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Consideration of reports of States parties

List of issues in relation to the combined fourth to sixth reports of Bahrain

Addendum

Replies of Bahrain to the list of issues*

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Updated information on the list of issues in relation to the combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of the Kingdom of Bahrain pursuant to the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Part I:

Issue 1, part 1, on progress to adopt various child-related legislative bills

1. The Kingdom of Bahrain is keen to develop and update its system of laws on children and young persons to bring them into line with all its national laws and the international instruments to which the country has acceded, incorporating them into a single bill to be known as the “Correctional Justice Act”. This bill is currently under review, pending submission and promulgation as a legislative instrument in line with the Constitution. The bill provides for the establishment of a system of due process in which children’s courts will have exclusive jurisdiction to rule in cases involving crimes committed by children aged 15 or over. Specialist panels are to be established in all juvenile courts; these will be composed of social workers, including women social workers, whose attendance at hearings will be mandatory.

2. Legislative Decree No. 17 (1976) — the Juveniles Act — addresses the question of age with respect to juveniles and the measures to be taken in cases where a juvenile is found to be in a state of delinquency, as defined by the law. The first juvenile welfare centre was established by the Ministry of Interior in September 1973 to take care of juvenile delinquents, reform their behaviour and keep them from loitering on the streets. The centre provides a range of health, psychological, social, leisure, cultural and educational services, as well as care for juvenile delinquents who have no family to look after them and might otherwise end up homeless and living on the streets.

3. The Bahraini Penal Code does not define a person under the age of 15 as a person who can be held liable for a crime. Thus, article 32 of Legislative Decree No. 15 (1976), promulgating the Penal Code, stipulates: “A person who was aged under 15 at the time of commission of a crime shall not be held liable for the act but shall be subject to the provisions of the Juveniles Act.”

4. Under Act No. 15 (2014), the wording of article 1 of Legislative Decree No. 17 (1976), on juveniles, was amended to read: “In the context of this law, ‘juvenile’ shall mean a person who has reached the age of 7 but is still under the age of 15 at the time of committing the offence or being found in a state of delinquency.”

5. Pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 17 (1976), a special court has been established with exclusive jurisdiction to try juveniles accused of criminal activity or of having turned to delinquency. A juvenile who commits a crime or who constitutes a danger to society does not receive a penal sentence. Instead, the juvenile is subject only to the measures stipulated in law. The measures taken are based on the court’s assessment of the gravity of the offence and the danger to society that the juvenile represents. Pursuant to article 12 of the Legislative Decree, if the court decides to place the juvenile in a social care institution, it may not stipulate the duration of placement in its decision. The law requires the institution to submit a report to the court every six months on the juvenile’s condition and behaviour so that the court may decide as it sees fit. In general, the measure ends when the juvenile reaches the age of 21. In cases of serious crimes, the law requires that an attorney attend court with the juvenile. If the juvenile has not engaged a defence attorney, the court will appoint one at State expense. Court proceedings are held in closed session, with only relatives, attorneys, witnesses and members of the relevant branch of the Ministry of Interior being allowed to attend. At least every three months, a judge may visit supervised facilities, vocational training centres, social care institutions, specialist hospitals and

juvenile welfare centres overseen by the Ministry of Interior to see how juveniles are doing while they are undergoing training.

6. Similarly, and with a view to achieving the goals of Legislative Decree No. 17 (1976), a special office within the Public Prosecution Service, called the Juvenile Public Prosecution Department, has been established to deal with crimes which juveniles are charged with committing. Following the promulgation of the Children's Act, jurisdiction over the crimes stipulated therein was transferred to this department.

7. Following the promulgation of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act No. 17 (2015) and the subsequent establishment of the Juvenile Public Prosecution Department, a family and child prosecution service department was established by decision of the Public Prosecutor and in keeping with the goals of the legislation. A special department of the Public Prosecution Service deals with all cases of psychological, physical, sexual and economic abuse involving the groups covered by the Protection from Domestic Violence Act, n, ensuring that such groups are accorded the privacy they need during case hearings. The staff of the department include social workers trained in family and children's issues. The Family and Child Prosecution Service Department has the authority to investigate and take action in cases involving juveniles under the age of 15, as well as crimes under the Children's Act and the Protection from Domestic Violence Act, whose goals the department was established to meet. These laws require that children in this category be treated in a manner appropriate to their age and that any measures and procedures undertaken with respect to them be designed with the intention of reforming their behaviour.

8. The Family Act No. 19 (2017), which came into force on 1 August 2017, applies to all families without distinction. It contains provisions pertaining to marriage and divorce and the effects thereof in terms of the rights of spouses and alimony. It deals with the obligations of parents towards their minor children and the obligations arising from guardianship and fostering. Furthermore, the Act regulates the right of children to sufficient financial support to enable them to be raised at an appropriate social standard and the conditions which must be met for fostering. These conditions include the requirement that carers be able to raise, protect and care for children and look after their interests and that they be free from serious contagious diseases.

9. The work of family and juvenile court judges is subject to inspection by the Judicial Inspection Department, which reports to the Supreme Judicial Council (Judicial Authority Act, arts. 44-47). Members of the Public Prosecution Service are also subject to professional inspections by the Service's judicial inspection branch. Inspection reports form the basis of performance evaluations and entitlements to promotions and bonuses.

10. The new draft of the Civil Organizations Act is being reviewed and assessed jointly by all stakeholders, including civil society organizations.

Issue 1, part 2, on progress made in establishing a regulatory framework for the business sector regarding the impact of its activities on children's rights

11. Legislative Decree No. 21 (2001), promulgating the Commercial Companies Act, regulates the business sector. It does not touch upon any of the rights of the child provided for in national legislation.

12. In a regulatory initiative designed to promote child protection and the provision of universal care in early childhood, Bahrain has devised a legal framework for private sector nurseries in implementation of article 18 of Act No. 37 (2012), promulgating the Children's Act. Thus:

- Decision No. 11 (2014) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, on the establishment of nurseries, provides for the establishment of a mechanism for issuing licences and identifies the main conditions which must be met to ensure that children receive the desired level of care in a secure environment, where standards of health, safety and security are met and their rights are observed.

- In keeping with its desire to provide the best for its children, Bahrain has sought to develop the capacities of nursery and kindergarten staff by means of a comprehensive scheme designed to increase their wages and provide them with training. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Education, the National Labour Fund (“Tamkeen”), the University of Bahrain and the Supreme Council for Women are all partners in the scheme.

Issue 2, part 1, on provision of information on the outcomes of the implementation of the National Strategy for Children (2013–2017)

13. Mechanisms and initiatives have been developed by entities that deal with children’s issues in a manner consistent with the National Strategy for Children (2013–2017). Indeed, approximately 79 per cent of the Strategy’s action plan has been implemented. The Strategy has four key themes: the right to health and survival, the right to education, development and capacity-building, the right to protection, and the right to participation. These themes contain 19 goals, supported by 114 action mechanisms, programmes and initiatives.

14. As the entity responsible for child-related issues in Bahrain, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development monitors the achievements of the National Strategy for Childhood action plan in partnership with the National Committee for Childhood and other partners concerned with particular children’s issues, such as ministries, commissions, universities and civil society organizations. The aim is to ensure implementation of programmes and initiatives designed to achieve the goals of the action plan.

15. A multi-party team has been formed to monitor all programmes, initiatives and activities set out in the National Strategy for Children action plan (2013–2017) and allow for a clear roadmap to be drawn up to deliver on the needs of children at national level. This will help to create a link between the monitored programmes and the Government’s action plan, facilitate the updating of the national report on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and provide input, in the form of content regarding the children’s sector in general, for national reports on the Sustainable Development Goals.

