serve persons with disabilities. Agreements were signed with 82 such institutions. Some 2,433 persons with disabilities benefited from the support offered by the Council in 2009;

(vi) Support for university students with disabilities: Royal grants were awarded to 525 undergraduates with disabilities on the basis of a scientific assessment conducted in 2009;

(vii) Student discount for university students with disabilities: Every student with disabilities admitted to a Jordanian university receives a discount on university fees. There were 289 students who received a discount in 2009;

(viii) A laptop with talking software for every blind university student: Under this initiative, the Council distributed 50 laptops and 219 talking software licences.

149. In vocational education, the Ministry of Education has designed an educational programme to develop the professional skills and vocational capacities of school students in grades 9, 10 and 11. The objectives of the programme are to prepare students to enter the labour market, adapt to the knowledge economy and acquire professional and vocational skills that will help them to find work.

150. The Ministry of Education has paid special attention to kindergartens as the foundation stone for teaching children educational values. Article 8 (b) of the Education Act (Act No. 3 of 1994), as amended, provides that “The Ministry shall establish kindergartens to the extent that its resources allow and in accordance with a phased plan.” In 1999/2000, the Ministry duly established kindergartens in poor and remote areas that were not served by the private sector.

151. His Majesty King Abdullah II and Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah attach great importance to children in this crucial age group and to the promotion of programmes, activities and events in the areas of planning, legislation, enforcement and assessment. Accordingly, the Ministry has endeavoured to develop children’s aptitude for learning from an early age through the Education Reform for Knowledge Economy (ERfKE1) project. This is done by:

- Expanding government kindergartens. In the academic year 2010/11, there were 920 kindergartens, of which 57 per cent were KG2;
- Designing a general framework and defining a set of outcomes for public and private kindergarten curricula based on child development standards;
- Developing the National Interactive Curriculum to take account of innovations in education and distributing it to all State-run kindergartens at the beginning of the academic year 2008/09;
- Providing kindergarten supervisors and teachers with professional and educational capacity-building training about highly reputed, world-class programmes, such as the “Working with Young Children” programme, the National Interactive Curriculum and other outstanding programmes;
- Raising awareness of the importance of this stage through a programme for parents that is designed to reach out to the largest possible number of caregivers and help them to acquire appropriate child-raising skills and through a programme in which family members can volunteer to participate in kindergarten classes;
- Building a system to maintain the quality of education in State-run kindergartens, in terms of moral and material standards, so as to provide a wholesome educational environment;
- Employing technology in kindergartens — providing KidSmart computers to 370 kindergartens — developing a training manual for the programme, and providing training to teachers;

- Supplying State-run kindergartens with furniture, teaching materials and games equipment that is suitable for children of different ages, as required under the National Interactive Curriculum, and providing an appropriate learning environment for children, in addition to computers, outdoor games and safe heating devices;
- Developing a policy framework for early childhood at the Ministry level;
- Developing the professional skills of kindergarten teachers.

152. In the second phase of ERfKE (ERfKE2), the Ministry will focus greater attention on the kindergarten stage. It will continue to expand the number of kindergartens in remote (less fortunate) areas and to equip and furnish them. During the coming decade, 600 kindergarten facilities will be built, chiefly in densely populated areas and poverty pockets, in line with the findings of a “readiness to learn” study (Early Development Instrument (EDI)). Particular attention will be given to all aspects of quality in kindergartens in terms of the curriculum, the physical environment, training, and the services offered to the children and these will be gauged against standards used to assess Jordanian children’s development. Moreover, establishment and licensing standards for private and State-run kindergartens updated, upgraded and expanded under community and family programmes will be adopted and applied and an accreditation system for kindergartens will be set in place.

153. All departments of the Ministry of Culture offer opportunities for children in Jordan to participate freely, on an equal basis and without distinction, in all events and in activities such as reading, writing and publication of articles in magazines. Children also participate in the arts (music, theatre, acting), which allows them to showcase their talents and express themselves. The Ministry ensures that all children throughout the Kingdom, including those who live far from the capital, Amman, have access to culture. It seeks to ensure that children in villages, rural areas and remote places can benefit from and take an active part in cultural activities. By way of example, the Ministry, in cooperation with the Haya Cultural Centre and the Khalid Shoman Foundation arranges for a mobile children’s library to go out to serve all children in distant and remote places.

154. As part of the National Youth Strategy, the Higher Council for Youth is establishing leisure camps where children can play games and enjoy various recreational activities. Children are encouraged to take part in cultural life through these camps and through youth centres. The Council also encourages young people to exchange cultural information and material, has published numerous children’s books and endeavours to ensure that children receive the protection that they are due.

