



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Sixth periodic report submitted by Jordan under article 44 of the Convention, due in 2019*

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1. Introduction

1. The Committee on the Rights of the Child considered the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Jordan (CRC/C/JOR/4-5) at its 1877th and 1878th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.1877 and 1878), held on 26 and 27 May 2014, and adopted the concluding observations at its 1901st meeting, held on 13 June 2014. In paragraph 70 of the observations, the Committee invited Jordan to submit its sixth periodic report by 22 June 2019.

2. Eager to engage with the Committee, Jordan hereby submits its sixth periodic report under article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, for the period from 2014 to 2018. The report reviews the progress made by Jordan in terms of measures taken, resources allocated and legislation, policies, programmes and strategies developed with a view to implementing the Convention. It also includes replies to the Committee's concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Jordan (CRC/C/JOR/CO/4-5).

3. This sixth report was drafted following the Treaty-specific guidelines regarding the form and content of periodic reports to be submitted by States parties under article 44, paragraph 1 (b), of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/58/Rev.3). In order to ensure nationwide participation and consultation, a committee was formed to prepare the report, with members from national, governmental and non-governmental institutions under the leadership of the National Council for Family Affairs. The Council is regulated by Act No. 27 of 2001, article 6 of which defines its status as a national institution and an umbrella group for official institutions and civil society organizations that work together on legislation, strategies and plans that concern or impinge upon the family.

2. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6), of the Convention)

4. According to a 2018 report of the Department of Statistics, children – i.e., persons under the age of 18 – account for 40.2 per cent of the population, while the average Jordanian family is made up of 4.8 individuals. The statistics also show that some 34 per cent of the inhabitants of Jordan are under the age of 15, 62 per cent are between 15 and 64, and 4 per cent are aged 65 or older.

5. According to figures compiled by the Department of Statistics, the number of children under the age of 18 is as follows:

2015	2016	2017	2018
3 832 192	3 939 250	4 041 774	4 144 700

6. Jordan is acting to give effect to the recommendations contained in the concluding observations, which are the foundation underpinning its approach to improving the rights of all children throughout the country. The response rate to the recommendations has been high, as is shown below.

2.1 Coordination between bodies and institutions working in the field of children's rights

7. Act No. 27 of 2001 concerning the National Council for Family Affairs aims to promote joint action. For its part, Regulation No. 33 of 2016 established the National Team for Protecting Families from Violence, which brings together governmental and non-governmental organizations active in that field. Monthly meetings are held to formulate national policies; define mechanisms; establish roles, responsibilities, mandates and participatory relationships vis-à-vis family protection; and identify issues of concern to families. Another relevant piece of legislation is the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of

2017, which also helps to ensure coordination, partnership and joint policymaking among stakeholders.

8. In cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) the Council launched a project to follow up on the Committee's concluding observations to the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports. The Office of the Prime Minister sent official letters to all the institutions affected by the concluding observations regarding follow-up mechanisms for the implementation of the recommendations and plans for the future. Moreover, a workshop was held in order to present guidelines for the future, which will be discussed during the present report.

9. Within the National Framework for the Protection of Families from Violence, a system for responding to cases of domestic violence has been developed with automated online access to the response procedures of service providers in that field. Moreover there are rapid response procedures for cases of violence with institutions interacting in order to provide services.

10. The National Early Childhood Development Team was formed in 2018 with members from 39 local and international bodies. Its purpose is to build a network between all stakeholders operating in the area of early childhood in Jordan; to unite efforts, plans and programmes in that connection; garner support; and make optimal use of resources.

11. With support from the National Council for Family Affairs, the Team oversees the implementation of national guidelines and policies regarding the early development of children and monitors the obligations of partner institutions, which it guides in their institutional planning. It also monitors and collects indicators relating to early childhood and drafts an annual report. A further function it has is to monitor the extent to which decrees concerning policies, strategies, frameworks and legislation related to early childhood development are being implemented.

12. In December 2018, a human rights unit was set in the Office of the Prime Minister to act as the foundation for the Government's activities in the field of human rights. Legislation and laws are examined to determine to what extent they conform to the principles enshrined in the international human rights instruments ratified by Jordan then, in coordination with ministries and other bodies, the necessary amendments are proposed, in accordance with the Constitution and applicable legislation. Ministries and other stakeholders continue to use available media to disseminate a culture of human rights throughout society, and there is ongoing communication and cooperation with international human rights organizations as well as with the organizations and institutions of civil society that work in the field of human rights. The periodic reports requested by the official bodies of the Human Rights Council and by the treaty bodies are examined then sent to the Prime Minister for distribution. The same applies to the treaty bodies' concluding observations. The Comprehensive National Human Rights Plan for the period 2016-2025 was launched as part of the national vision for the improvement of the human rights situation in Jordan.

13. In cooperation with partners, the operational models used by the field units of the Public Security Directorate and its partner institutions have been standardized within a case management methodology. The Family Protection Department coordinates with all other bodies involved with matters relating to children and adolescents, such as government institutions, civil society institutions, law enforcement agencies, etc.

14. Under Regulation No. 33 of 2016 concerning the National Team for Protecting Families from Violence, family protection agencies come together to promote a participatory approach to the drafting of national family protection policies. Under that Regulation, a memorandum of understanding was signed in December 2016 between the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Public Security Directorate (Family Protection Department), the Jordan River Foundation, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the National Council for Family Affairs.

15. The participatory approach has also been adopted in the interaction between national institutions and members of the House of Representatives and of the Senate when drafting national laws and strategies. This includes, by way of example, the enactment of the

Domestic Violence Act No. 15 of 2017 and the Juveniles Act No. 32 of 2014 as well as their implementing regulations.

16. Through its Family Protection Department and Juvenile Police Department, the Public Security Directorate coordinates with all child-protection partners, service providers and operators. There are field units in all governorates; for example the Family Protection Department has 17 field units throughout the country as well as two detachments in Syrian refugee camps. The Family Protection Department has also signed partnership agreements with more than 20 ministries and local and international organizations that operate in the area of child protection. In addition, a joint cooperation agreement has been signed between Questscope for Social Development in the Middle East and the Public Security Directorate (Juvenile Police Department) regarding a project on “youth resolve and cooperation and referral mechanisms” that aims at the social, psychological and legal empowerment of children. Moreover, an agreement has been reached with UNICEF to provide support for the creation and launch of a Juvenile Police Department in Russeifa, the purpose being to promote restorative justice for children on the broadest geographical scale. The operational models used by the Family Protection Department, the field units and partner institutions have been developed and standardized within a case management methodology thanks to cooperation with partners. There are eight models in all and the first six-month pilot phase began on 1 February 2019.

2.2 Data-collection mechanisms and the creation of a centralized children’s database

17. The Family Protection Department has a permanent database, which is constantly being updated with information on the situations and cases involving children that the Department deals with. In addition, an online case-tracking system is used, which will come to constitute a national database once it has been fully activated. Information about cases of ill-treatment against children is provided by the 16 units of the Family Protection Department in all the country’s governorates.

18. A database on juvenile offenders has existed ever since the Juvenile Police Department was set up as part of the Public Security Directorate. The database contains information about the type of crime committed, the age group of the offender, the geographical area (neighbourhood), gender, nationality and any repeat offences. There is a special database for cases of violence in school and another regarding social follow-up, social worker reports and behavioural monitoring. A monthly statistical input feeds the main database and the computerized archiving system, which includes all cases reviewed by the Department. An electronic case-tracking system has been introduced.

19. The Ministry of Education has its own comprehensive database with information regarding schools, teachers and pupils at all educational levels. The information is obtained via the Queen Rania Centre for Education and Information Technology using an educational management information system.

20. A database on shelters that provide protection and care has been established in the Ministry of Social Development. A total of 869 persons, of various social categories and age groups, have benefited from the shelters and been integrated into family welfare programmes. The table below shows how many children have been integrated, are in alternative care or are enrolled in kindergarten.

Integrated children	250
Children in alternative care	1 182
Children enrolled in kindergartens	46 970
Kindergartens	1 342

21. Based on the recommendations of an analytical study into juvenile justice, work is currently under way to find mechanisms for standardizing data relating to children and to

establish a national statistical database of all the bodies that work with children. The intention is that the database should act as a unified and easily accessible point of reference.

2.3 Innovative and child-friendly methods to raise awareness about the content and aims of the Convention

22. In 2017, the National Council collaborated with UNICEF to run an awareness-raising campaign on social media entitled “Teach but leave no marks” with the aim of changing trends and modes of behaviour in society so as to curb violence against children. The campaign, which targeted 15 million users on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, included messages explaining the nature of violence and its effects, and what action to take in order to curb and prevent it.

23. An interactive booklet on the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been drawn up using simplified language to help children learn about their rights. It was distributed during celebrations for World Children’s Day, which were attended by around 1,000 youngsters.

24. In collaboration with partners, the Public Security Directorate uses social media, television and local radio to raise awareness about children’s rights at the local level and across the media.

Number of lectures 13,000 students from various schools across the governorates in 2018

A Facebook page has been created for the Family Protection Department, and a special website has been set up to raise awareness about children’s rights.

25. The Ministry of Education runs training programmes on children’s rights and child protection for educational counsellors and schoolteachers.

26. The National Council is training a youth team, which includes representatives from all governorates, on the Convention, the rights of children and awareness of sexual and physical violence. The intention is that the members of the team will then raise awareness on these issues in their own schools.

27. The National Council disseminates information about child rights via social media and its own website in order to raise awareness about the Convention and its Protocols.

2.4 Training and awareness-raising on children’s rights

28. Two guides have been produced. One focuses on the best interests of the child while the other is a 2019 training guide on the Domestic Violence Act aimed at ensuring coordination and joint action among service providers.

29. The National Council has organized training courses – pilot projects on juvenile justice – on the Juveniles Act No. 32 of 2014. The courses, which are aimed at lawyers, judges, members of the Juvenile Police Department and social workers from the Ministry of Social Development from Amman and from the governorate of Zarqa’, include dispute settlement, trial procedures, rebukes, reprimands, alternative penalties and definition of the terms “best interests of the child” and “fair trial standards”.

30. An analytical study into juvenile justice was launched in 2017. The study produced statistics as well as recommendations for reducing juvenile delinquency, and it identified points of strength and of weakness, with a view to enhancing positive aspects and tackling negative ones. It also included recommendations on how to reduce the referral of juveniles to the courts by encouraging an increased use of dispute resolution processes for children in conflict with the law, during advanced stages of the proceedings, especially at the pretrial stage, and by introducing new elements of restorative justice at all stages of the proceedings.

31. Also in 2017, the National Council organized two workshops on the Juveniles Act and its associated legislation. The workshops – which were held in all three of the country’s

regions and were aimed at judges, prosecutors, lawyers and youth specialists – provided an opportunity for in-depth discussion about the Act and the regulations and instructions issued pursuant thereto. In addition, training workshops were held on the Domestic Violence Act No. 15 of 2017, attended by 120 delegates from the Jordanian Judicial Council, the Ministry of Social Development, the Institute of Forensic Medicine and the Family Protection Department. The training focused on international standards in the application of the law.

32. Action has been taken to raise awareness among the public at large with the distribution by the National Council of booklets containing technical material presented in a simplified manner. The booklets are made available via the website of the Council.

33. The table below shows the number of meetings held by the Public Security Directorate on issues relevant to the protection of children and adolescents, for the purpose of disseminating information about laws concerning minors.

<i>Year</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
No.	123	108	271

34. Over the last three years, the Family Protection Department has organized the following events.

66 campaigns	A campaign in local communities across all governorates, and in Syrian refugee camps, to raise awareness about women's and children's rights
300 lectures	In schools, hospitals and civil society organizations
A national conference on the best interests of children, in which four major partners participated	
4,200 lectures over 5 years	Attended by 200,000 participants

The Family Protection Department has a specialized training centre that conducts year-round training courses on children's rights.

35. The Juvenile Police Department has conducted training courses on juvenile justice and related topics. The training plans were drawn up using a conceptual framework and programmes formulated to suit the nature of the work. Details are in the table below.

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of courses</i>	<i>No. of participants</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Juvenile Police Department</i>	<i>Other units of the Public Security Directorate and partners</i>	
2016	25	326	76	402
2017	27	327	52	379
2018	27	464	116	580
Total	79	1 117	244	1 361

36. Across the country, 118 workshops and training courses on issues affecting children have been held for 1,423 participants including judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials and civilian partners.

37. The Ministry of Education runs programmes and activities to promote the meaningful participation of children and so empower families, communities and schools, including student councils. In doing so, the Ministry pays particular attention to children in vulnerable situations.

38. Each year, the National Centre for Human Rights organizes some 30 training workshops on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each course is attended by 25

participants, including students in schools and in State-run and private universities; professional associations such as those representing doctors, pharmacists, teachers, lawyers, journalists, etc.; members of civil society institutions; social workers; local community leaders; the Public Security Directorate; and religious figures. The courses are run in cooperation with the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs and the training is carried out in all governorates, with a focus on the more remote areas of the country.

39. The National Centre for Human Rights has produced, printed and distributed a booklet on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It has also produced a poster on the Convention using simplified language suitable for children. The poster has been distributed to schools and among students, and it has been made available on the Centre's own website. Furthermore, a story entitled "City of Children" has been written with the aim of teaching children about their rights under the Convention, and it has been distributed to the libraries of schools run by the Ministry of Education.