16. Implementation of the following elements of the National Strategy for Childhood action plan has been monitored:

Theme 1: Right to health and survival

17. This theme contains five key goals, covering 30 programmes and initiatives, representing the actions to be implemented by stakeholders to achieve the goals that will ensure the right of the child to health and survival. The programmes and initiatives of the Ministries of health and education relate directly to this theme, given the nature of their business — i.e. the provision of health and educational services to children — but other partners, too, including government institutions and civil society organizations, are involved in implementing programmes consistent with the goals of this theme. In general, programmes and initiatives which have been implemented represent a positive indicator of the course of implementation of the National Strategy for Children action plan. Stakeholders involved in the goals in this thematic area work together to develop programmes to guarantee the right of the child to health and survival, providing information on children’s health, education and social protection indicators. Programmes are offered to raise health awareness among school staff and students and train them to protect against and limit the spread of disease and related complications. There are educational programmes targeting mothers, pregnant women, children and teenagers, as well as programmes designed to combat violence and addiction, protect children from accident and injury, ensure early detection of hereditary blood diseases, incorporate health topics in the school curriculum and recruit and upgrade qualified health personnel to look after expectant mothers. There are also compulsory routine vaccination programmes for all children under the age of 5. Numerous programmes have been implemented to promote a healthy diet and physical health among children and improve ways of controlling, monitoring and evaluating non-infectious diseases. Furthermore, several universities provide mechanisms of support and assistance. For example, the Arabian Gulf University trains students of the

Faculty of Medicine in the skills of providing prenatal and postpartum health care for expectant mothers and provides clinical training in family and community medicine.

Theme 2: Right to education, development and capacity building

18. This theme contains five key goals, covering 40 programmes and initiatives, representing the actions to be implemented by stakeholders in order to accomplish the goals which will ensure the right of the child to education, development and capacity-building.

19. The Ministry of Education, whose core focus is education, plays a fundamental role in implementing programmes and initiatives to guarantee the right of the child to an excellent education. Other partners, including government institutions and civil society organizations, are involved in implementing programmes consistent with the goals of this theme, and numerous programmes have been implemented by bodies concerned with particular groups of children to develop children's capacities and meet their educational needs. These include programmes to provide care and support for exceptionally gifted and creative children, improve and develop psychological health services for schoolchildren, increase the professional competence of staff working with students with special needs, integrate special needs children in public and private schools and expand and develop facilities appropriate to all types of disability, focusing on upgrading infrastructure in schools with special education programmes in line with internationally recognized standards to facilitate the use of facilities by children and teenagers with special needs. Numerous initiatives have been observed which guarantee the right of the child to education in a stable and secure environment. Perhaps the most important of these are programmes to combat violence and addiction, which include training and educational workshops and courses for children, their families, teachers and decision makers, as well as special programmes for juveniles. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development makes a crucial contribution to initiatives promoting pre-school education to ensure that children have access to suitable nursery care in a safe, secure environment. Universities, including the Arabian Gulf University and University of Bahrain, provide support and assistance in the form of training for male and female teachers at all levels in government schools. In coordination with stakeholders, they organize a range of activities, workshops and training programmes for female kindergarten teachers to enhance their professional skills in dealing with children. Furthermore, members of staff, masters and doctoral students conduct research in certain areas in order to promote children's education, development and capacity building.

Theme 3: Right to protection

20. The theme of the right to protection contains four key goals, covering 22 programmes and initiatives, representing the action mechanisms to be implemented by stakeholders in order to achieve the goals which constitute the theme of child protection. It is clear from observation that, although stakeholders have implemented programmes consistent with the initiatives in the National Strategy for Childhood action plan, not all of them have been mentioned in the plan. Furthermore, there is close cooperation between government bodies, civil society organizations and national institutions when implementing programmes relevant to the theme of protection. This is clear from the projects and initiatives which have been implemented. Perhaps the most significant achievements are the Child Protection Centre and Child Helpline (998), which represent a model of joint action designed to protect and safeguard the rights of the child. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs, the Public Prosecution Service, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Supreme Council for Women and several civil society organizations are all represented on the board of the Child Protection Centre, which is responsible for implementing and managing the Centre's programmes. The Centre provides a national framework for the protection of the child and the family. It determines the roles and responsibilities of all governmental and non-governmental organizations working in the field of child protection, as well as reporting, referral, interviewing and training procedures.

21. It is furthermore clear from observation that cooperation between the various bodies takes the form of joint initiatives, such as educational and information campaigns on child

protection. Staff of official educational institutions are trained how to detect and deal with cases of abuse. There is a programme designed to develop the capacities and skills of service providers working with children to recognize the signs of abuse and another that seeks to enlighten senior police officers, judges, media workers, journalists and the imams of mosques on the rights of the child. There are programmes designed to train children in social skills, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, methods of conflict resolution and dispute resolution without violence, anger management and how to avoid gangs, gang violence and bullying. Training is provided for the staff of government institutions who work with children in how to rehabilitate children and juveniles and enable them to return to their families and home environment. It has been observed that several bodies have adopted action plans to address, monitor and follow-up problems of abuse and neglect by providing child support services, opening family guidance offices and family reconciliation offices and implementing programmes to provide access to social centres for the children of divorced parents.

Theme 4: Right to participate

22. This theme contains five key goals, covering 22 programmes and initiatives. It is evident that many initiatives have been implemented to ensure children's participation. These include opening channels of communication between children and officialdom to enable the former to express their views and opinions; promoting the participation of children at national and Arab level in a variety of fields, including health, religion, society, the environment and scientific and cultural activities; establishing and running clubs for children and young people; providing a range of programmes for children to develop their skills in different areas; involving children in local and international shows and competitions; training them to express themselves by taking part in a variety of programmes and activities; offering programmes designed to build and develop the potential and capacities of young people; holding workshops to encourage families to involve children in decision-making in matters that concern them; helping to raise the awareness of teachers and those who work with children; implementing Parents' Council programmes by staging activities involving parents/ guardians; practicing model decision-making together in situations children face in their everyday lives to help them avoid risk and ensure their safety; and widening the participation of children with special needs in a range of activities and programmes.

Issue 2, part 2, on provision of information on the legal framework and decision-making powers of the National Committee for Childhood

23. Article 11 of the Children's Act, No. 37 (2012) provides for the formation of the National Committee for Childhood by decision of the Council of Ministers. Members of the Committee are drawn from all bodies with an interest in childhood, including government institutions and civil society organizations. Article 12 of the Act sets out the powers of the Committee, in the light of which it takes decisions in such a way as to promote the general welfare of children

24. Article 7 of Decision No. 64 (2013) of the Council of Ministers, on formation of the National Committee for Childhood, stipulates that all government bodies must cooperate with the Committee to enable it to accomplish its work fully.

Issue 2, part 3, on how recent reforms have strengthened its authority and capacity to coordinate effectively all activities related to implementation of the Convention at cross-sectoral, national and local levels

25. Through the efforts of the National Committee for Childhood, the National Strategy for Childhood has enabled Bahrain to redraw the map of childhood and unite efforts to coordinate implementation of everything that is in the interests of the child.

26. Sitting in May 2018, the Council of Ministers agreed to extend the National Strategy for Childhood plan for a further five years in order to complete the remainder of the plan, thereby strengthening the outcomes and gains achieved in the development and protection of childhood and leading to greater coordination between different bodies in order to widen the beneficiary base of the plan. The Council of Ministers further directed that the Strategy represents the terms of reference for government reports dealing with childhood.