VIII. Special measures of protection

A. Child refugees

155. The following measures are taken to protect child refugees and unaccompanied children.

1. Residence

156. Article 26 of the Alien Residence and Affairs Act (Act No. 24 of 1972) contains provisions on residence of all foreign nationals, including children. It states:

- (1) The dependent children of a parent or of parents who are resident in Jordan shall be granted residence;

- (2) Foreign children who hold a one-year residence permit may enrol directly in Jordanian schools;
- (3) Children whose parents are resident may remain in Jordan until they reach the age of 18 years, as long as they are enrolled in a course of study;
- (4) Persons under the age of 18 years are not permitted to work in Jordan.

2. Memorandum of understanding with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

157. On 4 May 1998, the Government signed a memorandum of understanding with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Jordan on assisting asylum seekers and refugees and alleviating their suffering to the extent possible. The memorandum of understanding:

- Provides a definition of a refugee and of respect for the principle of non-refoulement, meaning that no refugee may be expelled or returned to a border or territory where his or her life would be threatened. The refugees' right of access to all existing courts and to legal aid is also spelled out in the text;
- States that refugees who are resettled in a third country will be exempted from paying fines for staying in the country after their residence permits have expired; which is a violation of the Alien Residence and Affairs Act, and from paying departure tax;
- States that the UNHCR Representative may interview asylum seekers and refugees who are detained at security centres or reform and rehabilitation centres in order to register an asylum application or to follow up on their case;
- States that persons granted refugee status who are detained in security centres for having breached the Alien Residence and Affairs Act will be released;
- States that the Ministry of Interior will endorse identification cards issued to refugees recognized as such by UNHCR;
- Establishes that refugees have the right to practise their religion and to work for themselves in accordance with the laws and regulations in force.

3. Child asylum seekers and refugees

158. Jordan has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Family Protection Department deals with issues relating to the family in general and to children in particular, whether Jordanian or non-Jordanian, and tackles any child rights issues or violations.

Education

159. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides Palestinian refugee children with a free education at their schools.

160. Non-Palestinian child asylum seekers and refugees, the vast majority of whom are Iraqi nationals, have been able to receive a free education in Jordanian government schools in recent years.

Health

161. Iraqi children who are not asylum seekers and refugees registered with UNHCR generally have access to government health services and are treated in exactly the same way as Jordanian nationals.

B. Child labour

162. The Ministry of Labour established a Child Labour Unit in 1999. In 2010, the Unit was bolstered when a labour law inspector, an engineer and head of section joined and 20 field labour inspectors were appointed as child labour liaison officers to follow up on periodic inspections of establishments where children were employed and to initiate legal action. The purpose of their work is to open the way for the rehabilitation of children who drop out of school and go out to work; to prevent other groups of children from dropping out of school; and to refer child workers to the Social Support Centre and to the civil society institutions associated with the organization Questscope, so that they can benefit from the services offered by these institutions.

1. Prevention

163. Site inspections by labour inspectors have been stepped up to ascertain whether private enterprises comply with the Jordanian Labour Code, particularly as regards child labour, and to take the necessary legal measures to curb and eliminate the worst forms of child labour and to ensure that private enterprises meet the conditions relating to the training of apprentices sent by the Vocational Training Corporation. The Ministry also plays an advocacy and advisory role, working through the media and distributing brochures and pamphlets on the subject of the elimination of child labour in general and the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in particular. The Ministry's main achievements with regard to inspections can be summarized as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of enterprises in which working children were discovered</i>	<i>Number of children discovered (Jordanian)</i>	<i>Number of children discovered (non-Jordanian)</i>	<i>Violations</i>	<i>Warnings issued</i>	<i>Advice and guidance</i>	<i>Number of inspections</i>
2009	365	375	16	26	10	375	-
2010	1 916	2 230	60	317	279	1 568	3
May 2011	431	435	7	17	153	322	2

Source: Ministry of Labour.

164. The Ministry:

- Received all complaints relating to child labour submitted by all available means (Ministry hotline, written complaints, field visits, and the media); sent inspectors to the field to follow up on complaints and initiate legal action; and replied to any related questions;
- Created a database in 2000 following the establishment of the Child Labour Unit. The database was updated in 2008;
- Developed a national strategy for the elimination of child labour in 2006 with more than 32 governmental and non-governmental agencies. The strategy included a number of objectives, themes and programmes for building the capacity of key partners to deal with the problem of child labour. It also included a number of objectives, programmes and activities in the areas of remediation and prevention. All sectors, including the governmental, non-governmental and private sectors, made a concerted effort to address this problem.

165. The Department of Statistics and the International Labour Organization (ILO) conducted a survey on child labour in 2007, which found that there were some 33,190 child workers in Jordan between the ages of 5 and 17 years, or 1.9 per cent of the population. The

employment rate among children under the age of 12 years was very low and employment was rare among girls.

2. Legislative measures

166. Article 77 of the Jordanian Labour Code (Act No. 8 of 1996) was amended by Interim Act No. 48 of 2008 and the legal penalties for employers of child labour were increased. The minimum penalty was raised, by decision of the Minister of Labour, from 100 Jordanian dinars (JD) to JD 300, with effect from 17 August 2008. Under article 77, as amended, employers who violate the provisions concerning child labour or any related regulations or decisions are liable to a penalty ranging from a minimum of JD 300 to a maximum of JD 500. Courts may not impose a penalty lower than the minimum or use their discretion to take account of mitigating factors.