40. The Justice Centre for Legal Aid has launched its "My Rights" programme, which is intended to make children between the ages of 5 and 12 aware of their fundamental rights and to enhance their capacity to exercise those rights. The programme uses booklets, which are tailored to specific age groups and distributed to children free of charge. The booklets adopt an interactive, entertaining and child-friendly style and make use of storytelling and interactive theatre. At the end of the programme, each child is able to focus on one or more of the rights, such as the right to survival, to development, to a given name, nationality and family name, to health care, to rights relevant to children with disabilities, to non-violence, to education, to opinion, to equality or to play. The Centre has also launched a programme aimed at children between the ages of 8 and 14, the idea for which arose following the spread of bullying in various forms among children. The programme uses a child-friendly educational package, which is distributed to children free of charge and includes a booklet with activities and advice regarding bullying and the various manifestations it can take (physical, verbal, emotional, online) and how the child can protect himself, herself or others. It also contains a questionnaire on bullying and an "I'm against bullying" pledge that the child signs at the end of the session.

41. The Justice Centre has also developed a preliminary preventive programme to explain in simple terms to children between the ages of 6 and 10 how they can protect themselves from harassment and its consequences. The programme, which constitutes a small step on the journey to eliminating harassment, makes use of storytelling, games and dolls.

42. The Public Security Directorate's Family Protection Department, in cooperation with the Noor al-Hussein Foundation (Institute for Family Health), has conducted a field study entitled: "The impact socialization in Jordanian families has on juvenile delinquency". In that context training plans on how to raise awareness about children's rights have been adopted and the 2019 programme includes high-quality courses on restorative justice for juveniles. In addition, there is a strategic plan that includes training for staff and awareness-raising plans.

43. The Public Security Directorate acts to ensure that the broadest range of groups and categories across the local community and the media are made aware of the Convention by undertaking the actions listed in the following table.

23 visits	With local councils
271 meetings	With six local and youth councils
1,200 brochures	To provide information about the Police Department
2 televised meetings	Providing information on the Juvenile Police Department

2.5 National Centre for Human Rights

44. Under Act No. 51 of 2006, the National Centre for Human Rights was established as an independent national institution in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). The

Centre, which receives complaints relating to violations of human rights violations in general, including violations of children's rights, has its headquarters in Amman but no branch offices. However, it does have liaison officers in all the governorates, who also receive complaints relating to violations of human rights violations in general, including violations of children's rights. The Centre gets some 20 complaints a year via its hotline, which is open round the clock to receive reports from children and others. In practice, however, the Centre receives only a small number of complaints from children themselves as other institutions, such as the Jordan River Foundation, focus on recording complaints from children.

45. In 2017, the State raised the budget of the National Centre for Human Rights to \$1 million and increased the number of personnel so that the Centre now has 50 staff of both sexes.

46. The Centre monitors and documents any violations of children's rights and it determines the extent to which Jordan is implementing the Convention. It also prepares an annual report on the human rights situation in Jordan, which includes a focus on the rights of children.

2.6 Human rights education in the school curriculum

47. Human rights constitute one of the main features of the general curriculum and, in particular, of the module on social education and the module on national and civic education. The topic is approached in different ways depending, on the one hand, on the nature of the module and, on the other, on the age and developmental characteristics of the students. It has been tackled in a variety of ways in a range of modules, such as Islamic education, Arabic, English, history, science and the arts.

48. The Ministry of Education runs educational programmes on human rights in general, and children's rights in particular, as part of both the primary and secondary school curriculum.

49. The school curriculum will be discussed in detail in the section on education in the present report.

3. Reservations

50. Jordan is of the view that its reservations do not conflict with the spirit or aims of the Convention. Children retain their rights and benefit from alternative family care under the Islamic system of *kafalah* and fostering arrangements established in accordance with Islamic sharia. The rules and regulations on fostering and *kafalah* are intended to protect children to the fullest degree possible. A committee has been formed by the Ministry of Social Development, the Department of the Chief Qadi and a number of other institutions to draw up integrated regulations regarding tutelage and alternative care. The reservations do not constitute an obstacle to the efforts being made by the Government to promote and protect the rights of children as enshrined in the Convention. Jordan entered reservations to articles 14, 20 and 21 of the Convention. Its reservation to article 14 on freedom of thought, conscience and religion is consistent with Islamic sharia, while its reservation to articles 20 and 21 on adoption is in line with laws and legislation which are themselves derived from Islamic sharia. In fact, sharia does not admit adoption, the reason being to preserve children's right to a name and surname, to protect their financial rights vis-à-vis inheritance, to uphold their other rights and to safeguard issues arising therefrom in sharia and statutory law, notably issues relating to marriage. According to article 3 of the basic instructions for the payment of the alternative allowance within the children's alternative care programme of 2013: "The children's alternative care programme: An alternative care project for children is to be rolled out in the Ministry the purpose of which is to provide social services within a context of family care rather than institutionalized care, thereby giving children who require protection and care the possibility of living in an appropriate family setting and enhancing their psychological, social, educational and healthy physical development." There are 1,185 children in alternative care.

4. Legislation

51. The sixth discussion paper formulated by His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein focused on laws, the judiciary and the rule of law. This was followed by legislative amendments in 2017, proposed by the Royal Commission for Developing the Judiciary and aimed at supporting children's rights and strengthening the legislative environment.

52. Some of the more significant strategies and pieces of legislation are listed below.

I. Legislation

52.1 Juveniles Act No. 32 of 2014 and the legislation issued thereunder: A bill to amend the Act has been drafted by a national committee. It focuses on strengthening protection mechanisms for juveniles, rolling out community-based measures and establishing specialized judicial bodies for juveniles at the levels of first instance and appeal. Regulations and instructions regarding the Juveniles Act were issued in 2015 and 2016:

- (a) Regulation No. 112 of 2016 regarding dispute resolution in cases involving juveniles;
- (b) Regulation No. 67 of 2016 regarding aftercare for juveniles;
- (c) Instructions specifying the requisites and the information to be included in reports of probation officers, 2015;
- (d) Basic instructions for the enforcement of non-custodial sentences, 2015;
- (e) Instructions regarding the enrolment of juveniles in education or training, 2015;
- (f) Instructions for granting leave to juveniles, 2015;
- (g) Instructions regarding the transportation of detained or convicted juveniles, 2015;
- (h) Instructions regarding a training programme for parents of juveniles in need of protection or care, 2015.

52.2 Domestic Violence Act No. 15 of 2017, the regulations concerning community-based measures issued pursuant thereto in 2018, and draft regulations to protect witnesses and informants in cases of domestic violence.

52.3 Children's rights bill.

52.3.1 Children's rights bill consistent with the provisions of the Convention has been drafted thanks to a participatory process that involved cooperation between the following official and non-official partners: National Council for Family Affairs, Jordanian Judicial Council, Department of the Chief Qadi, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Department of Civil Status, National Centre for Human Rights, Public Security Directorate, Jordanian National Commission for Women, Jordan River Foundation, Justice Centre for Legal Aid, UNICEF and Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

52.3.2 The bill first defines a child as anyone who has not reached the age of 18 then focuses on the four principles identified in the Convention and on using appropriate and effective means to raise awareness about the Convention on as wide a scale as possible. The bill also considers how to build and develop the skills of workers in the sector; it includes provision for other rights such as the right to education, to health, to development, etc.; it emphasizes the need for inter-institutional coordination and cooperation and it address the loopholes that exist in other legislation.

52.3.3 A number of specialized workshops were held between 2017 and 2018, and the bill, with an annexed study on the financial impact of its implementation, were submitted to the Government in March 2019.

- 52.4 Act No. 27 of 2017 amending the Criminal Code (Act No. 16 of 1960).
- 52.5 Act No. 36 of 2017 amending the Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 9 of 1961).
- 52.6 Cybercrime Act No. 27 of 2015. Under article 9 of the Act, more severe penalties are envisaged if acts of pornography or sexual exploitation involve persons under the age of 18. Under article 8, the penalty is to be redoubled if the person committing an offence under the Act is acting, or abusing, an official capacity.
- 52.7 Personal Status Act as amended by Act No. 15 of 2019.
- 52.8 Act amending the Code of Sharia Procedure (Act No. 31) as amended, 2016.
- 52.9 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017.
- 52.10 Medical and Health Responsibility Act No. 25 of 2018.
- 52.11 Regulation No. 16 of 2016 regarding the National Team for Protecting Families from Violence.
- 52.12 Regulation No. 119 of 2018 regarding legal aid, issued under article 208 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, as amended (Act No. 9 of 1961).
- 52.13 Regulation No. 171 of 2016 regarding shelters for women at risk.
- 52.14 Draft alternative care regulations, 2019.
- 52.15 Regulation No. 17 of 2013 concerning family reconciliation and mediation offices.
- 52.16 Regulation No. 48 of 2015 concerning the Alimony Loan Fund.
- 52.17 Instruction No. 1 of 2017 for granting permission to marry.
53. *II. Activities undertaken to raise awareness about the importance of amending and enacting legislation are listed below.*
- 53.1 A committee was formed to examine the phenomenon of school dropout. It concluded its work with a request for an amendment to the relevant instructions and submitted an official letter containing a proposed wording for the amendment.
- 53.2 A bill amending the Anti-Human Trafficking Act was approved by a legal committee in the Office of the Prime Minister. The bill focuses on the best interests of the child and on protecting children through the use of modern technology to give testimony in court.
- 53.3 Draft regulations regarding working children.
- 53.4 Draft alternative care regulations, 2019.
- 53.5 Regulation regarding kindergartens, 2018.
- 53.6 Regulation No. 22 of 2017 regarding flexible working arrangements.
54. *III. The most significant Government-approved strategies and plans are listed below.*
- 54.1 National Juvenile Justice Strategy 2017–2019.
- 54.2 National Criminal Justice Strategy 2018–2020.
- 54.3 National strategy to combat human trafficking, 2019.
- 54.4 Executive plan to strengthen the institutional response to cases of domestic violence.
- 54.5 National Framework for the Protection of Families from Violence.
- 54.6 Unified national procedural document for the prevention of and response to violence in Jordan (gender-based violence, domestic violence and child protection) 2018–2019.

- 54.7 National Framework for the Reduction of Child Labour.
- 54.8 Comprehensive National Human Rights Plan 2016–2026.
- 54.9 Jordanian response plan to the Syrian crisis.
- 54.10 Plan to strengthen the response of national institutions in dealing with cases of domestic violence 2016–2018.
- 54.11 Standards for accrediting and assessing the quality of the services provided in cases of violence, 2014.
- 54.12 Standards for accrediting and assessing the quality of residential care services, 2015.

5. Allocation of resources

55. The National Council for Family Affairs has conducted a study to analyse budget allocations for children and it has developed a budget model that includes strategic goals and tasks for each ministry, with a view to meeting children’s needs and protecting their rights.

56. In cooperation with the General Budget Department, the Council is implementing a child-friendly budget project with the aim of developing budgets that are sensitive to the needs and rights of children. To that end, three analytical studies have been conducted the first of which, launched in 2009, covered the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour. The second study began in 2014 and focused on the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs while the third was rolled out in 2016 and covered the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, and the Ministry of Youth. In the fourth phase of the project, the Council is conducting an analytical study of the budgets of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the municipalities of Sahab and of Greater Madaba and the National Aid Fund.

57. The Council has carried out a study into the financial impact of the children’s rights bill. The study, which has been attached to the bill, covers all the provisions contained therein. A financial analysis is currently being carried out at the national level on the Juveniles Act and the children’s rights bill in order to define priorities necessary for their implementation.

58. In order to promote the concept of child-focused budgets, the Council has cooperated with the General Budget Department to include estimated allocations for children in the General Budget Act (table No. 24 of the annual general budget tables).

59. Within the framework of the activities of the Ministry of Social Development, basic instructions for the payment of the alternative allowance were issued in 2013. In addition, the Ministry has a financial provision to protect children in its foster family welfare programme, which is disbursed in accordance with those instructions. It also allocates resources to shelters for the protection of children in such situations as well as other resources to purchase services from volunteer groups and local community organizations to protect and care for children.

6. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12 of the Convention)

6.1 Non-discrimination

60. The Juveniles Act was amended in 2014 to embrace full equality among all groups. Policies and programmes have been developed while, to promote issues affecting children, greater joint action is being encouraged among bodies of the legislature, the judiciary and the executive as well as with institutions of civil society and international organizations. Moreover, children have been recognized as being in a category that needs protection and care.

61. The principle of non-discrimination is reaffirmed in the general provisions of the children’s rights bill. Article 3 of the bill reads: “Children have the right to enjoy all the rights and freedoms enshrined in the present Act, without discrimination of any kind.”

62. Action has been taken to raise awareness about eliminating discrimination against girls, particularly as regards inheritance. Personal Status Act No. 36 of 2010 and a subsequent Act issued in 2019 both deal with inheritance in detail – the first time such a thing has happened in national legislation – and determine the share to be allocated to men and to women. Under no circumstances may any heir, irrespective of gender, be deprived of their portion of the inheritance and, if a violation occurs that affects the portion of any of the heirs, a complaint can be lodged with the courts to rectify the situation in accordance with the law. Under the Code of Sharia Procedure, the Sharia Public Prosecutor can submit a request for the protection of the rights of children and minors. The same conditions apply to marriage, wherein men and women have equal rights to establish a marriage contract. Awareness-raising campaigns are being run regarding marriages involving persons between the ages of 16 and 18 and the State has set controls and restricted the granting of marriage licences to ensure that the interests of both parties are respected and protected. A special module on the subject has been developed, which deals with legal and social aspects, the adaptation of the law, the reasons for early marriage and the conditions that have to be fulfilled for a judge to give consent to such a union. The module, which is delivered by means of lectures, training sessions and interactive theatre, is aimed at 14-year-old girls, parents and persons who work with children.