Issue 3, parts 1 and 2, on clarification of how Decision No. 1 (2016) of the Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Religious Endowments contributes to raising the minimum age for marriage to 18 years for both girls and boys and to prohibiting child marriage; and on provision of information on measures taken to raise awareness of the harmful consequences of child marriage and on the impact of such measures

27. Decision No. 1 (2016) of the Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Religious Endowments, on the regulation concerning persons legally authorized to conduct marriage and the provisions for notarization of personal status documentation (applicable to both denominations), contains 44 articles setting out the rules pertaining to the oversight of persons legally authorized to conduct marriage and the provisions for notarization of personal status documentation. It further sets out the rules for disciplinary action against such persons for violating any article of the Decision.

28. Act no. 19 (2017), promulgating the Family Act, was adopted following conclusion of the stages of scrutiny, discussion and consensus-building across all constitutional channels in the Kingdom. The Act provides full legal and statutory assurances for all members of the family, particularly in relation to permitting and notarizing the marriage of girls under the age of 16, which is subject to the permission of the judicial authorities, i.e. the competent sharia court. It provides assurance that the sharia court will only licence such a marriage after ascertaining its propriety, in accordance with article 20 of Act no. 19 (2017). The Family Act sets the age of marriage at 16.

29. Article 12 of the regulation concerning legally authorized persons issued pursuant to Decision No. 1 (2016) stipulates that, for a contract of marriage to be concluded and notarized, both spouses must be aged 16 or over at the time the contract is concluded. This shall be established by checking official documents and records. The law does not allow the marriage of persons under the age of 16 save at the request of the persons concerned and once the permission of the competent family court has been obtained and the propriety of the marriage ascertained. This is consistent with the Children's Act, No. 37 (2012), article 4 of which, in principle, defines a child as a person under the age of 18 full Gregorian years; special laws provide exceptions for persons below this age. It should be noted that, in practice, the average age of marriage for females in Bahrain is 24.

Issue 4, parts 1 and 2, on provision of detailed information on the legal policy and awareness-raising measures taken to address the legal and de facto discrimination experienced by girls, children with disabilities, Bidoon and Ajam children and children born to foreign or stateless fathers; and on specification of how these children's access to health care, education and other social services is ensured on an equal basis with other children, including through Act. No. 35 (2009)

30. Enforcement of the Immigration and Residence Act (2005), guaranteeing a woman the right to sponsor her foreign husband and the children that she has with him.

31. Facilitation of travel procedures for the children of a Bahraini mother married to a foreign man, granting of a provisional travel document to mitigate distress.

32. Council of Ministers Decision (11 January 2014) approving a bill to amend several provisions of the Citizenship Act (1963) to allow Bahraini nationality to be granted to the

children of a Bahraini woman married to a foreign man, subject to certain rules and criteria. The bill has been sent to the legislature in accordance with constitutional and legal procedure.

33. Promulgation of Act No. 35 (2009), which provides for the same treatment to be afforded to a non-Bahraini wife of a Bahraini man and the children of a Bahraini woman who is married to a non-Bahraini man as Bahraini citizens in respect of all matters relating to the government health service and education charges and residence fees, on condition of permanent residence in Bahrain.

34. Decision No. 59 (2008) of the Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs, amending several provisions of the rules of procedure of the Alimony Fund, adopted pursuant to Decision No. 44 (2007). A new paragraph — paragraph 3 — was added to article 2, to read: “3. Beneficiaries shall include the children of Bahraini wives, if such children do not hold Bahraini nationality, on condition that they are permanent residents in Bahrain. The Fund shall assess each case separately.”

35. Promulgation of Act No. 22 (2017), amending article 2 of Act No. 74 (2006), on the care, training and employment of persons with disabilities, granting the disabled children of a Bahraini woman married to a foreign man the right to enjoy the privileges and welfare facilities which the law grants to disabled Bahrainis.

36. Decision No. 82 (2017) of the Minister of Labour and Social Development, amending article 3 of Decision No. 24 (2008), on the criteria of entitlement to disability allowance, by adding the children of a Bahraini woman married to a foreign man, if they are permanently resident in Bahrain, to those entitled.

37. The Ministry of Education is keen to provide free, public education to all children, whether citizens or not. Thus, article 1 of the Education Act stipulates: “Basic education is the stage of compulsory education that begins when the child reaches the age of 6 and continues for at least nine years. Compulsory education ends at the age of 15.”

38. Article 32 the Children’s Act stipulates that the State is obliged to provide support and assistance to the families of children with disabilities to enable them to provide their children with proper care in all respects, as indicated in the previous article. This applies, too, to the children of a Bahraini mother married to a foreign man. The State guarantees equal rights for all children with disabilities in matters relating to family life and seeks to prevent their seclusion, exclusion, neglect or isolation.

39. Article 33 the Children’s Act stipulates that, under no circumstances may a child be separated from his parents because of his disability or the disability of one or both parents unless essential for the welfare of the child, in which case the child must be provided with alternative care within the extended family or, if this is not possible, within a family that will guarantee him a caring family environment.

Issue 5, part 1, on provision of detailed information on provision of information on the measures taken to ensure the right of children to be heard in all legal and administrative proceedings affecting them, including custody and divorce cases

40. Given that children are naturally sensitive and easily influenced, the Public Prosecution Service has established a psychological support section, staffed with social workers, to minimize the psychological harm caused to child victims as a result of questioning that obliges them to recall and relate a criminal event, and to avoid any possible fear and psychological harm that would be caused by having to confront the offender.

41. In the light of these considerations, the Public Prosecution Service has allocated a child-friendly interview room equipped with the technology to conduct interviews remotely to avoid personal confrontation with the accused.

42. Aside from Legislative Decree No. 26 (1986, as amended), on the regulation of sharia court procedures, the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Religious Endowments, in collaboration with the Supreme Judicial Council and the Supreme Council for Women,

has set up special courts, known as “family courts”. These ensure the privacy of family members (in particular the children) and confidentiality of this type of case by being completely separate from ordinary court buildings and even located in another governorate. More importantly, however, they help to maintain the psychological stability of the child as he enters the court accompanied by his parents. The Family Act (2017) and Children’s Act (2012) prioritize the best interests of the child when taking decisions and settling disputes on issues of custody, guardianship and alimony, on the basis of legal articles that will affect the child’s life and development. Key issues addressed in the Family Act include catering for children’s needs, education, welfare and upbringing (arts. 62 to 67). The child’s interests are a key factor in the provisions of the Family Act governing custody following the break-up of a marital relationship (arts. 123 to 139). The Family Act prohibits enforcement of a custody and visitation judgment in cases where a child requires psychological protection and removal from an atmosphere of violence. It also requires visits to be conducted in a place and at a time that will not have an adverse psychological impact on the child (art. 139).

43. Cases involving visitation and custody are subject to immediate implementation under the Code of Sharia Court Procedure. This means that the ruling is to be enforced even if the case has gone to appeal. Such cases are treated by the law as urgent and requiring a prompt decision by the judge.

Issue 5, part 2, on any legislation adopted or amended to integrate the best interests of the child as a primary condition

44. The Family Act, No.19 (2017), addresses the subject of financial support for relatives in article 62, which covers maintenance for minor sons, adult sons and daughters.

45. Article 63: With due regard to article 47 of this Act, the basic needs, capacity and financial sufficiency of the provider shall be taken into account when assessing alimony following divorce or separation.