167. Article 3 of the Jordanian Labour Code, as amended by Act No. 48 of 2008, which was published in the official gazette, issue No. 4924, on 17 August 2008, provides as follows:

“(a) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (b) of this article, the provisions of this Code shall apply to all workers and employers, with the exception of public and municipal officials;

“(b) Agricultural and domestic workers, cooks and gardeners and other such workers shall be subject to a special regulation concerning their employment contracts, working hours, rest hours, inspections, and any other issues relating to their employment.”

On the basis of this amendment, Regulation No. 90 of 2009, concerning domestic workers and cooks, was published in the official gazette, issue No. 4989, in October 2009. The Ministry is working with the parties concerned and with civil society institutions on the development of a regulation on agricultural workers.

168. Compliance with the legislation on child labour is one of the criteria established for the inclusion of eligible companies in industrial zones on the “Golden List”. No application from an institution wishing to benefit from the Golden List programme will be considered if the Ministry finds that the institution has deliberately committed any human rights violations, particularly with regard to the use of child labour.

169. The decision of the Minister of Labour on hazardous, physically tiring or injurious work listed under article 74 of the Jordanian Labour Code was amended in accordance with international treaties and published in the official gazette. Types of prohibited work were classified according to the nature of the hazard involved. In this, reference was made to available studies, the national strategy for the elimination of child labour, the experience of countries that have been successful in this respect, and international treaties.

170. The National Council for Family Affairs, in partnership with CHF International and Questscope for Social Development in the Middle East, conducted an analytical study of the relevant national legislation to see whether it was aligned with international treaties. This work was done as part of the Combating Exploitive Child Labour through Education (CECLE) project that is funded by the United States Department of Labor. The Council prepared legal briefs and sent them to the relevant bodies in preparation for amendments to be made to the laws in connection with the alignments process.

3. Training

171. The Ministry of Labour provided training to labour inspectors on conducting surveys on the worst forms of child labour. In 2006, in the context of a project to develop a national strategy for the elimination of child labour, the Ministry established a steering

committee headed by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Labour with members from governmental and non-governmental bodies concerned with child labour issues. The steering committee was restructured in 2010.

172. The Ministry of Social Development developed, printed and published a training manual for social workers on the elimination of child labour with a focus on child beggars as a category of working children. In 2008, the Ministry decided to add child labour as an item in its general budget in order to support activities to address child labour issues. In subsequent years, however, the item was removed from the budget, because of a lack of financing and insufficient follow-up.

173. The Social Support Centre in Sahab was established in early 2008 on the basis of a memorandum of understanding signed between the Ministry of Labour and the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development on 10 December 2007. The Ministry provides the necessary funding out of the general State budget as allocations for the National Agenda. Inspectors and Ministry staff coordinate with the Centre on case referrals, studies and database development and the Jordanian Hashemite Fund directs and oversees the work of the Centre. The Centre's goal is to combat child labour.

4. National programmes and plans

Combating Exploitive Child Labour through Education

174. The Combating Exploitive Child Labour through Education (CECLE) project was launched in November 2008 by CHF International, the National Council for Family Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Questscope, with support provided by the United States Department of Labor for a period of four years. The project targets eight governorates, namely, Jarash, Al-Balqa', Irbid, Amman, Madaba, Zarqa', Aqaba and Karak and its goal is to get 4,000 children out of exploitative work and prevent 4,000 children who are at risk from having to go out to work. It does this by providing quality educational services and other activities to protect children or those at risk of labour exploitation.

175. The role of the National Council for Family Affairs is to develop national policies, endeavour to have legislation on child labour amended and to develop a national framework to combat child labour. The Council conducts research and studies, coordinates and networks with national institutions involved in combating child labour through education, enlists the support of decision makers and raises awareness among parents of the importance of education and the dangers of child labour. It carried out a field study on the psychological, social and physical impact of child labour in the Kingdom and an analytical study of legislation on child labour in order to highlight the gaps between the national legislation and the international treaties that the Government has ratified or that relate to their implementation on the ground. The Council coordinates with the authorities and sends them proposals on legal amendments, in legal briefs, for their consideration and for adoption.

176. The role of the Ministry of Labour is to contribute to the implementation of laws, to oversee employer monitoring processes and to step up oversight and inspection activities. Moreover, the Ministry is responsible for supporting the role of the Child Labour Unit and helping to build labour inspectors' capacities in dealing with child labour. It also helps to raise awareness and develop networks with local community organizations so as to reach out to working children.

177. Under the CECLE project, the Questscope organization, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and partner associations, identifies child workers, develops plans to reach out to the children concerned, takes them out of work, and provides them with appropriate education and training. In addition to identifying cases, developing plans to

protect children from labour exploitation and helping them to continue their education, Questscope has built the institutional capacities of no less than 23 associations and 39 schools.