The National Framework for the Protection of Families from Violence was launched in 2016. It defines the roles, responsibilities, mandates and methods to be followed by institutions in all sectors in order to provide integrated, comprehensive and quality services in cases of violence. It follows a case management methodology that focuses on respecting the rights and desires of victims while laying emphasis on the concept of informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, taking account of the best interests of the child and maintaining the safety and security of victims and their families.

63. Two guides were issued in 2019: The “unified national operating procedures for the prevention of and response to violence” and the “procedures for health service-providers when addressing cases of sexual assault”. The guides are intended to support national policies aimed at combating gender-based violence, at providing protection from violence and at offering clinical care for persons rescued from situations of sexual violence in line with best practices nationally, in the Arab world and globally.

6.2 Best interests of the child

64. National legislation takes account of the best interests of the child. This includes the Personal Status Act which makes due allowance for moral and material issues affecting children. The Act includes clear provisions intended to protect and preserve children’s interests in matters such as visitation rights, custody, descent, alimony, treatment and education expenses, etc. The concept of the best interests of the child is also reaffirmed in the children’s rights bill and in the Juveniles Act, while other relevant laws also contain provisions specific to children.

65. Article 308 of the Criminal Code, exempting an offender from punishment if he marries his victim, was repealed under Act No. 27 of 2017.

66. A guide to standards on the best interests of the child was drafted in 2017, thanks to cooperation between the Department of the Chief Qadi, UNHCR and the Family Protection Department. Following that initiative, another guide was drafted in 2019 in the form of a training manual on how to apply those standards in proceedings before sharia courts and statutory courts. This latter guide was drawn up in cooperation with the National Council for Family Affairs and approved by the Jordanian Judicial Council and the Department of the Chief Qadi. Thirty sharia and statutory court judges across the country are due to receive training on the two guides in the course of 2019.

67. In a further step to safeguard the best interests of children, legal texts have been introduced regarding the issue of letters rogatory and of television interviews involving children.

68. The National Framework for the Protection of Families from Violence 2016 dictates that all rights should serve the best interests of the child, just as it seeks to guarantee full and effective enjoyment of those rights and to ensure that the obligation to respect children’s rights is not suppressed on the basis of an adult’s assessment of a child’s best interest. Moreover, the National Framework document does not admit a hierarchical approach to the best interests of the child and it states that no right may be infringed by applying a negative interpretation to the best interests of children, which must be fully applied at all times. In addition, all competent bodies are to work together to guarantee the overall physical, psychological and moral well-being of children, both boys and girls, and to protect their human dignity at all stages when responding to cases of domestic violence.

69. The amendments to the Criminal Code contained in Act No. 27 of 2017 aim to improve protection for girls and women in matters regarding crimes committed under the pretext of “honour”. The amendments also concern women with disabilities and they give mothers the right to consent to surgical operations and other medical treatment for their children. In addition, the amendments have put an end to the impunity enshrined in article 308 of the Code under which a person who perpetrated a sexual assault was exempted from punishment if he married his victim. The Act also envisages community service as a form of alternative penalty.

70. In 2016, the Department of the Chief Qadi set up the family reconciliation and mediation offices, developing the work of the existing family reconciliation offices, expanding their mandate to include the concept of mediation and amending the Code of Sharia Procedure. The aim was to achieve the national vision of family protection by finding satisfactory and early solutions with a view to keeping families out of the courts as much as possible, resolving family disputes and providing family counselling to those in need. A number of family mediation offices have been set up across all regions and governorates staffed by 290 social, legal, educational and psychological specialists, as is shown in the table below.

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of offices</i>	<i>No. of cases received by the offices</i>
2016	14	4 417
2017	17	22 446
2018	20	38 736

71. A new Act amending the 2015 Composition of Sharia Courts Act contains provision for the creation of the Office of the Sharia Public Prosecutor. The duties of the Office include protecting the rights of minors and of persons who are incapacitated or have diminished capacity. It also monitors the activities of parents and guardians to ensure that they are consistent with the law and respect the interests of the minors.

72. A new law has also been passed regarding proceedings before the sharia courts. It contains a number of important amendments, including:

(a) The simplification and acceleration of proceedings in relation to custody and visitation rights;

(b) Allowance is made for non-material rights upon which sharia courts may rule concerning custody, visitation and travel with a child; this is because the enforcement of such matters requires special rulings that are different from the enforcement of rulings affecting material issues;

(c) The concept of writ of enforcement has been expanded so as to give the agreements reached via the family reconciliation offices the force of writs of enforcement thereby avoiding the need to file lawsuits and obtain rulings.

6.3 Right to life, survival and development

(a) The right to life, survival and development are reaffirmed in the children's rights bill;

(b) Article 345 bis of the amended Criminal Code states that a person who commits any of the offences listed in chapter VIII, section I, of the Code does not benefit from the mitigating circumstances envisaged in article 97 and 98 of the Code if the victim of the offence, male or female, is under the age of 15;

(c) Act No. 8 of 2011 amends article 340 of the Criminal Code repealing the provision whereby a man who comes across one of his womenfolk in the act of committing adultery is exempted from punishment. Such a situation is now considered to be a mitigating circumstance. The amended text also allows the wife to benefit from the same mitigating circumstance if she comes across her husband in the act of adultery or in an adulterous situation in the marital home;

(d) So-called honour crimes no longer benefit from the mitigating circumstances envisaged in articles 97 and 98 of the Code, save in the situation envisaged in article 340. Moreover, the application of article 99 of the Code – under which courts can mitigate the penalty if the circumstances of a case so warrant – was restricted by amendments introduced in 2017;

(e) As concerns protection measures and the creation of shelters, a regulation was issued regarding shelters for women at risk. Under that regulation, a safe house has been built for endangered women where they can receive psychological, legal and social services and, most significantly, protection and reintegration into society.

73. There are four shelters for the protection of women and girls: two in Amman, one in Irbid and one in Russeifa. According to 2018 statistics, the number of women staying in the shelters was as follows:

- (a) Family reconciliation home in Amman: 419 women and 165 children;
- (b) Family reconciliation home in Irbid: 123 women and 33 children;
- (c) Dar Karama: 133 women;
- (d) Home for the care and rehabilitation of girls in Russeifa: 118 women.

74. In the context of cooperation and partnership between the Ministry of Social Development and civil society organizations, the Jordanian Women's Union continues to provide shelter as well as legal assistance for cases that fall within its jurisdiction.

6.4 Respect for the views of the child

75. A child's right to freedom of expression is enshrined in article 6 of the children's rights bill, which details how that right can be exercised in legal proceedings and in social and educational processes involving the child. Article 6 of the bill reads:

1. All children have the right to express their opinions and those opinions will be given due consideration in the light of the child's age and level of maturity. This includes making their views known in legal proceedings and in social and educational processes involving them;

2. Children have the right to request and obtain all kinds of information and ideas, which can be made accessible to them orally, in writing, in print, via art or by other means of the child's choosing as long as that does not prejudice the rights or reputation of others, national security, public order, public health or public morals;

3. Children have the right of respect for their private lives and any form of arbitrary or unlawful intervention into their life, family, home or correspondence is forbidden as is any infringement to their honour or reputation, taking due account of the rights and duties of their parents or guardians and in accordance with current legislation;

4. Nothing in the present Act prejudices the right of children to enjoy all general rights and freedoms or to benefit from the protection and care envisaged for human beings in general and for children in particular under other domestic legislation.

76. The Personal Status Act also envisages taking account of the views of children between the ages of 15 and 18 vis-à-vis their preference to stay with one parent rather than the other. When making rulings, courts must take account of the interests of that person and of the opinions and choices he or she expresses, and act to protect those interests.

77. The information available on social media sites and the websites of government institutions includes numbers via which to contact decision makers, make complaints and access services.

78. Legislation and its implementation includes provision for a complaints mechanism, a register of complaints and a national complaint registration mechanism in the form of the National Centre for Human Rights, which issues an annual report for follow-up purposes.

79. In that connection, article 36 of the Juveniles Act No. 32 of 2014 states:

(a) On the basis of a complaint made under article 35 of present Act, before taking any measures to protect a juvenile, the court is to ask the probation officer to draft a report on the juvenile's situation, background circumstances, family, social environment and state of health. The court must also hear from the juvenile and his parent or parents, guardian or the person entrusted with his care.

Article 22 of the Juveniles Act reads:

(b) The court is to inform the juvenile at the start of the trial of the charges against him and to ask him to plead, using simple language he is able to understand. ...

(i) The prosecutor or the court may use modern technology to protect anyone under the age of 18 during proceedings related to witness testimony, discussion and confrontation on condition that the technology used allows any party to the case to cross-examine the juvenile or the witness during the proceedings. Modern technology may also be used to hear from juvenile witnesses.

80. Article 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 9 of 1961) was amended under Act No. 36 of 2017, the original article being repealed and the text replaced with the current text. The original text read as follows:

1. (a) Witnesses under the age of 15 may, without being placed under oath, give indicative evidence if it is clear that they do not comprehend the nature of an oath;

(b) Testimony taken as indicative evidence is not of itself sufficient to secure a conviction; it must be supported by other evidence.

Under the amendment, the following paragraphs were added to the article:

(c) With due regard to the provisions of article 74 of the present Act and to subparagraphs (a) and (b) of the present article, the prosecutor or the court may use modern technology, as set forth in subparagraph (d) of the present article, to protect witnesses who are under the age of 18 when giving their testimony, on condition that any party to the case can cross-examine the witness during the proceedings. Testimony provided in this way is deemed to constitute admissible evidence;

(d) For the purposes of subparagraph (c) of the present article, the use of modern technology is mandatory when hearing from victims of sexual assault, unless such use is impossible, and is optional in all other cases.

2. The prosecutor or the court may use modern technology during investigations and trials, without prejudice to the right to cross-examine. This includes the remote trial of inmates being held in correctional facilities, as set forth in the relevant regulation.

3. The modern technological equipment used, including tapes and CDs, is subject to established protection procedures in order to maintain confidentiality and the privacy of the witness or inmate.

As is clear from the amended text of the article, a legal mechanism has been put in place to govern the use of modern technology to protect child witnesses. The mechanism allows technology to be used in trials and investigations and it makes such use mandatory when hearing from victims of sexual assault, unless that is impossible, and optional in all other cases.

81. Each year, the Ministry of Education runs the student parliamentary councils programme in all schools in Jordan. Quarterly reports are drafted detailing the councils' achievements at the level of schools, the Directorate and the Ministry.

82. The councils seek to ensure that children's views are respected. A team has been formed made up of youngsters of both sexes between the ages of 12 and 18 from different governorates and their views are sought when preparing booklets on matters affecting children. The group also participates in training courses while programmes have been launched to provide students with the basic knowledge and skills they need to improve their academic performance.

83. The Ministry of Education runs a programme of parent-teacher councils the aim of which is, *inter alia*, to strengthen the bond between schools and their local communities, encourage voluntary activities at the service of the community and solve students' behavioural and academic problems. Instructions have been issued to regulate the work of such councils.

7. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8 and 13 to 17 of the Convention)

7.1 Right to nationality

84. Jordan is governed by laws, institutions and a constitutional framework rooted in the principle that all Jordanians are equal before the law. The law does not deprive the children of Jordanian women married to foreigners of Jordanian nationality. In fact, the children of a Jordanian mother may acquire Jordanian nationality as long as they are born in Jordan and the father is either of unknown nationality, is stateless or his own paternity has not been legally established. In cases other than those, the practical and official application of the law does not, in fact, grant such children Jordanian nationality. A 2013 petition to amend the law included a request to allow women who had lost their Jordanian nationality by marrying a foreigner to recover that nationality, if they so wished and without having to prove that the marriage had terminated. The purpose of this was to alleviate the suffering of women whose husbands had left them or were absent and to give male and female Jordanians an equal right to grant their nationality to their children.

85. The Government seeks to simplify life for the children of Jordanian women married to foreigners by facilitating their residency, exempting them from fines and safeguarding their right to work and to education. A decree issued by the Council of Ministers grants certain privileges to children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians whereby they are treated on a par with Jordanians as regards education, health care, work, property, investments and obtaining a driving licence. Under the 2013 Passports Act, the Council of Ministers may, acting on a proposal from the Minister of the Interior and for justifiable humanitarian reasons, issue an ordinary passport to the child of a Jordanian woman married to a non-Jordanian, for a predetermined period and subject to renewal.

86. With regard to withdrawal of nationality from Palestinian children, a decree was issued in 2013 not to withdraw their nationality. Cases that can be reconciled with the law are referred to the Council of Ministers, and the very few cases where the norms are applied – when the individuals concerned have Palestinian documents – can be appealed before the Supreme Administrative Court.

8. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 37 (a) and 39)

8.1 Corporal punishment

87. Article 62 of the Criminal Code (Act No. 16 of 1960) states:

1. No act permissible by law is a crime;
2. The law permits:
 - (a) Discipline of various kinds imposed by parents on their children, which must not however cause suffering or harm (physical or mental), as permissible under general customs;
 - (b) Acts of violence that occur during sports, if consistent with the rules of play;
 - (c) Surgical operations and medical treatment if conducted correctly and with the consent of the patient, the patient's parent or legal representative, or in cases of urgent need.