46. Article 90: The parties may agree to determine the alimony the divorced woman is to receive during her *iddat* waiting period and the amount of child support, as well as custody rights and visiting rights (including number, time and place of visits), when applying for registration of divorce. This shall be recorded in the divorce certificate and subject to prompt implementation by force of law.

47. Article 123: Fostering entails protecting, raising and caring for the child in a manner commensurate with the right of the guardian in respect of guardianship.

48. Article 126: A foster-parent must be:

- (a) Muslim;
- (b) Of sound mind;
- (c) Of legal majority;
- (d) Trustworthy;
- (e) Capable of raising, protecting, caring for and looking after the interests of his charge;
- (f) Free from serious infectious diseases.

49. Article 129: If the parents are not to be found and the rightful person does not accept custody, the judge shall choose a relative of the child whom he believes to be upright; failing that, he shall choose a third party or appropriate institution.

50. Article 130: When deciding custody, the judge shall call upon the assistance of psychologists and social workers, taking into account the child’s best interests in a manner consistent with the provisions of the preceding articles.

51. Article 139:

(a) If it is not possible to agree upon visiting arrangements, the judge shall decide. Visits shall be arranged at a time and place that do not cause the child psychological harm. This arrangement shall apply in relation to implementation of the custody ruling;

(b) A visitation ruling shall not be forcibly implemented. If the person who has possession of the child refuses to implement the ruling without good reason, the judge shall issue him with a warning. If he again refuses, the judge may, at the request of the person with the right of visitation, refer the case file to the relevant court to decide forthwith as it sees fit in the interests of the child. This decision shall be subject to immediate enforcement;

(c) A custody ruling shall not be forcibly implemented unless the judge decides otherwise.

52. Article 3 of Act No. 18 (2006), on social security, guarantees social assistance to those entitled to it under the provisions of the Act, including families, Bahraini individuals and residents in the Kingdom who meet the conditions. Specifically mentioned are orphans and children (male and female) under the age of 18 or over 18 but without a provider or sufficient funds to rely on, as long as they can prove that they are in education, until such time as they graduate.

Issue 5, part 3, on provision of information on any awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, to promote the meaningful participation of all children at all levels of society

53. As the principle body concerned with childhood in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development has established after-school clubs for children and young people under the age of 18. Operating throughout the year, these clubs offer a number of ongoing programmes designed to develop the abilities and talents of children and young people, with the emphasis on socialization, the discovery of talent and preparation for participation in international events. These clubs also organize child-related events and campaigns, of which the most significant are:

- A child safety programme, launched in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior (Traffic Education Department) in November 2017 at the Sharifa al-Awadhi club with a large number of children in attendance. The first phase of the campaign focuses on children from the age of one month to 12 years and is designed to raise awareness of the importance of using means of protecting children inside the car to reduce the number of injuries sustained by children involved in car accidents.
- These clubs promote participation in events arranged by international organizations to provide the opportunity for children to express their ideas and discover their talents and potential. They also open up avenues of communication with children and young people from around the world.

54. The Ministry of Youth and Sport Affairs provides a range of extra-curricular activities for youngsters and young people throughout the year: in 2017, Ministry centres offered 1,097 programmes for 132,000 young men and women from towns and villages across the country. The Ministry also offers a range of special programmes, including:

- “Youth City 2030”: Since 2010, this programme has been giving young men and women the opportunity to participate positively in the labour market. It seeks to promote the concept of entrepreneurship by helping them to acquire new skills, enabling them to strive for excellence and encouraging them to diversify their skills base in a manner consistent with the needs of the labour market. In eight years, Youth City 2030 has offered 515 training programmes in five areas — “preparing for leadership”, “science and technology”, “the arts”, “the media” and “sport and health”, providing 26,080 training places for young people throughout its eight editions.
- Nasser bin Hamad International Youth Creativity Award: This is an award designed to attract creative young people in the 14–29 age group from Bahrain and around the world. Launched in its global version, a Gulf version of the award was introduced in

2012. Some 7,012 young men and women from 120 countries took part in the most recent version.

- Kingdom of Bahrain sports talent-spotting programme: This programme is designed to discover and develop the sporting talents of schoolchildren in 17 individual and group sports. Basically, the programme seeks to boost the sports scene in Bahrain with a range of talents capable of competing in the future in local, regional and international championships. In the most recent version of the programme, 631 talented young women took part.

Issue 6, on provision of information on the measures taken to address the obstacles to amending the Citizenship Act to ensure the right of all children to acquire the nationality of the State party through their mothers. Please explain whether there is an identification and referral mechanism for children who are undocumented or at risk of statelessness, in particular Ajam and Bidoon children

55. A bill amending the Citizenship Act has been approved by the Council of Ministers and referred to the legislature. The bill allows the children of a Bahraini woman married to a foreign man to acquire Bahraini nationality subject to certain conditions designed to respect the Constitution, safeguard the rule of law and comply with the fundamental principles on which citizenship legislation is based. *Inter alia*, the bill grants nationality to the children of a Bahraini woman in certain cases to avoid them becoming stateless. This confirms that Bahraini law does not contain provisions that discriminate against women but is, in fact, based on the recognized principles of international law. It will be observed that Act No. 35 (2009) — on treating the non-Bahraini wife of a Bahraini man and the children of a Bahraini woman married to a non-Bahraini man the same as Bahraini citizens in respect of all matters relating to government health service and education charges and residence fees, on condition of permanent residence in Bahrain — stipulates that the children of a Bahraini woman married to a foreigner are to be treated as citizens. Providing for equality in respect of government health service and education charges and residence fees, this Act is just one of the measures taken by the Kingdom of Bahrain to achieve equality for this section of the population. Note that the Supreme Council for Women and Ministry of Interior have formed a joint committee to monitor applications for Bahraini nationality by the children of Bahraini women married to non-Bahraini men.

Issue 7, part 1, on the measures taken to ensure respect for children's right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and access to appropriate information

56. The Constitution guarantees the right of freedom of expression by any means. Freedom of the press, printing and publishing is guaranteed under the rules and conditions laid down by law.

57. The National Strategy for Childhood covers four key themes, the fourth of which is devoted to the right to participate and non-discrimination. This theme contains five goals, involving implementation of 22 initiatives and programmes designed to ensure respect for the right of the child to self-expression and participation. These include opening channels of communication between children and officialdom to enable the former to express their views and opinions; promoting the participation of children at national and Arab level in a variety of fields, including health, religion, society, the environment and scientific and cultural activities; establishing and running clubs for children and young people; providing a variety of programmes for children designed to develop their skills in different areas; involving them in local and international shows and competitions; training children to express themselves by taking part in a variety of programmes and activities, including organizing model United Nations sessions in which public and private school students participate directly and raise various issues; organizing workshops such as those in social centres to encourage families to involve children in decision-making in matters that concern

them; helping to raise the awareness of teachers and those who work with children; implementing Parents' Council programmes by staging activities involving parents/guardians; practicing model decision-making together in situations children face in their everyday lives to help them avoid risk and ensure their safety; and widening the participation of children with special needs in activities and programmes.

58. Act No. 21 (1989), on the right to form associations, together with the laws on civil society organizations, establishes the right to form civil society and non-governmental organizations. Article 11 of Decision No. 4 (2007) sets out the model regulations of the charter of social and cultural associations and clubs under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, particularly the terms of membership, one of which is that a member must not be less than 18 years old.

Issue 7, part 2, indicating how many children and/ or their parents have been detained under Royal Decree No. 23 (2013) for participating in a demonstration or public gathering

59. There are no cases of children and/ or their parents detained under Royal Decree No. 23 (2013) for participating in a demonstration or public gathering.