178. The goal of the CECLE project is to eliminate child labour in Jordan. In the framework of the project, the National Child Labour Committee, which is headed by the Ministry of Labour, was restructured on 8 April 2009 to turn it into a platform for national dialogue on child labour and the main driving force behind policy formulation and legislative amendments.

179. On 10 December 2007, the Ministry of Labour signed a memorandum of understanding with the Jordanian Hashemite Fund on the establishment of the first ever specialized service centre for workers and members of their families – the Social Support Centre. Since its establishment on 1 January 2008, the Centre has continued to update the field survey, trained labour inspectors and established a database. Data on child workers that was collected by labour inspectors and Centre researchers in 2008–2009 was analysed and 2,150 cases of child workers in the age group 7–17 years were recorded.

180. The Centre conducts targeted awareness campaigns among schools with high dropout rates. It also conducts campaigns to inform families of working children of the risks to which the children may be exposed in the workplace and to remind them that their children are losing the opportunity for an education. In addition, it takes children out of work and rehabilitates them through an integrated system of services and programmes.

181. The Centre, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, runs an educational programme for girls and boys who have dropped out of school, that offers six classes at the primary, secondary and higher levels. It runs a psychosocial counselling programme to effect behavioural change in working children and develop their social skills and self-image. It also runs a recreational and extracurricular activities programme to develop the capacities and talents of children, in addition to programmes to develop alternatives to child labour and to prevent younger siblings from joining the labour market at a young age.

182. The Ministry signed a memorandum of understanding with UNICEF in 2009 that presents a general agreement reached by both parties on long-term cooperation to combat child labour, to stop children from entering the labour force at an early age and to reintegrate child workers into their families and communities in Jordan. Further to the memorandum of understanding, a proposal was made on restructuring the Child Labour Unit.

International Rescue Committee

183. A project to raise the awareness of women and girls of the importance of education and the dangers of child labour was conducted with a group of 103 girls and mothers. A number of training workshops were held, educational materials were distributed and workshops to raise awareness of the law were held for teachers at private schools in East Amman. A total of 134 teachers from eight schools participated in the training sessions, and educational materials were distributed to teachers.

C. Drug abuse

184. Since 1 January 2011, the Narcotics Department has instituted several prevention programmes, including a series of lectures for various actors. Five lectures were delivered to narcotics officers, 18 to the “We Are All Jordan Youth” Commission, 23 to associations, 22 to the Amman Municipality, 246 to schools, 5 to the Association of Jordanian Women’s Committees, 56 to youth centres and 10 to the private sector.

185. As far as statistics are concerned, 77 young persons were arrested in drug cases in 2010, as compared with 36 in 2011.

186. The Ministry of Education is engaged in a number of prevention projects to deal with the dangers of narcotics and psychotropic substances. It established a project to inform schoolchildren of the dangers of these substances. An annual budgetary allocation of 10,000 dinars is provided to support to this work and develop annual plans to raise awareness of the dangers of such substances. An annual plan to train counsellors, educators and teachers and teach them various skills and techniques that they need to educate students about the dangers of using narcotics and psychotropic substances is being developed.

187. Moreover, the Narcotics Department and other institutions jointly develop and implement prevention and remedial programmes to mitigate the dangers of narcotics and psychotropic substances. They also provide training to teachers, counsellors and educators on raising awareness among schoolchildren of the dangers of such substances and they provide them with the means to do so in order to protect students. A manual for educational guidance counsellors on educating schoolchildren about prevention has been developed so that the counsellor can equip students with the personal and social skills that they need to protect them from various problems, including the dangers associated with such substances. Furthermore, core training teams, composed of the heads of educational counselling departments in various directorates of education, are given training on how to raise awareness of the dangers of using narcotics and psychotropic substances. Activities to raise awareness of this issue are included in the plans of educational counselling departments and counsellors.

D. Child victims of exploitation

Legislative measures

188. The Criminal Code, as amended in 2010, lists a group of offences under the category of sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and the abduction or removal of a minor under 18 years of age, even with the latter's consent, with a view to the removal of the child from the custody of his or her legal guardian. The Criminal Code prescribes aggravated penalties for the abduction or removal of a minor by deception or force.

189. Moreover, the Criminal Code classifies the rape of a child without the use of violence or threats as a criminal offence. It prescribes aggravated penalties for rape of a child under 12 years of age with or without the use of violence or threats.

190. According to article 310 of the Criminal Code, a penalty of from 6 months to 3 years in prison and a fine of from JD 200 to JD 500 will be imposed on anyone who procures or attempts to procure a woman under the age of 20 years who is not a prostitute or a woman of ill-repute in order for a third party to engage in unlawful sexual intercourse with her, or who procures or attempts to procure a woman to become a prostitute, who induces a woman to leave her normal place of residence in order to live in or frequent a brothel in Jordan or abroad, or who procures a child under the age of 18 years for the purpose of sodomizing the child.