Article 62 (a) was amended under Act No. 27 of 2017. The original text had been repealed and replaced with the current text under Act No. 8 of 2011. The subparagraph originally read as follows:

(a) Disciplinary beatings imposed on children by their parents in the manner permissible by general customs.

In other words, a condition not to cause suffering or harm (physical or mental) has to be met in order to make the disciplining of children by their parent justifiable, in addition to the requirement that the discipline has to be permissible under general customs.

88. A clear and unambiguous text has been included in the children's rights bill, which reads:

44 (c): The status of parent or person entrusted with the care of a child does not constitute an excuse to commit any of the acts under subparagraphs (a) and (b), which read as follows: (a) Subjecting a child to violence, ill-treatment or exploitation; (b) Subjecting the child, in any way, to sale, prostitution, exploitation in pornography or any other form of sexual abuse.

89. The bill defines neglect as abandonment of a minor on the part of the parent or the person entrusted with the child's care, without valid reason, or leaving the child without the necessary accompaniment. The bill considers such situations tantamount to threats to the physical and mental health and integrity of children.

90. With regard to educational institutions, article 68 of the Civil Service Regulations, as amended by Regulation No. 42 of 2017, prohibits officials from undertaking any of the following actions, under pain of disciplinary liability:

(f) Inflicting corporal punishment or harm in any form, on children in institutions, be they educational, rehabilitative or training institutions, or in care and protection homes.

91. According to article 141 of the Civil Service Regulations, officials are liable to disciplinary penalties if they violate or abuse their responsibilities or powers, if they misuse professional ethics or obstruct professional conduct, or if they neglect to carry out their duties. Under article 148, if the actions on the part of the official involve a criminal offence, then the disciplinary proceedings are suspended and the individual concerned along with the record of the investigation, are referred to the competent public prosecutor or court. Moreover, under article 42 (b) (4), the official concerned may not return to the same duties.

92. The Domestic Violence Act envisages dispute-settlement procedures in cases involving minor misdemeanours, where such measures could prevent families from breaking

up and enable their situation to be monitored. The courts in Jordan rule on compensation for wives or children who have suffered abuse at the hands of husbands, the cases having been referred by legal aid centres such as the Mizan Centre. This is a national remedy that can be used to apply pressure to abusive fathers to cease such behaviour. In this way settlement procedures are intended to ensure the continuity of family life.

93. Corporal punishment is prohibited under national legislation, specifically in welfare regulations and in the instructions for licensing shelters, instructions for family integration and instructions for licensing kindergartens.

94. A number of programmes have been rolled out including research into the situation of children in order to formulate plans to alter their behaviours and reintegrate them. Steps have also been taken to hold staff legally accountable if they beat children and to withdraw children in cases of abuse.

95. Accreditation and quality control standards for the services provided in cases of violence were introduced in 2014 and approved by the Council of Ministers. They aim to improve the quality of the services available in such cases and to institutionalize professional practices. In addition, accreditation and quality control standards for shelters were introduced in the period 2015–2016.

96. The unified national operating procedures for the prevention of and response to violence in Jordan were launched on 29 April 2019. They act as a detailed reference document identifying the practical requirements of a case management methodology at the institutional and national level. They favour a participatory approach that brings together all relevant institutions to address and respond comprehensively to gender-based violence, domestic violence and child protection and to identify in detail the roles and responsibilities of all bodies involved in the protection system, each in its own sector. The new procedures have two parts: policies and guidelines for the prevention of and response to violence in Jordan and procedures for dealing with cases of domestic violence.

8.2 Abuse and neglect

97. Action has been taken with regard to the effective enforcement of laws prohibiting corporal punishment and the systematic institution of legal proceedings against persons who inflict corporal punishment. For example, under article 16 (a) (2) of the Regulation regarding kindergartens, the Ministry of Social Development runs training courses for childcare workers, while article 17 of the Regulation prohibits the use of corporal punishment against children just as it forbids the use of force to make a child do something or the infliction of any form of mental abuse or ill-treatment upon a child. According to the instructions for licensing kindergartens (public, private and charity-run) – issued pursuant to article 20 of Regulation No. 52 of 2005 regarding kindergartens – such acts can lead to suspension, closure and prosecution.

98. The National Council for Family Affairs is rolling out a project to set up kindergartens. To that end, it is conducting a study into the legal and technical conditions for opening kindergartens in private- and public-sector establishments and for training staff, in enactment of article 72 of the Labour Code. Work on the project will be completed by September 2020, the aim being to have trained 700 young women and opened 80 kindergartens by then. During the current year, the plan is to open 40 kindergartens and to train 400 young women, appointing 200 of them to the kindergartens that will open during the course of the year.

99. The Domestic Violence Act identifies cases that amount to abuse and explains how to report them, and it criminalizes domestic violence in all its forms. Offences that fall outside the scope of the Act are dealt with under the Criminal Code, which was amended during the course of 2017 with the repeal of article 308 and the restriction of the mitigating circumstances envisaged under article 99. In fact, crimes against the person are considered to be more serious under the law than other offences.

100. The Public Security Directorate runs a system for receiving reports, information and complaints whereby all its departments are linked by a toll-free number, 911. The reports are received in a main operations room whence the competent division, depending on

geographical jurisdiction, is alerted in order to address the reported situation. Sometimes, a division with a specific typological jurisdiction receives reports directly or referred via security centres. Cases of domestic violence reported via the number to the Family Protection Department are inputted directly to the system of procedures for dealing with cases of domestic violence so that the competent institutions can intervene comprehensively; i.e., providers of health, social, educational, care, psychological and legal services.

101. The following reporting-related measures have been introduced with a view to strengthening the protection system:

(a) In accordance with the Domestic Violence Act, all providers of health, social and educational services are under an obligation to report, under pain of legal liability;

(b) Local communities and community groups are encouraged to report cases of violence, and the law guarantees confidentiality of the personal data of the reporting party;

(c) New reporting channels have been opened thanks to toll-free emergency numbers, emails and the websites of public security agencies;

(d) Daily lectures are held and courses are run by the “friends of the police” with the aim of raising awareness about the need to report any and all cases of violence against children;

(e) Efforts are made to raise awareness via the websites of public security bodies involved with the protection of families and children;

(f) Conferences, workshops and awareness-raising campaigns are held to encourage people to report any case of domestic violence or violence against children.

102. Articles 33 and 34 of the Juveniles Act identify the cases in which juveniles are considered to be in need of protection and care, while article 37 defines the role of the courts in cases where juvenile protection is necessary.

103. The Ministry of Health runs 32 centres, located inside hospitals, for the identification of cases of domestic violence. In addition, there are 122 other centres located inside health-care centres in all parts of the country. In 2018, the Ministry’s domestic violence centres received a number of cases involving violence against children, as detailed in the table below.

<i>Type of violence</i>	<i>0 to 12 years old</i>		<i>12 to 18 years old</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Physical violence	347	321	208	500
Sexual violence	29	20	11	52
Neglect	45	37	4	10
Psychological violence	20	24	10	45
Total	441	402	233	607

104. In cooperation with the Jordan River Foundation, the Ministry of Social Development has drafted a guide on operating procedures for the social service centres belonging to the Family Protection Department.

105. The Regulation regarding shelters for women at risk details the functions of such shelters, as follows:

(a) To provide protection and temporary accommodation for beneficiaries until such time as the problem they are experiencing is resolved or the danger they are facing is eliminated;

(b) To provide beneficiaries with social care as well as psychological, health, counselling, cultural and legal services;

(c) To establish a database of beneficiaries. This is to help shelters achieve their objectives, which consist in:

(a) Receiving and sheltering women at risk and providing them with adequate food, clothing and support services; running programmes focusing on training, rehabilitation, physical and psychological recovery, health awareness, counselling and legal assistance; and seeking to resolve the women's problems in accordance with human rights principles.

106. The Amina guest and rehabilitation hostel for women was opened in the last quarter of 2018. The New Hope centre is a specialized institution that provides services to 55 children with disabilities while 3 other children with disabilities are cared for in the Jerash care and rehabilitation centre and a further 6 in the Kerak care and rehabilitation centre. This makes a total of 64 children with disabilities who are being cared for in homes. It should be noted that, with the issuance of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017, action is being taken to suspend the establishment of homes for persons with disabilities.

8.3 Sexual exploitation and abuse

107. Act No. 27 of 2017 amending the Criminal Code includes a number of new provisions intended to ensure that offenders cannot escape punishment by marrying their victim. In that regard, article 308 of the Code has been repealed and article 98 has been amended so that the author of an offence cannot benefit from the mitigating circumstance of "defending honour". Moreover, offenders do not get a more lenient sentence if a family member decides to forfeit their personal rights. If the courts do decide to take mitigating grounds into account, under article 99, they are not required to apply the minimum penalty. Sexual harassment of all forms is punishable under article 306. Moreover, penalties have been increased with a view to discouraging offences against children or persons with disabilities, be they male or female. Penalties have also been increased for offences that fall within the definition of sexual harassment, which is the offence of inappropriate advances or indecent acts, and the scope of application has been broadened to include child victims by raising the age from 15 to anyone, boy or girl, who has not reached the age of 18.

108. Inspectors from the Ministry of Labour's inspection department, which includes the anti-child labour division and the anti-human trafficking division have participated in training courses and workshops to help improve their professional performance. The courses and workshops covered international refugee law, communication skills, dealing with others and anti-human trafficking laws. In addition, Jordan has ratified international treaties to protect children from economic exploitation and to reduce child labour.

109. A field survey was conducted in 2016 – in collaboration with the Department of Statistics and the Centre for Strategic Studies and with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) – to measure the extent of the phenomenon of child labour and investigate its causes. The survey found that the total number of working children between the ages of 5 and 17 stood at 75,982, of whom 60,787 were Jordanians, 11,098 Syrians and 4,096 from other Arab countries.

110. A number of measures have been taken to protect children from economic exploitation, including intensifying periodic inspections, running specialized campaigns in sectors where child labour exists and taking legal action.

111. The Jordanian National Commission for Women is working to implement the Sustainable Development Goals as part of the National Strategy for Women 2020–2025, with a particular focus on target 5.2 on eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual exploitation, and target 5.3 on eliminating all harmful practices, such as child marriage. It is also concentrating on the issue of girls in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through awareness-raising, advocacy and garnering support to amend legislation to repeal the exceptions that admit the possibility of child marriage.

112. Persons of both sexes, in particular those under the age of 18, are protected under the 2015 Cybercrime Act, which penalizes the deliberate transmission or publication, via digital systems or the Internet, of any audio, written or visual material that includes pornographic acts or sexual exploitation. The Act likewise criminalizes the use of digital systems or the

Internet to create, draft, store, process, display, print, publish or promote pornographic activities for the purpose of influencing persons under the age of 18 or persons with disabilities, of directing or instigating them to commit a crime or of exploiting them in prostitution or pornography. In addition, the Act envisages penalties for vilification or denigration against any person of either sex. A special department for combating online child sexual exploitation has been set up in the Family Protection Department and began its operations in 2017.

113. The National Council for Family Affairs has a number of technical counselling centres where family guidance is available free of charge; 11 such centres were set up in governorates across the country in the course of 2017. They provide advice and awareness-raising services on family-related matters as well as telephone counselling, marital and pre-marital advice, family reconciliation services, social support and community training. The beneficiaries of the centres include families in general, marriage candidates, families at risk of break-up or violence and families of persons with disabilities or persons with addiction issues as well as children, adolescents and older persons.

114. Statistics regarding the number of cases involving children, dealt with by the Family Protection Department between 2013 and 2018 are given in the table below.

Year	Type of violence	No. of cases involving children	No. of child victims		Total No. of child victims
			Male	Female	
2013	Sexual assault	695	283	457	740
	Physical assault	132	77	65	142
2014	Sexual assault	599	221	379	600
	Physical assault	109	47	68	115
2015	Sexual assault	650	236	468	704
	Physical assault	174	82	117	199
2016	Sexual assault	741	281	474	755
	Physical assault	238	94	162	256
2017	Sexual assault	846	369	696	1 065
	Physical assault	167	101	119	220
2018	Sexual assault	1 027	429	665	1 094
	Physical assault	252	147	178	325
Total		5 630	2 367	3 848	6 215

115. The Jordanian national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was approved in December 2017. The third strategic goal of the plan is to work to provide responsive and gender-sensitive humanitarian services.

8.4 Harmful practices

116. With regard to the active measures taken to put an end to the practice of early and forced marriage, the Personal Status Act stipulates that marriage contracts are not valid if any influence, coercion or force has been brought to bear such as to undermine or affect the will of the parties involved. The courts cannot validate a marriage contract under such circumstances. Moreover, Jordanian law does not admit, under any circumstances or for any reason, the marriage of girls under the age of 16. As a general rule, marriage is allowed once the age of majority has been attained, although it can take place in exceptional circumstances that require a body of measures and agreements, as per the guidelines in that regard.

117. In 2017, new guidelines were issued regarding the marriage of persons under the age of 18, the purpose being to restrict the discretionary powers of judges, to lay down more precise standards and to ensure that consent to such marriages is reviewed at several stages and levels. These include the courts of first instance, a case examination by social workers

and scrutiny of the measures by a panel of three judges and by a centralized department on matters involving minors in the Department of the Chief Qadi. The Sharia Judicial Institute is running human rights training programmes and a human rights directorate was set up in the Department of the Chief Qadi in 2015.