Issue 8, part 1, on measures taken to ensure the effective implementation of Ministerial Decree No. 14 (2012), prohibiting the use of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by the police, including of children

60. The law forbids such practices and there are no cases in the Kingdom of the torture of children.

61. The Ministry of Interior is keen to develop the legislation regulating its activity in order to improve the quality of police work and the image of the police, while observing the principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Accordingly, Ministerial Decision No. 14 (2012), on the police code of conduct, was issued to reflect best global practice and the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The Code contains a number of principles, chief among them being the rule of law and respect for human dignity, as well as the principles of police work. A number of courses and workshops were organized to implement the Code.

62. Procedures for arrest and detention, police questioning and interrogation by the Public Prosecutor are governed by regulations whose legality is verifiable. As such, any allegation of torture or mistreatment will be investigated by the instruments of oversight and protection in the Kingdom, including the Ombudsman (Ministry of Interior), the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission, the Special Investigation Unit and the National Institution for Human Rights.

63. Juvenile centres handle complaints in the same way as reform and rehabilitation centres. The juvenile is informed of his rights and duties upon being admitted to the centre, including how to file a complaint; privacy, confidentiality and a prompt response are assured. Parents/ guardians are directed to present to the Ombudsman in person to deliver complaints, if any. Furthermore, there are complaints boxes in all sections of juvenile welfare centres. According to the fifth annual report of the Ombudsman, covering the period 1 May 2017 to 30 April 2018, no complaints regarding juvenile welfare centres were received.

64. The Special Investigation Unit is charged with investigating allegations of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Established by Decision No. 8 (2012) of the Public Prosecutor, to whom it is responsible, the purpose of the Unit is to ensure effective and meaningful investigation of this type of charge. It works with complete independence under the guidelines of the Istanbul Protocol: Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or

Punishment. The Unit is supported by technical systems and expertise to ensure effectiveness.

65. Bahraini law applies the harshest penalties for committing crimes against persons or the family, including rape and indecent assault. Thus articles 318 and 320 of Legislative Decree No. 15 (1976), promulgating the Penal Code, impose a sentence of imprisonment as follows:

- Article 318: A person who, after being requested, refuses to hand over a child in his care to the person who has obtained a judgement for the custody or guardianship of that child shall be sentenced to a term of imprisonment or a fine. This provision shall apply even if the person in charge of the child is one of the parents or grandparents.
- Article 320: A person who endangers the life of a child under 7 years of age or of a person unable to protect himself by reason of health or mental condition or who forces another person to commit such act shall be sentenced to a term of imprisonment or a fine. The punishment shall be imprisonment if the crime is committed in a secluded place. If the said crime results in the unintentional death or permanent disability of the victim, the perpetrator shall be sentenced to the punishment prescribed for assault resulting in death or permanent disability, as appropriate. Commission of the crime by an older relative of the victim, someone with authority over him or a person charged with looking after him shall be treated as an aggravating circumstance.

Issue 8, part 2, on the capacity of the National Institution for Human Rights to receive, investigate and refer complaints in a child-friendly and gender sensitive manner

66. The National Institution for Human Rights plays an important role in protecting the rights of individuals in general and the rights of children in particular. It devotes a special section — section 3 — of its complaints manual to the procedure for receiving complaints from children under the age of 18, stipulating that the child's parent, guardian or legal representative, as appropriate, must be informed.

67. The Institution studies and expresses an opinion on complaints received from children or a relative on the child's behalf. The appropriate body is then contacted to review and resolve the complaint.

68. If a complaint involves an allegation of abuse that requires immediate intervention for fear of the consequences if normal procedures are followed, it shall be processed and a decision made as a matter of urgency and in complete confidentiality to guarantee the child's rights in full and ensure his best interests are protected.

69. Under the law of its foundation, the National Institution for Human Rights provides legal assistance and advice when filing a complaint ostensibly outside its mandate and when making initial application. As such, the Institution pays particular attention to petitions submitted by children — the section of the population most in need of care — or by relatives on their behalf, providing them with advice and helping them to navigate the procedures to be followed.

70. The Institution takes the same interest in both convicted and detained children and juveniles, visiting them on a regular basis to ensure that they are provided with a suitable environment affording the maximum degree of protection and guaranteed contact with the outside world in the form of family visits, telephone calls and correspondence. The Institution also meets with them personally in absolute confidentiality, noting their requests and complaints and determining their needs before taking the appropriate decisions, in coordination with the management of the Juvenile Welfare Centre.

71. The Institution is keen to develop and update ways of communicating with citizens and residents to maximize levels of protection and promote the human rights situation, while respecting the confidentiality of those who have submitted complaints, including children. A new communication centre has been opened and a free hotline (80001144) installed. The hotline receives complaints, provides advice and responds to inquiries

concerning the protection and promotion of human rights within its remit. This is one more service to be added to the range of services enabling citizens and residents to contact the Institution, whether by presenting in person or via the website, social media pages or mobile telephone applications.

Issue 9, part 1, on legislative reforms or policy measures to ensure that child victims of violence or abuse are not treated as offenders

72. Aside from Legislative Decree No. 26 (1986, amended), on the regulation of sharia court procedures, the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Religious Endowments, in collaboration with the Supreme Judicial Council and Supreme Council for Women, has set up special courts, known as “family courts”. These ensure the privacy of family members (in particular the children) and confidentiality of this type of case by being completely separate from ordinary court buildings and even located in another governorate. More importantly, however, they help to maintain the psychological stability of the child as he enters the court accompanied by his parents. The Family Act (2017) and Children’s Act (2012) prioritize the best interests of the child when taking decisions and settling disputes on issues of custody, guardianship and alimony, on the basis of legal articles that will affect the child’s life and development. Key items addressed in the Family Act include catering for children’s needs, education, welfare and upbringing (arts. 62 to 67). The child’s interests are a key factor in the provisions of the Family Act governing custody following the break-up of a marital relationship (arts. 123 to 139). The Family Act prohibits enforcement of a custody and visitation judgment in cases where a child requires psychological protection and removal from an atmosphere of violence. It also requires visits to be conducted in a place and at a time that will not have an adverse psychological impact on the child (art. 139).

73. The Child Protection Centre, established pursuant to Decision No. 69 (2016), provides health, psychological, legal and family services for all children resident in Bahrain and subjected to violence, physical or psychological abuse and neglect without discrimination on grounds of gender, origin, colour, race, language, religion or belief. Furthermore, the Centre provides assessment, examination, treatment and follow-up for child victims of physical abuse and neglect, in coordination with the appropriate governmental and non-governmental bodies.

74. Family protection offices were set up in directorates of police in governorates across the country, designed to receive case of domestic violence and monitor the provision of prevention and treatment services in a suitable environment that respects the privacy of the family and proper way of addressing such cases. The success of the initial trial led to family protection offices being opened in directorates of police in all governorates.

75. A special family and child prosecution department was created by Decision No. 1 (2016) of the Public Prosecutor, with responsibility for taking the necessary measures to provide rapid intervention and protection to stop the violence, provide the victim with psychological, social and legal help in a safe environment and ensure that the offender is prosecuted.

76. To coincide with International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, held on 25 November each year, the Supreme Council for Women launched the National Strategy for the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence, in November 2015. Developed by a working group representing the ministries, official agencies and concerned civil society organizations, the Strategy is based on the key themes of prevention, protection and services, legislation and laws, awareness-raising and media support, studies and research, and evaluation and follow-up. A implementation plan has been prepared, containing precise indicators of the stages of implementation in accordance with the mandate of the bodies involved.