191. Thus, the law protects males and females and places particular emphasis on protecting women and girls, irrespective of their age, from sexual exploitation in exchange for remuneration or any other form of consideration. This is consistent with the Protocol.

192. Moreover, under article 311 of the Criminal Code, anyone who, by means of threats or intimidation, procures or attempts to procure a woman to engage in unlawful intercourse in the Kingdom or abroad, or who, by means of false claims or deception, procures a

woman who is not a prostitute or a woman of ill-repute in order for a third party to engage in sexual intercourse with her shall be liable to a penalty of from 1 year to 3 years' imprisonment.

193. In order to provide additional protection, article 311 of the Criminal Code also states that anyone who administers a drug, a substance or any other item to a woman with the intention of anaesthetizing or overcoming her so that any person may engage in unlawful sexual intercourse with her shall be liable to a penalty of from 1 year to 3 years' imprisonment.

194. In order to protect children from prostitution, article 314 of the Criminal Code provides that anyone entrusted with the care of a child between the ages of 6 and 16 years who allows the child to reside in or frequent a brothel shall be liable to a maximum penalty of 6 months' imprisonment or a fine of 20 dinars.

Pornography

195. Under article 319 of the Criminal Code, anyone who sells or possesses, with a view to its sale or distribution, lewd printed materials, manuscripts, photographs, drawings, designs or any other item that could offend against public decency, or who prints or reproduces such items and materials by any other means with a view to their sale or distribution, or who displays in a public place any lewd image, photograph, drawing, design or any other item that could offend against public decency, or who distributes such items for display in a public place, or who manages or is involved in the management of a shop that sells, publishes or displays lewd items, whether printed materials, manuscripts, photographs, drawings, models or any other items that could offend against public morals, or who announces or broadcasts by any means that a third party is dealing in the sale, printing, reproduction, display or distribution of lewd materials and items shall be liable to a maximum penalty of 3 months' imprisonment and a fine of up to JD 50. Dealing in pornographic material, whether such material exploits children or adults, is therefore proscribed by law and the circulation and propagation of dissemination that simulate sexual activities or depict the sexual organs is a punishable offence.

196. The Youth Supervision Act provides for the establishment of a committee, consisting of representatives of the competent authorities, to apply measures to prevent child begging, to prohibit the sale of tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances to persons under the age of 18 years and to prevent young people from entering hotel bars and nightclubs and from being served hookah pipes and alcoholic beverages in cafes and restaurants. To do this, the committee organizes periodic patrols and it drafts and submits reports to the Minister on the closure of premises that commit breaches.

197. In addition, article 12 of the Tourism Act (Act No. 20 of 1988), as amended, provides that:

“For the purposes of the application of this Act, any person licensed to practise any profession or to own any business linked to tourism shall be considered to have breached his or her obligations under the Act and his or her professional duties in any of the following cases, whether the obligations, duties and services concerned were contractual or customary: [...]

“(c) If that person does any act that damages the interests or reputation of tourism or tourism professions in Jordan, including by exercising a profession in a manner incompatible with public decorum, public decency, public order, customary practice in tourism and the associated code of conduct.”

198. Article 7 of the regulations issued in 1999, on hotels, tourist facilities, restaurants, and tourist guest houses, nightclubs and professional obligations, deals with the protection of minors as follows:

“1. Licence holders or employees or representatives working in a tourist facility that have been issued with a beverages licence may not offer or serve beverages to any person under the age of 18 years or allow any such person to consume alcoholic beverages on the premises. It shall be deemed a violation of the law and of the present regulations if licence holders, their employees or representatives do so, or if:

“(a) A person under the age of 18 years buys or entices a third party to buy or consume alcoholic beverages in a tourist facility that has a beverages licence;

“(b) A person buys alcoholic beverages for or serves alcoholic beverages to a third party whom he or she knows to be under the age of 18 years;

“(c) The licence holder or the employee is entitled to ask any person who appears to be under the age of 18 years to show his or her official identification documents.

“2. It is a violation for licence holders or their employees or representatives to employ a person under the age of 18 to offer, sell or serve alcoholic beverages.”

199. Article 9 of the Interim Information Systems Offences Act of 2010 states:

“(a) Any person who deliberately sends or publishes, by means of an information system or the Internet, any indecent audio, visual or reading material that is intended for or harmful to a child under the age of 18 years shall be liable to a minimum penalty of 3 months’ imprisonment and a fine of from JD 300 to JD 5,000.

“(b) Any person who deliberately uses an information system or the Internet to prepare, save, process, display, print, publish or promote pornographic activities or acts that incite or influence a child under the age of 18 years to engage in prostitution and pornographic acts or exploit the child for that purpose or defame, sell or incite a child to engage in delinquency or in the commission of an offence shall be liable to a penalty of at least 6 months’ imprisonment and a fine of from JD 500 to JD 5,000.”