118. The Higher Population Council, which is part of the Ministry of Planning, conducted a study on the situation of early marriage, its causes and ways to curb it in the short, medium and long term. The results of the study were approved by the Government and led to the formation of a national committee bringing together all stakeholders to examine the causes of the phenomenon and ways to address it. The committee has developed a template and a national plan of action identifying roles, responsibilities and time frames, and the Government is currently studying and reviewing that template prior to taking a decision.

Data regarding the marriage of persons under 18 disaggregated by gender and population numbers for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018

<i>Age group</i>	<i>15–16</i>		<i>16–17</i>		<i>17–18</i>		<i>Total</i>	
<i>2016</i>								
<i>Sex</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>
Marriages	2 859	2	3 417	93	4 631	239	10 907	334
Population in that age group	88 648	95 704	90 176	96 938	91 024	102 590	269 848	295 232
Percentage of marriages for age group	3.2%	0.0%	3.8%	0.1%	5.1%	0.2%	4.0%	0.1%
<i>2017</i>								
<i>Sex</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>
Marriages	2 655	0	3 096	79	4 683	220	10 434	299
Population in that age group	90 955	98 195	92 524	99 460	93 394	105 259	276 873	302 914
Percentage of marriages for age group	2.9%	0.0%	3.3%	0.1%	5.0%	0.2%	3.8%	0.1%
<i>2018</i>								
<i>Sex</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>
Marriages	1 968	2	2 504	75	3 754	207	8 226	284
Population in that age group	93 282	100 685	94 890	101 983	95 783	107 929	283 955	310 597
Percentage of marriages for age group	2.1%	0.0%	2.6%	0.1%	3.9%	0.2%	2.9%	0.1%

9. Access to justice and remedies

119. With regard to children's access to justice and effective redress, article 3 the Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 9 of 1961) as amended in 2017 reads:

(b) If the victim of a crime is under the age of 15 or has a mental impairment, the complaint is filed by the party who has custody over the victim. If the offence involved is an offence against property, the complaint is submitted by the guardian or curator;

(c) If the victim's interests conflict with those of the representative, or if the victim does not have a representative, that role is to be taken by the Office of the Public Prosecution.

120. Article 12 of the Juveniles Act stipulates: "Complaints are to be submitted by the juvenile or by the juvenile's parents, guardian or the person entrusted with care, or by the probation officer or an officer of justice, to the Juvenile Police Department or to the nearest security centre." The provision contained in the Juveniles Act is specific and has priority application; therefore, the complaint can be submitted by the juvenile, without need to be accompanied by a guardian, irrespective of the age of the juvenile, as per the definition of juvenile in article 2 of the Act.

121. An analysis of the text shows that persons aged 15 and over may submit complaints directly while, for persons aged under 15, complaints are to be submitted by a guardian, as stated in the law. If the juvenile's interests conflict with those of the representative, then the Office of the Public Prosecution undertakes to submit the complaint on behalf of the child. The underlying principle is that the guardian takes legal action on behalf of the minor or ward and, in exceptional circumstances, certain pieces of legislation, such as the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Code of Sharia Procedure, allow cases and complaints to be brought by children, if they are aged 15 or over. If there is a conflict of interests between the interests of the child and those of a child's legal representative, the child is represented by the Office of the Public Prosecution or is appointed a temporary guardian. Likewise, article 43 of the Code of Sharia Procedure allows persons aged 15 or over to take legal action for themselves, with permission from the courts, if there is a justification for so doing.

122. In 2018, the National Council for Family Affairs held three training workshops at the regional level on the use of modern technology to hear witness testimony. Participants included delegates from the Jordanian Judicial Council, the Ministry of Justice and the Public Security Directorate (Family Protection Department). The purpose of the initiative was to launch the use of closed-circuit television technology both in the Family Protection Department and in courts throughout the country. This is to take place by supplying courts with the necessary equipment and systems, providing maintenance and training officials, technicians and judges on how to use the technology. The training – which has been imparted to 25 representatives from the aforementioned institutions in each region (service providers) – covers the legal and psychological aspects associated with hearing from victims of sexual offences and how to avoid confronting a victim with an offender while upholding the sacrosanct right to defence.

123. With the aim of promoting restorative justice, the National Council for Family Affairs collaborated with UNICEF on pilot projects between 2015 and 2017, focusing on its own procedures with a view to ensuring that delinquent juveniles did not reoffend. An analytical study on juvenile justice was carried out in 2018 and a national committee was set up to draft a bill for the amendment of the Juvenile Act. A steering committee on juvenile justice has also been launched, which works under the auspices of the National Council for Family Affairs. It represents all bodies concerned with matters affecting juveniles and seeks to support and guide the activities of other committees and to ensure the smooth running of projects.

124. In enactment of article 33 of the Juveniles Act, a public service procedural guide was drafted in 2018, in collaboration with probation officers, judges and partner institutions.

125. The rate of settlement – where a child avoids legal proceedings – in cases involving juveniles or children went from 38 per cent in 2017 to 60.8 per cent in 2018, which redounds to the interests of children.

126. The Government issued a new regulation in 2015 to restructure fees in sharia courts. Under the regulation, a number of provisions relating to legacies for orphans have been exempted from fees. In all, 26,500 children had benefited from the amendments as of the end of 2018 and the total amounts exempted were in excess of 1 million Jordanian dinars (JD). In addition the family reconciliation and mediation offices, provide their services to families free of charge.

127. Legal assistance is provided to juveniles. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 9 of 1961) has been amended to include mandatory legal assistance for all offences that attract penalties of 10 years' imprisonment or more and non-mandatory legal assistance for offences that attract lesser penalties. Following that amendment, a legal aid directorate was set up inside the Ministry of Justice and Regulation No. 119 of 2018 regarding legal aid was issued. One of the groups to benefit from the amendment are juveniles who are identified as a priority category under article 4 of the Regulation.

128. One of the aspects covered in a memorandum of understanding signed between the Ministry of Social Development and the Justice Centre for Legal Aid is the provision of legal assistance to juveniles, who are referred to the Centre's own legal aid services. Under the memorandum of understanding, the Ministry referred 246 requests for legal assistance to the Justice Centre during the course of 2017; legal representation was provided in 128 cases and

legal advice in a further 42. In 2018, 285 cases were referred. Under the Juveniles Act, a lawyer is required to be present with the juvenile at all stages of the investigation and trial.

10. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18 (1) and (2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))

10.1 Family environment

129. The Committee recommended action to ensure that mothers and fathers share equally the responsibility for their children and that laws do not discriminate against the girl child. The Personal Status Act has been reviewed and revised to remove all provisions that discriminate against women and girls, and numerous amendments to the Act have been made and approved.

Inheritance

130. The calculation of inheritance among heirs does not depend upon being male or female; rather, it takes account of a number of considerations including the connection between the norms governing inheritance and the norms governing maintenance and upkeep. It also takes account of the succession of the generations; in fact, the upcoming generation that must bear the burdens of life generally receives a greater share of the inheritance than the declining generation. For example, the daughter of a deceased man inherits more than the deceased's mother – although both are female – and more than the deceased's father. The son likewise inherits more than the deceased's father. Sharia also takes account of the degree and strength of kinship and thus there are cases where the male inherits more than the female, cases where they inherit the same amount and cases where the female inherits more than the male. In order to uphold these rules, an amendment was introduced into article 310 of the Personal Status Act, which defines the mechanism for the distribution of inheritance among uterine relatives whereby males and females have an equal portion. The jurisprudence underpinning this takes the agreed principle of equality of share among a mother's siblings of either sex and applies it as a principle governing inheritance among uterine relatives. A daughter's offspring – who are considered by law to be uterine relatives – can also inherit, as set forth in article 301 of the Personal Status Act. Section V of the chapter in the Act that deals with inheritance explains how the inheritance takes place and the 2019 amendment to article 310 states that the daughter's offspring, if they inherit, do so equally be they male or female.

Custody and visitation

131. Legislators have repealed article 172 (b) of the Personal Status Act regarding custody of children by non-Muslim women. Moreover, the amendment has expanded the scope of the Act by giving children the right to lodge with a non-custodial parent. This provision is contained in article 181 ff., which regulates visitation and access rights.

132. Article 178 of the Act has also been amended so that a woman with custody of a child is entitled to a custody allowance until the child reaches the age of 15, rather than the age of 12. It should be noted that the custody allowance is distinct from child maintenance, which continues until the child attains majority and, if the child so wishes, goes on to university.

Responsibility for custody

133. Responsibilities for custody are divided equally between the custodial parent and the other party. In most cases, the child is cared for and resides with the mother while the father has the right to visit and provide lodging for the child. Other issues related to the care and supervision of the infant are, in general, shared equally between the father and the mother. This is confirmed in article 184 of the Act, which states that the custodial and non-custodial parents share the care and guidance.

Descendance

134. Article 157 of the Act, which focuses on establishing the descendance of the child, has been amended to accommodate genetic testing as a way of establishing descendance. The amendment gives courts the authority to establish descendance, an authority that is not restricted by the existence of a valid marriage contract. The Personal Status Act does not use the term child born of adultery, illegitimate child or any other term with negative connotations.

Maintenance

135. Neither the law nor its application by the courts distinguish between children on the basis of sex (male or female) in their entitlement to maintenance and the amount of that maintenance. The courts rule on maintenance on the basis of a child's need and age. Under the law, children of both sexes have an equal entitlement to maintenance for their education from kindergarten to the completion of secondary education and, for those who wish to continue their studies, until they have obtained a bachelor's degree from university. The law also makes provision for girls for whom, in all cases, it decrees maintenance until completion of their university studies; that maintenance then continues until the individual concerned has sufficient money from her job or until she has a husband who is legally obliged to maintain her.

Awareness-raising

136. The Department of the Chief Qadi has organized a programme for prospective marriage candidates, and a number of courses have been run in Mafraq and Zaatari. The programme – which will be rolled out more generally under an expansion plan – was developed by experts in sharia and statutory law, education, psychology and health care. The second stage of the initiative will begin at the start of September this year.

Polygamy

137. Polygamy is admitted under Islamic sharia. The relevant rules have been set forth in law and approved by jurisprudence which, in any case, considers polygamy to be an exception and monogamy the norm. Statistics show that polygamous marriages in Jordan account for no more than 7 per cent of all marriages each year. This includes all forms of polygamy; i.e., true polygamy and virtual polygamy, the latter being when two spouses have quarrelled and separated and the second marriage takes place before the divorce. Marriage guidelines categorically forbid polygamy involving wives under the age of 18.

10.2 Children deprived of a family environment

138. As concerns the active measures taken to accelerate the transition from institutionalization to family-based care for children, an integration project for family-based care was developed and a specialized administrative department has been set up with staff who have been assigned titles, roles and functions. A number of agreements have been signed to serve the goal of the programme, and the number of children placed with foster families has increased, currently standing at 1,182. In addition, 250 children have been included in the family integration project, despite the fact that it has been running only for a short time. Children have been admitted to the alternative care programme and agreements have been signed as part of that programme. The Ministry of Social Development carries out periodic case reviews on children in care homes with a view to reintegrating them into their own families or an alternative family. A special budget has been allocated to the alternative care programme. The Ministry also looks after orphans with fostering programmes, alternative care arrangements and financial guarantees, in partnership with banks and in accordance with the tenets of sharia.

139. Under the Persons with Disabilities Act, the authorization for shelters has been revoked and they have been turned into inclusive day-care centres. A programme for the family integration of children with disabilities is to be rolled out under which institutionalized community care is provided, aimed at offering the chance to live in a family-style

environment for children with disabilities who are in need of care and protection and at promoting their psychological, social, health and educational well-being.

140. An early intervention programme is to be rolled out for children who are experiencing developmental delays. Caregivers from the family are trained in special and early education programmes that aim to stimulate the child to progress in different developmental skills and to reduce, to the extent possible, the gap between them and their peers. Efforts are also being made to bolster the social protection system for children with disabilities.

141. In order to allocate human and technical resources to alternative care centres, the Ministry of Social Development has signed agreements to purchase staffing services. Five such agreements have been signed to acquire the services of 75 workers. In addition services have been purchased from six associations, which serve around 135 children. The numbers and specializations of potential staff, as well as the criteria for appointing them to work in children's care homes, are kept on file at the human resources directorate.

142. Under the basic instructions for the payment of the alternative allowance, the Ministry of Social Development runs child/mother reintegration programmes and disburses alternative care allowances. This takes place under the alternative care programme, even if the child was born outside wedlock. Risk factors are assessed and care is provided to mother and child under the Juveniles Act and the National Framework for the Protection of Families from Violence.

143. Specialized administrative units, which have been set up inside the Ministry of Social Development, implement family welfare programmes within the framework of current legislation, taking a participatory approach towards the official and voluntary bodies concerned. The units also work to provide and allocate budgets, to train and qualify staff and to develop procedural and training manuals. The Ministry is working to set up a specialized administrative unit for alternative care.

144. A department within the Ministry undertakes a constant and effective assessment of programmes and procedures, and participates in the development of legislation and instructions. The department follows a case management methodology that is respectful of the best interests of the child whereby it periodically follows up on children who have been placed with alternative families, undertakes social studies, interacts with the authorities and submits a periodic report to the juvenile courts. It also examines a child's situation with the alternative family before the juvenile courts rule to extend an alternative care ruling. Moreover, the department seeks to build a working relationship with the families; a telephone line is available to report on cases and an urgent response plan is in place. A mobile app is being developed to link the Ministry to the families providing alternative care.