Issue 9, part 2, on prohibiting the practice of marriage between child victims and abusers

77. Work is under way on amending articles of the Bahraini Penal Code concerning crimes against the person. Specifically, it is proposed to cancel article 353 of Legislative Decree No. 15 (1976), promulgating the Penal Code, exempting the rapist from punishment if he marries his victim. The amendment has been passed to the legislature.

Issue 9, part 3, on whether Act No. 17 (2015), on domestic violence, specifies sanctions for perpetrators and remedies for victims and whether there have been any prosecutions under this legislation

78. The Domestic Violence Act, No. 17 (2015) sets out measures to protect victims that are taken from the date on which criminal charges are filed. Measures include issue of a restraining order against the assailant, with penalties stipulated for the violation thereof. The Act provides for recourse to a legislative decree promulgating the Penal Code, No. 15 (1976), on punishment commensurate with the offence committed.

Issue 10, part 1, on the measures taken to implement Decree No. 23 of the Minister of Labour

79. The principal items of relevance in the Labour Law, No. 36 (2012) are as follows:

- Title II of the Labour Law regulates occupational apprenticeship and defines an occupational apprentice as a person who concludes a contract with an employer for the purpose of learning a craft, occupation or trade for a fixed period of time during which he shall undertake to work under the supervision or management of the employer in return for a wage or remuneration. An employer or employer's representative who violates any of the provisions of title II of this Law shall be fined not more than two hundred dinars and not less than fifty dinars (art. 184).
- Title IV of the Labour Law regulates juvenile employment and defines a juvenile as person aged 15 or over but under the age of 18. Article 24 stipulates that it is forbidden to employ any person under the age of 15. An employer or employer's representative who violates any of the provisions of title IV of this Law or the decisions issued in implementation thereof shall be fined not more than two hundred dinars and not less than fifty dinars (art. 186).

80. It is worth noting that no violations of the aforementioned articles on child labour have been registered.

81. The Labour Market Regulatory Authority does not issue work permits to foreign labourers under the age of 18 Gregorian years. In accordance with the law, the Authority issues work permits to workers aged 18 or over.

Issue 10, part 2, on informing the Committee on the measures taken to prevent the exploitation of children, in particular foreign girls in domestic work

82. There are no such cases. The Labour Market Regulatory Authority is competent to issue work permits to workers aged 18 Gregorian years or over.

Issue 11, part 1, on the timeline for adoption of the bill to amend the Children's Act

83. The Correctional Justice Bill is currently under scrutiny pending submission to the legislature prior to promulgation, as stipulated by the Constitution. The bill currently being scrutinized will include a system of prosecution.

Issue 11, part 2, on rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for children in conflict with the law

84. Rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for children in conflict with the law:
1. Social rehabilitation: a programme based on a study of all aspects of the juvenile's social environment and behavioural patterns, with follow-up to determine an appropriate course of action; the programme includes:
 - Identifying the problems facing the juvenile;
 - Holding individual sessions targeting the behaviour to be changed;
 - Developing rehabilitation programmes to address juvenile problems;
 - Monitoring the behaviour of the juvenile and guiding him toward appropriate behaviour;
 - Preparing the juvenile for reintegration in the external environment.
 2. Academic rehabilitation: a programme aiming to provide all stages of education in line with Ministry of Education curricula. Students' academic problems are identified and addressed in order to improve juvenile attainment levels. The programme is based on:
 - Identifying attainment problems, if any, and seeking to resolve these;
 - Using all available means to motivate juveniles academically;
 - Supporting and fostering school guidance and counselling programmes and services to help students achieve the maximum possible degree of psychological, pedagogical and social equilibrium, creating balanced personalities able to interact positively with others and make the best use of their capacities and potential;
 - Coordinating remedial classes appropriate to the level and needs of each student, in partnership with academic staff.
 3. Health rehabilitation: a programme designed to provide the full range of health services that juveniles need, from treatment for chronic disease to accident and emergency; the programme includes:
 - Conducting a comprehensive medical examination before the juvenile is admitted to the centre;
 - Monitoring the health of the juvenile in the event of sickness;
 - Referring the juvenile to the appropriate physician in the event of a health problem and dispensing appropriate treatment;
 - Checking the juvenile's appointments record for any prior appointments scheduled before and after admission to the centre.
 4. Vocational rehabilitation: this programme provides an opportunity to take advantage of free time in the centre and put juvenile energy to good use by acquiring professional skills that will help them adapt to the outside world; the programme includes:
 - Agriculture;
 - Carpentry;
 - Tailoring;
 - Cookery;
 - Hairdressing;
 - Computing;
 - Handicrafts.

5. Psychological rehabilitation: a programme providing integrated psychological counselling and guidance, in cooperation with specialists from the Health and Social Affairs Department of the Ministry of Interior; the programme includes:

- Psychological counselling sessions;
- Intelligence and personality tests;
- Diagnosing cases of mental illness and mental problems for referral to specialists for monitoring;
- Group counselling sessions.

6. Family rehabilitation: this programme focuses on strengthening the fundamental role of the family in addressing and resolving juvenile problems; it is based on:

- Involving parents in the counselling process and providing support;
- Involving parents and the family in general in internal and external programmes;
- Arranging home visits on a regular basis.

7. Cultural and sporting rehabilitation: cultural and sporting activities are organized to enable juveniles to acquire the necessary physical, social and behavioural skills to help them change their attitude toward themselves and others and promote a spirit of collective action, participation and cooperation. Playing fields and equipment are made available to ensure that the desired goals are achieved. Additionally, recreational and educational programmes are organized inside and outside the centre.

Issue 12, on measures taken to ensure that all children who are victims and/ or witnesses of crime are provided with the protection required by the Convention; and explanation of how child victims of violence, abuse or neglect and their families are provided with effective remedies and support, including recovery and social reintegration assistance

85. The Child Protection Centre and child support hotline (998) were created to respond to the needs of child victims of abuse, providing protection and support in a child-friendly environment for the child and the family during assessment, treatment and follow-up. Children subjected to violence and mistreatment are afforded protection by treating them as victims under the Children's Act, No. 37 (2012).

86. As the principle child protection body, the Child Protection Centre is responsible for assessing and monitoring children who have been subjected to mistreatment, physical, psychological and sexual abuse or neglect. It provides evaluation, examination, treatment and follow-up in coordination with the appropriate governmental and non-governmental bodies.

87. The Centre receives reports of child abuse, as well as cases referred to it by child protection bodies. It also receives complaints and reports from children themselves.

88. The Centre provides a range of services designed to protect children from all forms of abuse, including:

- Social services;
- Psychological services;
- Legal services;
- Health services;
- Educational services.

89. The Centre has a board of directors, formed pursuant to Decision No. 1 (2015) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. Chaired by the relevant section of the Ministry, membership of the board consists of representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Supreme Council for Women, Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Religious Endowments, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Information Affairs Authority and several civil society organizations.

90. The main functions and duties of the board include formulating plans and programmes to ensure that children are protected from mistreatment, overseeing the implementation thereof, coordinating with the relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies to ensure that children are protected from abuse, studying repeat cases presenting at the Centre and formulating solutions.

91. An evaluation and follow-up committee was formed pursuant to Decision No. 20 (2012) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. Chaired by the relevant department of the Ministry, membership of the board consists of representatives of:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Development;
- Salmaniya Medical Complex;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Interior (Juvenile Welfare Centre);
- Bahrain Defence Force Hospital;
- Psychiatric Hospital;
- Public Prosecution Service.