E. Trafficking in and sale of children

200. Article 3 of the Trafficking in Persons Act (Act No. 9 of 2009) defines trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of persons for the purpose of exploitation by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of authority, exploitation of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of sums of money or favours in order to obtain the consent of a person who has influence over another person, or the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of persons under the age of 18 years for the purpose of exploitation, even if such exploitation is not accompanied by the threat or use of force or other means”. The word “exploitation” is understood to mean “the exploitation of others for forced or coerced labour, slavery, servitude, the removal of organs, prostitution or any form of sexual exploitation”.

201. Article 9 of the Trafficking in Persons Act prescribes aggravated penalties for human trafficking offences and a maximum penalty of 10 years’ imprisonment with hard labour and a fine of from JD 5,000 to JD 20,000 for establishing, organizing or running an organized criminal group for the purpose of human trafficking or for being a member or participant in such a group. The same penalties apply if women or persons with disabilities are among the victims, or if the offence involves the exploitation of prostitution or any form

of sexual exploitation or the removal of organs. Moreover, article 9 (c) prescribes aggravated penalties in cases where the perpetrator is the spouse, ascendant, descendant, tutor or guardian of the victim or if the offence is a transnational crime.

202. Article 4 of the Human Organs Utilization Act (Act No. 23 of 1977), as amended, provides: "Organs may not be transferred from a living person to another in exchange for remuneration or profit." It also states: "Without prejudice to any penalty stipulated in any other legislation, any person who breaches this Act shall be liable to a minimum penalty of 1 year's imprisonment and/or a minimum fine of 10,000 dinars."

203. The Criminal Code was amended by Act No. 8 of 2011, concerning the age up to which children are protected from abduction or removal. Whereas article 291 of the Criminal Code formerly classified the abduction or removal of a minor under the age of 15 years as an offence, article 291, as amended, now refers to the abduction or removal of a minor under the age of 18 years.

204. Similarly, whereas article 289 of the Criminal Code formerly made it an offence to abandon a child under 2 years of age without a good reason or reasonable grounds and thus to endanger the child's life or permanently damage his or her health, article 289, as amended, increased the age up to which protection under criminal law is afforded to children in cases of abandonment and neglect to 15 years.

205. Moreover, the National Plan of Action for Children includes a number of components related to the protection of children from exploitation and lists the key activities that need to be undertaken to provide such protection. The National Plan of Action for Children achievement report for 2004–2009, which was prepared by the National Council for Family Affairs, outlines the main achievements scored in the monitoring and evaluation of the Plan. Standards and mechanisms for identifying children at risk were developed on the basis of social studies research conducted by the Family Protection Department of the Public Security Directorate and of medical reports, particularly forensic reports. Family counselling services were developed, particularly in the religious courts, to resolve family problems before they become critical. Article 11 of the Code of Procedures for Religious Courts (Act No. 50 of 2007) was amended to provide for the establishment of family counselling and conciliation bureaux in the religious courts.

206. The Ministry of Labour signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Council for Family Affairs on 8 April 2009, pursuant to which the National Committee to Combat Child Labour was established. The Committee reviews national initiatives on child labour and is the driving force behind the formulation and introduction of [related] policies and legislative amendments.

207. In 2008, a four-year programme was launched targeting eight governorates, namely, Jarash, Al-Balqa', Irbid, Amman, Madaba, Zarqa', Aqaba and Karak. The goal of the programme is to remove 4,000 children from exploitative work by providing quality educational services and other activities to protect exploited children and those at risk of being exploited in work.

208. The Ministry of Labour signed a memorandum of understanding with UNICEF on 28 May 2009 on technical assistance to establish the Child Labour Unit and provide it with the resources required for it to function properly.

209. The National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which was launched on 2 March 2010, contains four main thematic components: prevention; protection; prosecutions; and building partnerships and cooperation at the local, regional and international levels. It highlights the need to adopt a human rights approach that is consistent with international standards in order to protect and assist victims and those

adversely affected by trafficking offences, in particular children, and takes into consideration the best interests of the child.

F. Other relevant aspects

210. Under Jordanian law, children are protected from exploitation in forced labour. Article 77 of the Jordanian Labour Code (Act No. 8 of 1996, as amended) provides that:

“(b) In addition to any penalty stipulated in other current legislation, an employer who, by means of force, threats, deception or coercion, commits a breach against any worker, including confiscation of the worker’s passport, shall be liable to a penalty of from 500 to 1,000 dinars. The same penalty shall apply to a person who is an accessory, instigator or accomplice in such cases.

“(c) The penalties provided for under paragraphs (a) and (b) above shall be doubled for repeat offences.”

211. Act No. 48 of 2008 amending the Labour Code covers agricultural and domestic workers, a group that is likely to include working children. The Act, therefore, provides a legal framework for protecting working children in accordance with their age and circumstances, as required under international law and norms.