11. Disability, basic health and social welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (1–3) and 33)

11.1 Children with disabilities

145. Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 was published in the Official Gazette No. 5464 on 1 June 2017.

146. Article 2 of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 includes a body of definitions that reflect the social model of disability, including: discrimination on the basis of disability, free and informed consent, reasonable accommodation, accessible formats, accessibility and inclusive design. Moreover, article 3 of the Act focuses entirely on defining persons with disabilities and that definition then serves to underpin the provisions in the rest of the Act. The definition is consistent with that contained in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Act as a whole is in line with the obligations and general principles of the Convention as well as with the core principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

147. Children with disabilities are able to obtain diagnoses, free health insurance and inclusive education, and they are exempted from fees for obtaining a work permit for a non-

Jordanian worker. In addition, they are exempted from paying customs duty on disability mobility vehicles, and they have the right to training and habilitation. In sum, the rights of children with disabilities are safeguarded, their capacities and skills are developed and their integration into society is promoted.

148. Regulation No. 10 of 2018, concerning early intervention was issued together with instructions on how to conduct such interventions. An agreement was signed with the King Hussein Foundation to implement, with funding from UNICEF, an early intervention programme for 150 children. Moreover, a habilitation and training programme for children with disabilities has been run at 18 educational day centres throughout the countries, benefiting 710 children of both sexes with intellectual disabilities. For its part, the Ministry of Development has set up three units providing early intervention at three government centres. Under the Regulation on early intervention and its associated instructions, licences are due to be issued to early intervention centres in the private sector.

149. With respect to concerns about the limited data available regarding children with disabilities, the population and housing census conducted by the Department of Statistics in 2015 yielded information about the number and geographical distribution of persons with disabilities as well as about types and degrees of disability. This led, for the first time in the history of Jordan, to the production of official data pointing to a disability ratio of 11.2 per cent for persons aged 5 years or older. In other words, when the Department of Statistics completes its census of children with disabilities under 5 years of age, disability rates may reach the level of global estimates recorded in reports of the World Health Organization and the World Bank. This change in the approach to disability in Jordan follows a lengthy period during which the declared estimates of disability never exceeded 2 per cent of the total population. According to statistics from the Ministry of Education for the academic year 2018/19, a total of 1,396,868 students were enrolled in State-run schools while the number of students with disabilities of various kinds to whom the Ministry was providing its services stood at 21,859. In addition, statistics from the Ministry of Social Development for 2018 indicate that 5,835 students with disabilities benefited from services provided by centres and institutions run by the Ministry and the private sector. This means that a total of 27,694 students with disabilities were receiving services. According to studies and estimates conducted at the global and local level, students with disabilities should account for around 10 per cent of the entire student body. However, the statistics show that the proportion of students with disabilities who actually receive services is, in fact, 19.8 per cent; in other words, more than 80 per cent of students with disabilities are not provided with any kind of educational services or programmes.

150. Concerns were also expressed about children with disabilities being placed in special classes where the promotion of inclusion is limited and about the limited measures taken to develop inclusive education. In that connection, article 17 (a) of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 says that “it is forbidden to exclude anyone from an educational institution on grounds of disability”, while article 18 (b) enjoins the acceptance and integration of children with disabilities into educational institutions. Under article 18 (e) of the Act, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, in coordination with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to develop a national plan for the integration of persons with disabilities into educational institutions. That plan must be rolled out within no more than 1 year of the Act coming into force and must be complete within no more than 10 years. In enactment of the foregoing, the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Ministry of Education have signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a 10-year plan to make State-run schools inclusive of students with disabilities.

151. Article 27 (b) of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 stipulates a general and fundamental principle according to which persons with disabilities may not be placed in a day-care or residential institution without their free and informed consent. Article 27 (c) states that the Ministry of Education, in coordination with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons, is to develop a comprehensive national plan aimed at finding interim and permanent solutions and alternatives to State-run and private institutions, and at turning non-State shelters for persons with disabilities into inclusive day-care centres. The plan must be rolled out within no more than 1 year of the Act coming into force and must be complete within no more than 10 years.

152. The Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017 defines as violence any act or omission that deprives a person with a disability of any of their rights or freedoms or restricts their exercise thereof, that prejudices their physical integrity or that causes mental or psychological damage, on the basis or by reason of their disability. The Act also states that the rights of such persons must be upheld in laws, policies, plans and institutional programmes and envisages the allocation of budgetary resources.

153. In response to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Regulation on early intervention centres for children with disabilities was issued in 2017. Its purpose is to integrate such children into their families and local communities, to evaluate and meet their needs with specific programmes and services, and to provide parents and other caregivers with the information and skills necessary to address their children's disabilities. It also seeks to reduce occupancy of shelters, to relieve the financial burdens of caring for such children, to bring down disability rates and to close the gap between the mental age and the actual age of children with disabilities.

154. The Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has taken measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of girls with disabilities. To that end, it has organized a national campaign across all the country's regions to outlaw and criminalize hysterectomies on girls with mental disabilities. The campaign, which was directed at 455 families with girls with mental disabilities, addressed the topic in its legal, health and religious implications. On 9 January 2014, the General Fatwa Department issued Decree No. 194 (2/2014) prohibiting hysterectomies on girls with disabilities and stipulating the responsibility of society towards such girls.

155. A concern was expressed that the vast majority of children with disabilities and children with learning difficulties do not benefit from adequate support. In that connection, article 19 of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 states that the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is to coordinate with the Ministry of Education to undertake educational assessments, develop curricula and formulate teaching methods for students with disabilities in educational institutions, and train staff in their use. Article 20 of the Act sets forth the conditions governing the training required to obtain a diploma in educational assessment and in teaching persons with disabilities using special educational methods. The article further states that the conditions of individuals who operate in the field of educational assessment and special education are to be regularized within no more than two years after the entry into force of the Act. In view of the importance of training persons who assess and educate persons with disabilities – who are the specialists who support students with disabilities and promote their integration into schools – the 10-year integration plan envisaged in the Act has a particular focus on human resources and capacity-building. The aim is to train teachers and support staff specialized in areas such as speech, language, occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

156. This focus also includes the provision of qualified teachers to carry out integrated education. In this context, university teacher training programmes have been reviewed and teachers have been trained in integrated education. The role of auxiliary teacher has been created as well as a number of specialized support posts. In addition, training has been provided to specialists who undertake psychological and educational assessments.

157. The Ministry of Education has developed a 5-year strategy to provide integrated education to children with disabilities and to implement the Persons with Disabilities Act. The strategy, which has arisen from the 10-year plan, involves the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and one of its chief areas of focus is to equip schools to take in students with disabilities.

158. The Ministry of Education has cooperated and coordinated with UNICEF to provide integrated educational services in 84 schools, 64 of them in host communities and 17 in refugee camps across the country. In addition, work is under way at the regional level to fit out five model schools.

159. In line with its own budget allocation, the Ministry of Education employs staff in schools according to needs and specializations (i.e., the school configuration). In cooperation with the Ministry's strategic partners, such as the Mercy Corps, training has been provided to groups of professionals to help ensure that persons with disabilities are able effectively to

exercise their right to quality education. It should be noted, however, that training entails financial costs that the Ministry is not always able to meet. Five workshops have been held with Korean trainers on how to deal with students with hearing disabilities and a course on integrated education has been held in cooperation with UNICEF.

160. In order to ensure the right of children with disabilities to inclusion in leisure and cultural activities, an agreement has been concluded between the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Children's Museum under which the two bodies cooperate in raising awareness about disability rights. Under the agreement, the Museum has opened its doors to children with disabilities, their families and their associations in order to promote a culture of acceptance and respect for difference and diversity among visitors and, subsequently, to familiarize them with the Convention. Every year in December, the Children's Museum admits children with disabilities and their representative associations free of charge to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Jordan has ratified the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, which was published in the Official Gazette No. 5503 on 1 March 2018. In addition, the Council of Ministers issued its Decree No. 1305 on 1 October 2018 in which it accredited the following bodies to implement the provisions of the Marrakesh Treaty: the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the National Library and the Friends of the Blind Association. The Ministry of Social Development, with the participation of children with disabilities, celebrates religious and national holidays, the Week of Children with Disabilities and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Furthermore, children with disabilities enrolled in centres run by the Ministry also participate in leisure outings to tourist and archaeological sites, in academic and social skills programmes and in sporting activities.

161. In order to contrast the stigmatization of and prejudice against children with disabilities, the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – in line with its functions under the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 – has held a series of workshops about the Act. The courses, which were directed at official and unofficial bodies in the different regions, aimed to elucidate the Act, to define the roles and responsibilities of different entities in its implementation, to illustrate the etiquette of dealing with persons with disabilities and to explain accessibility, reasonable accommodation and accessible formats. The goal was to present a positive view of adults and children with disabilities. In the course of 2018, 53 awareness-raising programmes were held, attended by 1,129 participants, 524 male and 605 female, all of whom work for official or unofficial bodies. The Higher Council strongly believes in the importance of the media and social media as a way of drawing the awareness of society to the rights of persons with disabilities, including children, and of throwing light on the challenges they face and achievements they have made in integrating into society. For that reason the Council has developed, drafted and published content via social media including posters, infographics, films and news coverage. This content reflects a strategy with a human rights-based approach. In addition to this, dialogue sessions on the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 have been held in the country's three regions. The sessions were attended by 230 participants who split into groups to come up with recommendations on topics connected to the rights of children with disabilities, including: health, education, independent living, alternatives to institutionalization, accessibility, diagnoses and violence.

162. With regard to the recommendation to consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the ratification of that instrument is being examined as part of the agenda of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 14 of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 already includes provision for national redress mechanisms in the form of an equal opportunities commission. Moreover, article 48 of the Act envisages imprisonment and/or a fine for anyone committing any of the acts of violence listed in article 30 (a) of the Act, and the penalty is to be redoubled in the case of repeat offences. For its part, article 48 (b) envisages a fine of between JD 3,000 and JD 5,000 for anyone who violates article 25 (e) of the Act and refuses to employ a person on grounds of disability. These mechanisms must be used before having recourse to the mechanisms envisaged in the Optional Protocol.

163. Before ratification of the Optional Protocol, the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is coordinating with the competent bodies to roll out new redress mechanisms, such as the equal opportunities commission envisaged under article 14 of the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017. This, in fact, is one of the basic requirements for the enforcement of that Act.

11.2 Health and health services

164. The State is working to the full capacity of its human resources and pursuing every avenue to ensure that children can enjoy the highest attainable level of health and, in that regard, it has acted to reduce child mortality. In fact, according to the results of a population and family health survey conducted in 2017/18, the neonatal mortality rate stood at 11 per 1,000 live births, the infant mortality rate at 17 per 1,000 live births and the mortality rate of children under 5 at 19 per 1,000 live births, in the 5 years prior to the survey. This indicates that around 1 person in 50 in Jordan dies before reaching the age of 5 with most deaths (90 per cent) occurring in the first year of life and 58 per cent in the first month. The study shows that neonatal, infant and child mortality rates in the 5-year periods preceding each population and family health survey conducted between 1990 and 2017/18 have fallen by half from 39 to 19 per 1,000 live births.

165. As a general rule, the Personal Status Act (articles 192 to 194) places an obligation upon the father or breadwinner to pay for a child's treatment in order to protect the latter's interests and right to good health. The authorities can also be obliged to provide treatment for a child, whatever the cost and irrespective of nationality or religion, under an order handed down by the sharia courts.

166. The health care a mother receives during pregnancy and childbirth is vital for the survival and well-being of both her and her infant. With regard to prenatal health care, the population and family health survey of 2017/18 indicates that, of all women aged between 15 and 49 who gave birth to a live infant in the 5 years prior to the survey, 98 per cent received prenatal health care from a specialized health-care provider, with 79 per cent of women undergoing 7 or more prenatal health visits. In addition, 83 per cent of mothers received postnatal health care while 86 per cent of newborns received a medical check-up during the first 2 days after birth.

167. The Government attaches great importance to childhood vaccinations and sees the global vaccination of children against common diseases as a vital way of reducing infant and child mortality.

168. The national vaccination programme provides vaccines for all children irrespective of nationality or sex. In fact, 98 per cent of children on Jordanian territory have been vaccinated, and 99 per cent of schoolchildren. According to statistics produced by the Ministry of Health, since the launch of the programme, just 30 children registered with the Ministry have fallen ill.

169. The Ministry of Health runs awareness-raising programmes as part of which 6,751 lectures were delivered in schools in 2017 and attended by 204,635 students while, in 2018, 5,815 lectures were delivered to 185,097 students. In 2019, lectures are due to be delivered on the following topics: mental health, bullying and school violence, the risks of smoking and drugs, physiological changes, healthy nutrition, food poisoning, personal hygiene and dental health. The Ministry hopes to raise health awareness among 30 per cent of all State and private school students by the end of 2022. The Ministry of Health is giving national accreditation to "healthy schools", with a target of 550 such schools by the end of 2022. At the end of 2013, 300 schools had been accredited and efforts are currently being made to add another 250 schools to the total by adding 50 per year at the bronze level.