92. The child support hotline was launched on 27 December 2011. This is a toll-free number for receiving messages from children and others concerning their exposure to violence, mistreatment or danger. It offers counselling, active listening and referral to the appropriate bodies, if necessary. The hotline was set up by the Ministry in cooperation with Child Help International.

93. The hotline constitutes a means of rapid and emergency intervention in the case of children exposed to any form of life-threatening violence, requiring immediate measures to be taken as soon as possible to save their lives after receiving a call for help.

94. Act No. 17 (2015), on protection from domestic violence, sets out the measures to be taken to protect family members subjected to violence.

95. Act No. 37 (2012), promulgating the Children's Act, clarifies children's rights and ensures they are protected against mistreatment and neglect.

96. Act No. 22 (2000), on foster care, provides for social and health care for children of unknown parents, orphans and those in similar circumstances in need of care.

97. The Batelco Care Centre for Cases of Domestic Violence provides help and advice by means of specialized psychological, social and legal support teams. It also offers field training in social work, psychological counselling and family therapy. Additionally, the Centre offers individual and group therapy services for victims of domestic violence. Furthermore, it seeks to raise legal and cultural awareness in order to combat domestic violence in society.

98. Dar al-Aman ("the Safe House") is a government social care institution that seeks to provide free temporary shelter to battered women and their children. Established to meet the obligations of Bahrain under the convention on human trafficking and its supplementary protocol, Dar al-Aman is attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. Dar al-Aman has launched a hotline to receive reports of domestic violence and refer these to the appropriate bodies.

99. Note that the penalties for crimes of domestic violence are set out in the Penal Code and specific criminal laws, as appropriate. The penalties stipulated in Act No. 17 (2015), on protection from domestic violence, are confined to violation of the restraining orders provided for in that Act.

Violation of restraining orders issued by the Public Prosecution Service or court

- Article 16 of Act No. 17 (2015), on protection from domestic violence, stipulates that violation of a restraining order carries a sentence of up to one month in prison and/ or a fine of not more than 100 dinars.
- Article 17 of the same Act stipulates that, without prejudice to any more severe penalty in the Penal Code or other law, violation of a restraining order by the use of violence against any person covered by the provisions of this Act carries a sentence of up to three months in prison and/ or a fine of not more than 200 dinars.

Procedures and measures of protection

100. Aside from the above-mentioned procedures for interviewing child victims of violence and in accordance with the provisions of the Domestic Violence Act, the Public Prosecution Service undertakes to:

- Protect the informant in a domestic violence case and only disclose his name and identity if judicial procedures so require;
- Corroborate all the information contained in the report and the parties involved immediately upon receipt; such information shall include the extent of the violence against or in front of children and its effect upon them;
- Issue orders for the immediate treatment of child victims of domestic violence or, if necessary, their transfer to a shelter as soon as possible;
- Issue the appropriate order to protect persons subjected to domestic violence, including prevention orders and restraining orders;
- Issue a provisional ruling, giving reasons, removing the victim from the family environment for his own protection;
- Additionally, amendments have been introduced to the Code of Criminal Procedure, Act No. 53 (2012), providing full protection for victims, witnesses, expert witnesses and persons who give information in a case. Means of protection include: change of identity, change of residence, banning disclosure of any information relating to identity or place of residence, use of modern telecommunication technology to transmit live or recorded victim and witness testimony, banning gradual disclosure of the identity of witnesses until the court orders disclosure once the threat has been lifted. Protection is guaranteed during the investigation and trial stages.

101. The Kingdom of Bahrain established the Batelco Child Care Home, attached the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, to provide psychological and livelihood services for children resident in the home who have no family to care for them, come from broken homes or are of unknown parentage:

1. Psychological services:
 - Submission of a daily report on children's behavioural development by pedagogical specialists and care givers;
 - If a child has a problem, the social worker or psychologist prepares a report for submission to the research and rehabilitation supervisor and the management;
 - All reports are discussed at a short daily meeting attended by specialists and the rehabilitation supervisor and a plan of action is formulated;
 - Daily reports are put before the consulting psychologist with a view to reinforcing positive behaviour and treating negative behaviour;
 - The consulting psychologist attends a regular weekly meeting with the children and also participates in various internal and external activities;
 - If a problem needs to be addressed, an appointment is fixed for the child to visit the consulting psychologist's clinic;
 - Liaison is conducted with the consulting psychologist on the programme of treatment for the child's problem;

- If required, the child is transferred to a paediatric clinic by the consulting psychologist;
 - If necessary, medication is given;
 - Nurses give medication as required under the direction of the consulting psychologist; daily observations are recorded in the medical record;
 - Action is taken to satisfy the child's psychological needs, in a manner appropriate to his age;
 - The home has the authority to place a child in the children's psychiatric hospital after diagnosis and at the recommendation of the hospital physician.
2. Livelihood services:
- Healthy, nutritious meals appropriate to the age, level of development and health of the child are prepared under supervision;
 - A daily programme, including set times for meals, study, watching television, leisure and recreational activities is drawn up; the programme is monitored;
 - Children are supplied with proper clothing;
 - Bathing and tidying of rooms and clothes lockers are supervised;
 - Bedtimes and wake-up times are supervised on a daily basis and determined in accordance with work, school and leave arrangements;
 - Cleaning and tidying of rooms is supervised; essential items and appliances are provided;
 - A list of needs is drawn up and action taken to ensure that items are provided on time;
 - Older children are trained to prepare a list of their needs;
 - Children of unknown parents over the age of 18 who have finished general secondary school are taught to drive and are allowed to purchase a car after leaving the home.
3. Awareness-raising programmes:
- Children are enrolled in life skills, cultural, religious and sports training courses and registered in sporting and health clubs and associations, as well as special technical centres and institutions.

Part II

13. The Committee invites the State party to provide a brief update (no more than three pages) on the information presented in its report with regard to:

- (a) New bills or laws and their respective legislation;**
- (b) New institutions (and their mandates) or institutional reforms;**
- (c) Recently introduced policies, programmes and action plans and their scope and financing;**
- (d) Recent ratifications of human rights instruments.**

102. Act No. 18 (2017), on punishment and alternative measures, was modelled on international legislation and trials that have been proven to be successful. The alternative penalties referred to in the Act include community service, house arrest, prohibition on visiting a particular place or places, undertaking not to approach or contact certain persons or bodies, electronic tagging, attendance at rehabilitation and training programmes and payment of compensation for damages resulting from the crime. The provisions of the Act are being increasingly applied as the criminal courts resort to replacing a custodial sentence

with an alternative, under the terms and conditions of the Act. The Public Prosecution Service has a mandate to implement the law by reviewing rulings that meet certain objective or personal conditions which may cause a judge to replace a custodial sentence with an alternative. Numerous rulings have been replaced under the system set out in the Act. Replacement of a custodial sentence with the measures prescribed by the Act depends on the investigator's assessment of the health or personal circumstances of the accused; the innocuous nature of the offense and absence of serious criminality may also be a factor. The sentencing of an offender to an alternative punishment is based on the satisfaction of the court and the judge's assessment of the punishment the accused deserves if found guilty, taking into account the conditions and circumstances of the crime, the personal situation of the accused (suggesting that he will not commit the crime again) and the effect an alternative punishment is likely to have upon his behaviour and his return to being an upright member of society. The age of an offender — i.e. whether he is a minor or an adult — is just one of the personal considerations involved in applying the system of alternative punishments and measures. As such, the 15–18 age group stand to benefit from this system.