212. The Jordanian Labour Code sets out the rights that must be granted by law to working children in the workplace. While the minimum working age defined in international treaties is 15 years, the Labour Code sets the minimum age at 16 years and provides that no young person under 16 years of age may be employed in any manner whatsoever.

213. The Labour Code (Act No. 8 of 1996), as amended, states that no young person under 18 years of age may be employed in hazardous or physically demanding work or work that is injurious to their health. This type of work is defined in ministerial decisions further to consultations with the competent authorities.

214. The minimum age for engagement in hazardous work was raised from 17 years to 18 years pursuant to Act No. 11 of 2004 amending the Labour Code. A decision on hazardous, physically tiring or injurious work for young people was issued in 1997 and amended. It defines the work from which young people under the age of 18 years are barred, including work in offices, hotels, restaurants, places of public entertainment and nightclubs. A decision on hazardous, physically tiring or injurious work was issued in 2011 and published on page 2618 of the official gazette, issue No. 5098, on 16 June 2011. The decision prohibits engagement in all types of work that are physically, psychologically, socially or morally hazardous, meaning: work involving physical exploitation for sexual purposes and the like; work in hotels, places of public entertainment, nightclubs, cafes and Internet cafes; work involving the sale and serving of tobacco, hookah pipes, alcoholic beverages or any other item prohibited for those under the age of 18 years by other legislation; and work in which the young person will be left on their own. The decision also prohibits engagement in work involving chemical, physical, biological and microbial hazards (e.g. viruses, bacteria, parasites) and ergonomic hazards (the “fit” between the user and machinery or equipment used at work).

215. Article 8 of the Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Act (Act No. 11 of 1988), which refers to the employment of young people, prescribes a penalty of life imprisonment with hard labour for employing young people in the production or manufacture of any narcotic or psychotropic substance or in the purchase, sale, transportation or storage of any such substances or of plants from which such substances or stimulants are derived, or in the cultivation of such plants.

216. Under the Juveniles Act, young persons in any of the following categories are deemed to be in need of care and protection: those who engage in prostitution, acts of depravity, vice or gambling, or who work for persons who engage in those activities, or who frequent persons of ill-repute; persons who have no fixed abode or who are habitual vagrants; those who have no legitimate means of livelihood or reliable provider and one or both of whose parents are dead, in prison or absent; the legitimate or illegitimate children of a father who has been convicted of committing an indecent act with any of his children; persons who are exploited in begging or in prostitution, acts of depravity or vice, or who work for persons who engage in those or any other unlawful activities.

217. In accordance with the Labour Code and the relevant international treaties, provisions have been included in the new Juveniles Bill to cover the situation of children working outside of any legal framework.

218. Jordanian law contains safeguards to ensure that persons under the age of 18 years are not directly involved in hostilities. The law establishes a minimum standard for protection in accordance with paragraph 38 (3) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which stipulates that: "States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest." Article 5 (b) of the Military Service Act (Act No. 2 of 1972) sets the standard by establishing that the required minimum age for recruitment is 16 years. Moreover, under the current instructions regulating recruitment into the Armed Forces, the minimum age of recruitment is 18 years. This instruction is based on article 3 (a) of the National Service Act (Act No. 23 of 1986), which states that every Jordanian man over the age of 18 years must serve his country, as determined by the General Command. Moreover, the Officers' Service Act (Act No. 35 of 1966) provides: "To be appointed to the rank of officer the individual must have reached the age of 17 years." According to article 5 (b) of the Military Service Act, no person under the age of 16 years may be recruited into the Armed Forces. Article 13 (b) of the Officers' Service Act, states that no person under the age of 17 years may be recruited as an officer. No soldier under 18 years of age may participate in any military operations. There is no voluntary recruitment to the Jordanian Armed Forces. Those who wish to be recruited must meet the conditions set out in laws and regulations, namely, the recruitment conditions set forth in the Military Service Act and the Officers' Service Act, and regulations issued by the General Command, which prohibit the recruitment of anyone under the age of 15 years. The voluntary recruitment process was discontinued 18 years ago.

219. With regard to the recommendation contained in paragraph 78 of the Committee's concluding observations, pertaining to landmines, the Jordanian Armed Forces have been engaged in mine clearance operations in the Jordan Valley and Aqaba since 1993. In 2008, they declared that mine clearance operations in these areas were complete. However, in view of the concern of the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation to ensure that the area was cleared of missing mines, a number of joint teams from the Committee and the Armed Forces were formed in early 2009 to conduct search and inspection operations; they were able to find some missing mines. Exhaustive operations have been concluded over vast areas of the Jordan Valley. The land will be handed back to the owners in the near future, and further search and inspection operations will be conducted in the remaining regions.

220. Minefields in Wadi al-'Araba and Aqaba were cleared and the land was returned to the Government in 2008.

221. The National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation has been conducting mine clearance programmes in the northern border area since 2008 and has cleared more than

two thirds of the mines planted there. Work in the area is expected to continue until early this year. The Committee will continue with verification and search operations in the area until it has applied all the safety measures at its disposal.