170. Ninety-three per cent of children between the ages of 12 and 23 months have been vaccinated against tuberculosis (BCG) and 88 per cent against measles. Coverage of the first dose of the combined diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus vaccine was high, at 93 per cent. Eighty-eight per cent of children who are aged between 12 and 23 months and have Jordanian

mothers have received all their basic vaccinations, as compared with 76 per cent of children with Syrian mothers and 75 per cent of children with mothers of other nationalities.

171. Despite the fact that the prevalence of fever is more or less consistent (13–14 per cent) irrespective of the nationality of the mother, treatment patterns vary. In fact, consultancy or treatment is sought for 62 per cent of children with Syrian mothers as compared to 69 per cent of children with Jordanian mothers and 71 per cent of children of other nationalities. Moreover, the children of Syrian mothers are those who benefit least from antibiotic coverage (36 per cent as opposed to 40–49 per cent).

11.3 Health of adolescents

172. With regard to the recommendation concerning adolescent health and development, the Ministry of Health provides services to women of childbearing age including care during pregnancy and childbirth. The Ministry also provides post-abortion services as well as family planning and counselling, information on gender-based violence, crisis health-care services for women and management for cases of rape. Around 35 per cent of the Ministry's annual budget is spent on children.

173. On 28 April 2019, the Prime Minister announced that the time had come to produce a clear and timetabled plan to provide comprehensive health insurance to uninsured persons in order to reach a health insurance coverage of 100 per cent, in line with the Comprehensive National Human Rights Plan 2016–2025. In addition, health insurance services are made available to Syrian refugees on an equal footing with Jordanians and any fees this entails are purely symbolic.

174. The Ministry of Education is incorporating sex and reproductive health education into the school curriculum. Despite some challenges consisting in certain models that society rejects, particularly vis-à-vis delivery methods, reproductive education has been addressed in a number of different modules. For example:

- Islamic education module: This covers birth control and breastfeeding in Islam as well as the rights and duties of women according to Islam. It is addressed as part of Islamic culture during classes in the twelfth grade;
- Geography module: This covers population growth in the modern age, the negative effects of large population increases and how to control the upwards trend. It also includes definitions of age and gender composition and the reasons for population growth in Jordan. It is covered in the sixth grade;
- In the seventh grade, attention focuses on global population distribution and the characteristics of people in developed and developing countries. Certain demographic indicators are examined such as infant mortality, fertility rates, population composition and its impact on economic makeup, the effects of population increase and the problems of poverty and unemployment. Attention also turns to population policies and international efforts in that regard, and to the demographic window;
- Many population-related topics are addressed in detail in the eleventh grade. The sources of demographic data and population-related theories and policies, including that of the demographic window, are explained and illustrated. Population characteristics are also examined such as population growth factors, population size, migration and age and gender composition and the impact these things have on the strength of the State;
- National and civic education module: This covers a number of sub-themes with a unit on family and society. The unit deals with the Jordanian family and Jordanian society and it defines the concept of the family and its models, characteristics and duties. This takes place during the sixth grade;
- In the seventh grade, the concept of social change and its sub-themes are introduced with their attendant factors, problems and obstacles. The science module includes a unit on development, genetics, factors affecting human development and the characteristics of the various stages of development;

- Genetics and its significance are introduced in the fifth grade;
- Genetic science and the inheritance of human traits are examined in the eighth grade;
- Life sciences module: This module, which is introduced in the ninth grade, covers the organs of the human body including the reproductive system, the different stages of life and the characteristics of each stage;
- Genetic traits and the application of genetic science are considered during the tenth grade;
- Genetic traits and human reproduction are examined in the twelfth grade.

175. The curriculum of the Ministry of Education does address the concept of birth control but it uses the term pregnancy planning, which is incorporated in more than one module depending upon the stage of educational development. The topic is addressed at the sixth grade in the geography module which goes into the negative effects of large population increases and how to control the upwards trend. The seventh grade focuses on certain demographic indicators such as infant mortality, fertility rates, population composition and its impact on economic makeup, the effects of population increase and the problems of poverty and unemployment; attention also turns to population policies and international efforts in that regard, and to the demographic window. These matters are then gone into more deeply in the eleventh grade.

176. Sexually transmitted diseases are studied in the science module during the seventh grade, while genetic maladies, circumcision, infertility, cervical cancer and certain reproductive behaviours are covered in the life sciences module at the ninth grade. Birth control is addressed extensively in the life sciences module at the twelfth grade. In addition, delegates from the Ministry of Health come to teach students in schools run by the Ministry of Education about health care and how to confront violence.

177. Television programmes for children have been produced to raise their awareness about the dangers of smoking, drugs, harassment and sexually transmitted diseases as well as to nurture the children's talents, to address violence and bullying in schools and to change prevailing culture. It is worthwhile to draw attention to the role played by mosques and the Ministry of Education in highlighting the perils of sexual relations between children, and various lectures on that subject have taken place in a number of different locations.

11.4 HIV/AIDS

178. The population and family health survey of 2017/18 collected information, among men and women alike, about knowledge and trends related to HIV/AIDS and other types of sexually transmitted diseases. The survey also served to collect information about the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases among married men. Comprehensive government health insurance is provided to children living with AIDS. According to a study, 88.8 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 19 who are or have been married had heard about AIDS while 82.1 per cent of men aged between 15 and 19 had heard about HIV or AIDS. In addition, 94.5 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 who are or have been married had heard about HIV or AIDS while 89.1 per cent of men aged between 15 and 49 had heard of HIV or AIDS.

179. According to the same study, 42.6 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 19 who are or have been married had knowledge of how to prevent AIDS by using a condom during conjugal relations, while 46.3 per cent of men aged between 15 and 19 had knowledge of how to prevent AIDS by using a condom during sexual relations. The Department of Statistics also found that 51.6 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 who are or have been married had knowledge of how to prevent AIDS by using a condom during conjugal relations, while 54.1 per cent of men aged between 15 and 19 had knowledge of how to prevent AIDS by using a condom during sexual relations.

180. The Department of Statistics has confirmed that 50 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 who are or have been married knew about the possibility of transmitting AIDS from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding while 40.4 per

cent of women between the ages of 15 and 19 who are or have been married knew about the possibility of transmitting AIDS from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. At the same time, 47.8 per cent of men aged between 15 and 49, and 30.5 per cent of men aged between 15 and 19, knew about the possibility of transmitting AIDS from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding.

11.5 Standard of living

181. With regard to the Committee's recommendation on the issue of child poverty, the Government is providing cash support to poor families and developing a package of measures to support them further, chiefly as regards fuel and food. In order to direct that support to its intended beneficiaries, particularly children in need, the Government has decided that – in cases of separation or divorce where there is a legal dispute between the spouses – the child support is to be given to the mother who is looking after the children. The sharia courts, which provide the financial authorities with information about families and children, are developing a database to record, register and classify cases.

182. The Orphans' Fund Development Corporation was established in 1972 as an official, public and financially and administratively independent institution that serves to conserve orphans' funds and to augment them through investments of different kinds. The courts and other competent bodies deposit orphans' cash assets with the Corporation where they are invested across multiple portfolios. Legislation has been issued to regulate the Corporation, and a new law was enacted in 2002. Orphans can benefit from the services the Corporation offers until they attain their majority, at which point they receive the assets deposited along with any interest. Children can also, according to need, access their money and the interest in order to pay for education, medical treatment or other expenses, by a decision of the court and through their guardians.

183. As of the end of 2018, more than 64,000 orphans were benefiting from the services of the Corporation with total deposits in excess of JD 175 million. The interest accrued in 2017 amounted to 4.3 per cent.

184. As of the end of 2017, the Corporation had a total of 18 branch offices in different parts of the country.

185. The Alimony Loan Fund, which is also administratively and financially independent, was set up in 2015. Its first budget was allocated and its board of directors established in 2016 and, the institutional formalities complete, the Fund began lending to its beneficiaries. The Fund constitutes an effective mechanism for protecting the rights and well-being of children. The lending process began in 2018 with a total disbursement between 1 February 2018 and 30 April 2019 of JD 365,286,000.

186. A total of 749 families have applied to the Fund and, as of April 2019, maintenance payments have been disbursed via the Fund to 490 girls and 447 boys.

187. The Fund, which has an annual budget of around JD 2 million, provides services from its main headquarters in Amman and from four branch offices distributed across the country's three regions. The Fund can also deliver loans via an electronic card – the Support Card – without need for review on the part of the Fund. Liaison officials are to be appointed in all the governorates to liaise between the sharia courts and the Fund.

188. One important achievement has been the issuance of electronic family cards, which enable beneficiaries to receive sums that the sharia courts have decreed they should have, particularly for child maintenance and education costs. Such persons can make withdrawals from automatic teller machines or at direct points of sale without need for further review by the courts or the authorities.

189. As of 2019, a total of 21,000 cards had been issued from supply points covering around 70 per cent of the population. The designated sums disbursed via the cards amounts to JD 1.5 million per month and the service is active both from inside Jordan and from abroad.

12. Education and recreational and cultural activities (arts. 28, 29, 30 and 31)

12.1 Education, including vocational training and guidance

190. The State makes great efforts to safeguard education and the quality of education. In that connection, it is reviewing and developing curricula to include various global concepts such as human rights, gender, equality, the Sustainable Development Goals, the provision of qualified staff, the creation of a safe environment for education, technological integration and community involvement. An educational quality and accountability unit has been set up and efforts are being made to develop the curriculum and to identify the challenges standing in the way of educational advancement, including the reduction of the school dropout rate. There is a particular focus on more marginalized and vulnerable groups such as children living in remote areas, children (especially girls) with disabilities and refugees. In cooperation with partners (Questscope for Social Development in the Middle East and the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief), the Ministry of Education has opened 150 cultural enhancement centres across the country for persons who have dropped out of school. The centres, which are attended by 4,009 students of both sexes, help to provide education for all and contribute to the development of society. Participants follow a programme intended to imbue them with basic life skills and to raise their cultural and academic level. The programme – which lasts 24 months divided into three 8-month cycles – is aimed at persons who have dropped out of school: males aged between 13 and 18, and females between 13 and 20.

191. The Ministry of Education runs specialized training programmes for all its staff. The outcomes of the training courses have a positive impact on the nature of the services and programmes offered to children with disabilities.

192. All children on national territory are able to pursue their school life without discrimination. This includes refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

193. Ninety-five per cent of children aged between 36 and 59 months who live with their mothers have been involved by adult family members in four or more activities to promote learning and readiness for school. The average number of activities in which adult family members (in most cases parents) participated with children was 8.8. Just 32 per cent of children participated in four or more early educational activities with their fathers, while 78 per cent participated in at least four activities with their mothers.

194. The Government continues to work to improve access to, and quality of education. It is pursuing the fourth of the Sustainable Development Goals and seeking to achieve the Goal's targets. As part of overall training plans, it is also acting to extend early childhood education and it continues to support and build the capacity of teachers with various year-round training schemes.

12.1.1 Aims of education

195. In relation to the Committee's recommendation to generalize non-stereotyped educational curricula, education in concepts such as tolerance, peace and coexistence are some of the main themes underpinning the module on social education and the module on national and civic education between the first and tenth grades. The cumulative knowledge structure of those modules is considered to provide the most appropriate learning environment for such concepts. The same concepts are also addressed, under various headings, within the module on Arabic language and the module on Islamic education.

196. The results of the population and family health survey of 2017/18 show that 13 per cent of children aged between 36 and 59 months who live with their mothers are enrolled in a structured early childhood education programme.

197. The policies of the Ministry of Education in the area of early childhood (children of 5–6 in kindergarten) are as follows:

I. Enrolment and expansion

198. The period spent in kindergarten, which lasts two years at the most, constitutes a stage of formal education that is non-compulsory in Jordan. The Ministry establishes kindergartens, within the limits of its capacities and as part of a phased plan.

II. Service quality

199. The Ministry seeks to prepare children in a way that covers all their personal, physical, mental, spiritual and emotional aspects with a view to forming healthy habits, developing social relationships, promoting positive tendencies and instilling a love of school life. Through its national interactive curriculum for kindergartens, the Ministry evaluates the general framework document on the outcomes of public and private education as it affects the curricula of kindergartens for children between the ages of 4 and 6. The framework document was produced by the National Centre for Curriculum Development in 2018. Efforts are currently being made to develop tools for the individual evaluation of children in kindergartens, in coordination with the National Centre for Curriculum Development. This process is currently in its final stages. Standards for accrediting kindergartens were approved in 2018, in cooperation with the National Council and a manual on those standards will be produced in 2019. Guidelines relating to State-run and private kindergartens are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

200. Challenges and recommendations concerning education:

200.1 Alignment of legislation on education with the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

200.2 The lack of human and financial resources to provide high quality and inclusive educational services, and raising education allocations, which are currently 6 per cent of the general budget;

200.3 The urgent need to ensure that students with disabilities can exercise their right to education, in accordance with the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017;

200.4 The urgent need to roll out the Regulation concerning follow-up, assessment and accountability in inclusive education;

200.5 Changing societal perceptions of the learning environment to make teaching more attractive and to promote the teaching profession;

200.6 The lack of training and capacity-building for newly qualified teachers.

201. Indicators concerning kindergartens in the academic year 2017/18 are set forth in the table below.

<i>Kindergarten KG1</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Evening school</i>	<i>Kindergartens in associations</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage enrolment</i>
No. of children	24 173	30	0	1 064	25 262	14.2%
No. of kindergartens	1 628	5	0	68	1 699	
<i>Kindergarten KG2</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Evening school</i>	<i>Kindergartens in associations</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage enrolment</i>
No. of children	66 819	36 936	1 547	1 625	103 754	62.2%
No. of kindergartens	3 770	1 791	59	91	5 585	

202. In the year 2016/17, 93 per cent of kindergartens achieved the KG2 technical and administrative quality standards for State-run kindergartens. The aim is to reach 98 per cent by 2022.