103. Promulgation of Decision No. 28 (2018), on reforming the National Committee for Childhood.

104. The National Strategy for the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence was launched as part of the country's efforts to harmonize with the Sustainable Development Goals, which seek to protect women of all ages from all sections of society. The Strategy is aimed at all members of society, male and female, of all age groups, including children, but focuses on high risk groups more likely to be subjected to violence. It is designed to bring about a positive change in the attitudes and behaviour of all members of society toward women.

105. Act No. 1 (2017), on protecting society from HIV/ AIDS and protecting the human rights of people living with the disease.

106. Act No. 26 (2017), on the use of medical techniques that assist in intrauterine insemination and in vitro fertilization.

107. Act No. 34 (2018), promulgating the Public Health Act; articles 53 and 59 deal with childhood and the family.

108. Decision No. 7 (2018), regulating the procedures and rules governing the use, sale and marketing of breast-milk substitutes.

109. Decision No. 16 (2017), forming a working group on women's, children's and adolescents' health.

110. Expansion of nutrition clinics attached to health centres to include children and adolescents in the 6–18 age group, providing universal, long-term treatment for those suffering from obesity and an assessment of risk factors.

111. Act No. 30 (2018), promulgating the Personal Data Protection Act.

112. Completion of the draft strategy on adolescence under the direction of the World Health Organization, in line with the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health.

113. Act No. 23 (2018), promulgating the Health Insurance Act; articles 39 and 42 deal with childhood and the family.

114. Act No. 1 (2017), on protecting society from HIV/ AIDS and protecting the human rights of people living with the disease (article 11).

115. Decision No. 20 (2018), amending certain provisions of Decision No. 46 (2011), regulating taking leave of the Child Care Home and subsequent care.

Part III

Data, statistics and other information, if available

14. Please provide consolidated information for the past three years on the budget lines regarding children and social sectors by indicating the percentage of each budget line in terms of the total national budget and the gross national product. Please also provide information on the geographic allocation of those resources.

15. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data disaggregated by age, sex, ethnic origin, national origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on:

(a) **Children who are registered at birth or at a later time, in particular Bidoon and Ajam children:**

<i>Year</i>	<i>New births (less than 1 year)</i>	<i>Births –Bidoon</i>
2015	20 983	0
2016	20 714	0
2017	20 929	4

Note: A new born child may initially be registered without nationality; the entry is amended if nationality is subsequently determined.

(b) **Girls under 18 years of age who are married:**

117. The Family Act sets the age of marriage at 16. Furthermore, article 12 of the regulation concerning persons legally authorized to conduct marriage issued pursuant to Decision No. 1 (2016) stipulates that, for a contract of marriage to be concluded and notarized, both spouses must be aged 16 or over at the time the contract is concluded. This shall be ascertained by checking official documents and records. The law does not allow the marriage of persons under the age of 16 save at the request of the persons concerned and once the permission of the competent family court has been obtained following checks on the propriety of the marriage. This is consistent with the Children's Act, No. 37 (2012), article 4 of which, in principle, defines a child as a person under the age of 18 full Gregorian years; special laws provide exception for persons below this age. It should be noted that, in practice, the average age of marriage for females in Bahrain is 24.

(c) **Working children, disaggregated by the type of work they do:**

118. Numbers of children aged between 15 and 18 employed under the conditions stipulated in the Labour Law

<i>Age</i>	<i>No. of Bahraini children working in the private sector, disaggregated by age and gender</i>								<i>Total by age</i>
	<i>2015</i>		<i>2016</i>		<i>2017</i>		<i>2018</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	5
16	7	-	-	-	1	-	5	-	13
17	31	12	28	3	19	7	34	5	139
Total by years	38	12	28	3	20	7	44	5	
Total		50		31		27		49	157

<i>No. of Bahraini children working in the public sector, disaggregated by age and gender</i>									
Age	2015		2016		2017		2018		Total by age
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	1	-	3	-	1	1	-	3	9
Total by years	1	-	3	-	1	1	-	3	
Total		1		3		2		3	9

(d) The number of cases of abuse and violence against children, including those involving corporal punishment, that have been investigated, the number of perpetrators and the reparations afforded to victims:

119. Statistical monitoring of cases of child abuse in the period 2015–2017, including cases of light, moderate and serious corporal punishment investigated, shows the following:

- Total cases of abuse in 2015: 760
 - Cases involving abuse of boys: 512
 - Cases involving abuse of girls: 158
- Total cases of abuse in 2016: 772
 - Cases involving abuse of boys: 550
 - Cases involving abuse of girls: 222
- Total cases of abuse in 2017: 807
 - Cases involving abuse of boys: 582
 - Cases involving abuse of girls: 225

16. Please provide data disaggregated by age, sex, socioeconomic background, ethnic origin and geographic location regarding the situation of children deprived of a family environment, for the past three years, on the number of children:

(a) Separated from their parents;

(b) Placed in institutions, disaggregated according to the duration of the placement;

2016

<i>Under 3 years</i>		<i>3–10 years</i>		<i>10–17 years</i>		<i>17–20 years</i>		<i>20–37 years</i>	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
6	3	4	0	7	9	0	2	4	0

2017

<i>Under 3 years</i>		<i>3–10 years</i>		<i>10–17 years</i>		<i>17–20 years</i>		<i>20–37 years</i>	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
4	7	9	1	7	9	0	0	4	0

(c) **Placed with foster families;****2016**

<i>Under 3 years</i>		<i>3–10 years</i>		<i>10–17 years</i>		<i>17–20 years</i>		<i>20–37 years</i>	
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
4	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0

2017

<i>Under 3 years</i>		<i>3–10 years</i>		<i>10–17 years</i>		<i>17–20 years</i>		<i>20–37 years</i>	
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
3	1	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	0

17. Please provide data disaggregated by age, sex, type of disability, ethnic origin and geographic location, for the past three years, on the number of children with disabilities:

- (a) **Living with their families;**
- (b) **Living in institutions;**
- (c) **Attending regular primary schools;**
- (d) **Attending regular secondary schools;**
- (e) **Attend special schools;**
- (f) **Out of school;**
- (g) **Abandoned by their families.**

120. To be provided at a later date.

18. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data disaggregated by age, sex, type of offence, ethnic and national origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on children in conflict with the law:

- (a) **Arrested;**
- (b) **In pre-trial detention;**
- (c) **In detention;**
- (d) **In diversion programmes of any kind.**

Number of juveniles presenting at the Juvenile Welfare Centre, disaggregated by gender only in the period 2015–2017:

<i>No. of juveniles presenting at the Juvenile Welfare Centre, disaggregated by gender (2015)</i>				
<i>Juveniles admitted</i>		<i>Juveniles held in custody by order of Juvenile Court</i>		<i>Total</i>
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Gender</i>	
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
12	14	87	5	108

<i>No. of juveniles presenting at the Juvenile Welfare Centre, disaggregated by gender (2016)</i>				
<i>Juveniles admitted</i>		<i>Juveniles held in custody by order of Juvenile Court</i>		
<i>Gender</i>		<i>Gender</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
17	6	39	1	63

<i>No. of juveniles presenting at the Juvenile Welfare Centre, disaggregated by gender (2017)</i>				
<i>Juveniles admitted</i>		<i>Juveniles held in custody by order of Juvenile Court</i>		
<i>Gender</i>		<i>Gender</i>		
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
17	4	39	1	61

19. Please provide the Committee with an update of any data in the report that may have been outdated by more recent data collected or other new developments.

121. This has been indicated in the replies.