222. Since 2007, the Committee has conducted awareness campaigns on the dangers posed by mines and unexploded ordnance. It has been able to cover all of the northern provinces and the Jordan Valley and continues to reach out to all affected areas. The number of accidents involving landmines and unexploded ordnance is much smaller than it was in the past, prior to the awareness campaigns.

223. In connection with the recommendation in paragraph 20 of the concluding observations, it should be noted that the mandate of the National Centre for Human Rights is broad and comprehensive and is not restricted to police and military affairs. Pursuant to article 5 of the National Centre for Human Rights Act (Act No. 51 of 2006), the Centre deals with abuses and violations. It follows up on them with the executive, legislative or judicial authorities with a view to ending them and eliminating their effects. The Centre does not need prior approval from the authorities to tackle violations.

224. The Centre's powers and rules are based on its constitution and are consistent with the principles relating to the status of national institutions (Paris Principles). In this context, according to article 6 of the National Centre for Human Rights Act, the Centre enjoys full independence in the exercise of its human rights-related intellectual, political and humanitarian activities and functions, the rules for which are drawn from its constitution. Under article 8, the Centre may request any information, data or statistics that it deems necessary for the achievement of its objectives from the relevant authorities, which are required to respond without delay. Under article 10, the Centre is entitled to visit detention centres, juvenile care homes or any public place in which human rights violations are reported to have taken place or to be taking place.

225. The Centre has a specialized unit staffed by a lawyer, a social worker and a sociologist who deals with women's and children's issues. In addition, a monitoring and complaints unit staffed by specialized lawyers receives all complaints relating to human rights, including children's rights, and forwards them to the relevant units in the Centre. A total of six staff — five lawyers and a sociologist — receive and follow up on complaints relating to children. This is a considerable challenge in the work of the Centre.

226. The process of monitoring violations of children's rights and evaluating progress with regard to the implementation of the Convention at the local and national levels absorbs considerable resources, because of the need to include all segments of Jordanian society and the institutions concerned with the promotion and protection of children's rights. However, because the Centre lacks sufficient financial resources for this purpose, monitoring and evaluation activities have been limited. The Centre's financial resources consist of financial support from the Government, the proceeds from activities and projects undertaken by the Centre, and donations, gifts, bequests and endowments. This is stated in article 20 of the National Centre for Human Rights Act (Act No. 51 of 2006), which was published on page 4026 of the official gazette, issue No. 4787, on 16 October 2006.

227. To respond to these challenges, the Centre has established a network of lawyers throughout the country who help to log complaints and monitor violations. This facilitates access by those who lack the financial or material means to go to the Centre to lodge complaints. There are 12 lawyers working on a voluntary basis with Centre staff.

228. **Interest in the establishment of the Ombudsman Bureau.** The Ombudsman Bureau was established pursuant to Act No. 11 of 2008 and commenced its work on 1 February 2009. The functions of the Bureau are discharged by the Ombudsman, who is fully independent, based on the powers invested in him by law. Article 8 provides that: "The Ombudsman shall exercise his powers and functions with full independence. He shall

be subject to no authority other than the law and shall receive no instructions or orders from any party or authority.”

229. The Ombudsman is appointed by a decision of the Cabinet, based on a recommendation of the Prime Minister. The decision is endorsed by Royal Decree.

230. Pursuant to article 12 of the Act, the Ombudsman Bureau:

(a) Examines complaints relating to any decisions, measures, practices or omissions on the part of the public administration or public officials. It shall not accept any complaint against the public administration that is currently being considered by an administrative or legal body, or investigated by a judicial body or on which a court decision has been delivered;

(b) Makes recommendations on ways of simplifying administrative procedures to make it easier for citizens to genuinely benefit from the services offered by the public administration; deals with complaints concerning violations of the law, regulations, instructions or international treaties; and contacts the public administration in order to rectify given situations and prevent future breaches. The service is available to Jordanian and non-Jordanian adults and minors who are resident in Jordan. Minors may submit a complaint through a guardian or legal representative.

231. The work of the Ombudsman Bureau is done by legal personnel who are qualified either to log complaints and grievances or to conduct investigations and offer advice. The Bureau also has other support offices. It has a special budget that comes from the State budget. The Ombudsman prepares the Bureau’s draft annual budget and submits it to the Cabinet for approval, adoption and inclusion in the general State budget.

232. The Ombudsman Bureau prepares an annual report, which it transmits to the Cabinet. The report shows the results of the Bureau’s work over the year and includes comments by the relevant authority. The Prime Minister supplies the Senate and the House of Representatives with a copy of the report at the beginning of every regular session of the National Assembly. The report outlines the process for monitoring and evaluating the responses of the authorities to complaints about their procedures and decisions and includes information on the progress achieved at all levels.