203. In the year 2017, 92 per cent of kindergarten teachers received qualitative training in early childhood programmes, and the aim again is to reach 98 per cent by 2022. The total number of kindergartens stands at 1,500. Under a joint grant scheme, furniture for 400 kindergartens is being received in the year 2018/19.

13. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40)

13.1 Asylum-seeking and refugee children

204. As concerns the Committee's recommendation to implement specific programmes to improve the living conditions of Syrian refugee children, at the end of 2018 the National Council drafted two reports – one on the situation of families and one on refugee families – which included figures and percentages. The reports can be used for plans, strategies and services in matters relating to children.

205. According to UNICEF statistics, there were 235,616 Syrian refugee children of school age in 2018. A total of 151,696 children were enrolled in official educational institutions of whom 134,121 in formal education and 17,575 in informal education.

206. The Ministry of Education launched its strategic plan 2018–2022 under which the State provides citizens of other countries with a place of refuge and education of different levels for their children. This has placed enormous pressure on the education system and the challenge has been further complicated by the Syrian crisis, with UNHCR registering 661,114 Syrian refugees in Jordan as of July 2017, in addition to the more than 1 million Syrians who reside in the country. Of the registered refugees, approximately 16 per cent are under the age of 4, 22 per cent are between the ages of 5 and 11, and 14 per cent between 12 and 17. This massive influx of Syrian refugee children has led to further pressures in the classroom, overcrowded classes and a reduction in the duration of lessons at some State-run schools. The number of schools has been increased with 204 evening schools for refugee children and the institution of double shifts.

207. The Government has undertaken to increase access for Syrian refugees during the period of implementation of the strategic plan 2018–2022. With reference to different levels of education, it has been noted that Syrian girls suffer great deprivation of secondary schooling. In fact, the average enrolment rate for female Syrians in basic education is 38.1 per cent and, in secondary education, just 12.2 per cent. The free and compulsory nature of education is equally applicable to Jordanian children and Syrian refugee children.

208. In the year 2014/15, the total number of enrolments stood at 1,533,353 with Syrians accounting for 44.3 per cent – 125,924 – in basic education. The total number in secondary education was 207,809 of whom 11.5 per cent – 4,563 – were Syrians. The figures for 2015/16 were 1,594,545 with Syrians accounting for 36.7 – 107,912 – in basic education and 5,407 (13.5 per cent) in secondary education.

209. With the arrival of Syrian refugees in Jordan, and in order to guarantee their right to education, the following measures have been taken:

1. Means and facilities have been put in place to welcome Syrian children and receive them into national schools, both inside and outside the camps, in a manner consistent with their age and despite the fact that they do not have documentation;

2. Schools for Syrian refugee students have been opened in the camps (Zaatari camp, Marajib al-Fahoud and Azraq). In all, 52 schools have been opened in Zaatari and Marajib al-Fahoud;

3. Some schools have been converted to a double-shift system to accommodate Syrian children of school age;

4. Thanks to cooperation with international and local organizations, the requirements of refugee students – such as school bags, uniforms, stationery and textbooks – are met; moreover, Syrian students are exempted from school fees;

5. Teachers in second-shift schools, which are intended for Syrian students, and in schools in the camps, are trained in how to deal with students in crisis and emergency situations using a psychological support programme.

210. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides basic education to more than 115,000 students in 172 Agency-run schools. Students in the fourth, eighth and tenth grades take national examinations in the main subjects: Arabic, English, science and mathematics.

211. In 2014, the Department of the Chief Qadi opened two new sharia court offices in the Zaatari and Azraq camps to provide judicial services to refugees particularly for matters relating to the documentation of marriage, descent, birth, civil status and the control of early and undocumented marriages. In addition, family reconciliation offices have been opened in the same two camps to provide family and marriage counselling and legal support.

The sharia courts have adopted special criteria for appointing guardians of unaccompanied children, taking account of the children's circumstances and ensuring they are protected against any kind of abuse.

212. In 2018, a total of 4,225 family cases were brought in the Zaatari and Azraq camps for Syrian refugees, 2,913 at the office in Mafraq and 1,312 at the office in Azraq.

13.2 Eradicating child labour

213. Jordan seeks to protect children from economic exploitation, in line with national legislation and policies and with the international treaties the country has ratified. In 1999, the Ministry of Labour set up a child labour department which takes various measures intended to curb child labour in general and its worst forms in particular. Efforts to that end are expedited by using labour inspectors, who act as the executive arm of the Ministry of Labour. In 2016, 23 labour inspectors from labour directorates all over the country were appointed as child-labour liaison officers. They enforce the provisions of the Labour Code (Act No. 8 of 1996), as amended, that are applicable to child labour and coordinate with competent bodies in the governorates.

214. Under national law children, be they Jordanian or migrants, are prohibited from working in homes. In fact, no one may be employed as a domestic worker in Jordan unless they are over the age of 20. Cases can arise where a person under the legal age enters Jordan on a forged passport. When such persons are discovered they are treated as victims of human trafficking, provided with the facilities and services they require and helped to return to their country of origin. In cases where it is shown that a child is employed in domestic work, the employer is held liable, the child is removed and the case is referred to the competent court.

215. The Ministry of Labour works to ensure compliance with the Labour Code (Act No. 8 of 1996), as amended, by intensifying controls, conducting daily periodic inspections and running a rolling series of inspection campaigns in sectors where children are most likely to be employed.

Inspection indicators 2014–2018

Year	No. of visits	No. of Jordanian adolescents	No. of non-Jordanian (Syrian) adolescents	Legal steps		
				Advice and guidance	Closure warning	Violation
2014	1 862	887	414	335	799	285
2015	1 442	1 273	450	275	440	576
2016	8 621	1 112	367	100	852	1 210
2017	6 337	285	134	154	318	381
2018	8 213	723	137	432	627	666

216. The Ministry of Labour is also working to monitor the extent of compliance with the list – compiled by the Minister of Labour – of jobs that are hazardous and harmful to the health of juveniles. An occupational safety and health guide for child labour was issued in 2018, in collaboration with ILO, its purpose being to ensure effective and high-quality child labour inspections, to raise awareness among the public about the importance of combating

child labour and to regulate child labour inspection processes using a clearly defined mechanism, thereby protecting children from becoming engaged in hazardous activities.

217. Any situation in which children are being exploited for domestic labour is referred to a special unit, which investigates the matter then refers it to the competent public prosecutor. A legislative system has been developed under which penalties for child exploitation have been increased to hard labour for up to 10 years. In cooperation with the Justice Centre for Legal Aid, the Ministry has recently acted to make a number of labour inspectors more familiar with mechanisms for protecting children from exploitation.

218. Domestic legislation that has a bearing on child labour is reviewed and amended in order to help protect children from economic exploitation. The most recent amendments, introduced by the Ministry in 2008, consisted in revoking the exception whereby agricultural workers were not subject to the provisions of the Labour Code (Act No. 8 of 1996) and raising the fine – from JD 300 to JD 500, redoubled in the case of repeat offences – imposed on employers who violate the Code by employing adolescents. In 2011, the ministerial decree containing the list of hazardous jobs compiled under article 74 of the Labour Code was reworded. The new wording envisages a classification of prohibited activities on the basis of the degree of danger they might entail for adolescents up to the age of 16. Committees work with the competent authorities to propose possible legislative amendments.

219. Child workers are removed and rehabilitated, and assistance is offered to their families, as part of a project to prevent child labour. The project is financed under the budget of the Ministry of Labour to an amount of JD 300,000. A social support centre was established in 2008, which acts as the executive arm of the Ministry of Labour and the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development. It has the following goals:

- (a) To withdraw the children from the labour market, rehabilitate them and enrol them in education;
- (b) To provide educational and vocational services and programmes for children and their families;
- (c) To establish a national system of referral to various services, programmes and institutions;
- (d) To raise awareness among working children and children who have dropped out of school, and their families, about the importance of education and the risks associated with child labour;
- (e) To implement formal and informal educational programmes;
- (f) To run a guidance and self-support programme;
- (g) To roll out a capacity-building and leisure programme;
- (h) To provide a programme of integrated living services.

220. The social support centre covers areas in eastern Amman in the Capital governorate as well as certain neighbourhoods in Zarqa governorate and in Russeifa. In 2017, a total of 21,754 persons – including children and local residents and communities – benefited from the various services and programmes the centre offers. The number of beneficiaries in 2018 was 14,215. The number of children (working and non-working) who had dropped out of school and who were enrolled in the educational programmes was 2,179 in 2017 and 950 in 2018.

221. The centre is intended for all children regardless of their nationality, religion, ethnicity or gender. In fact, it serves 1,121 Jordanians, 888 Syrians, 44 Palestinians and 126 other nationalities.

222. In 2017, of 244 cases involving child labour, 95 working children were completely removed from the labour market. At the same time, 100 girls were withdrawn from working as housekeepers, out of 145 cases. Moreover, 561 boys and 931 girls, all of whom had dropped out of school, were protected from the risk of entering the labour market.

223. In 2018, of 200 cases involving child labour, 120 working children were completely removed from the labour market. At the same time, 50 girls were withdrawn from working

as housekeepers, out of 70 cases. Moreover, 662 children, all of whom had dropped out of school, were protected from the risk of entering the labour market. Services were provided to 500 Jordanian children, 400 Syrians and 90 Iraqis as well as to Palestinian children.

224. The Ministry seeks to develop the capabilities of its staff by providing continuous training for labour inspectors in interview techniques, communicating with adolescents, ways of identifying the kind of work they are engaged in and the dangers of the working environment. The training courses and workshops, which are held in cooperation with international and local groups, are listed in the table below.

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of training courses and workshops</i>
2014	22
2015	15
2016	19
2017	5
2018	6

225. In cooperation with the National Council for Family Affairs and with the involvement of all competent authorities, the Ministry of Labour is developing strategies and action plans to curb child labour in Jordan, most significantly a national framework for combating child labour. A proposal is currently being considered to amend the framework in order to address current challenges.

226. A national child-labour monitoring system has been instituted that links the three ministries involved in the roll out of the national framework: the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Education. Amendments to the system were completed in 2018, thanks to support from ILO and training courses on the system have been instituted for labour inspectors, probation officers working with juveniles and staff of the Ministry of Education. This is in addition to the launch of the website WWW.CHILDLABOR.GOV.JO.

227. Working children have begun to be referred under the online system linking the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Labour, in cooperation with ILO. A liaison officer has been appointed from the directorate of institutional development and 16 officials have received training. A rapid analysis was conducted on the situation of workers in Zaatari camp, Petra and Qweismeh in the period between December 2017 and April 2018, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Public Security Directorate and the National Council for Family Affairs. In addition, a guide has been produced for probation officers and social workers with the aim of providing them with basic information about how to combat child labour and the mechanisms available to deal with the children involved.

228. The Ministry produces studies, undertakes research and drafts reports on child labour in cooperation with national and international support bodies. The results of a comprehensive national survey were published in August 2016.

229. A draft regulation for children who work in contravention of the law has been produced. It is based on restorative justice and includes a body of rules on referral and protection that are consistent with the best interests of the child.

13.3 Children in street situations

230. There are no so-called street children in Jordan although there are children who work as beggars and who are dealt with under the law by the Juvenile Police Department and the anti-begging section of the Ministry of Social Development. Such children are accompanied if they need protection and care, and the necessary social interventions are carried out with recourse to the courts only being used as a last resort to place them in a care home. The cases in which a child requires protection and care are defined in article 33 of the Juveniles Act No. 32 of 2014.

13.4 Sale, trafficking and abduction of children

With a view to implementing Act No. 9 of 2009 on human trafficking more effectively and to prosecuting and punishing traffickers, the Office of the Prime Minister has approved a bill to amend the Act. The bill will now proceed towards enactment via constitutional channels. One of the most prominent features of the amended Act is an additional section on protection under which the competent authorities are to protect victims and other persons who have suffered harm and to safeguard their physical and mental integrity, following a methodology that guarantees the best interests of the child. Moreover, penalties have been increased so that, if the victim of the crime is a child, perpetrators are liable to a term of imprisonment of 7 years and to a fine of not less than JD 5,000. The amendment bill also includes provisions regarding the accountability of juridical persons.

231. In addition, the definition of exploitation has been expanded to cover sexual exploitation and begging. A draft national strategy and plan of action to combat human trafficking, approved by the Office of the Prime Minister at the beginning of 2019, covers themes such as prevention, protection, prosecution and international cooperation. The theme of protection includes various strategic goals and subcategories of which the most significant is the provision of specialized assistance and protection to child victims and children who have suffered harm as a result of human trafficking. A number of activities are undertaken in that connection including training on specialized counselling for such children.

232. The strategy aims to raise awareness among all groups in society, particularly the most vulnerable.

233. An operational body – the anti-trafficking unit – has been set up in the Public Security Directorate to examine cases involving the traffic in human beings. The objectives of the unit include:

- Developing a general policy to prevent human trafficking as well as plans for the implementation of that policy and ways to monitor such implementation;
- Reviewing legislation related to the prevention of human trafficking and submitting the necessary proposals and recommendations;
- Coordinating between official and unofficial bodies involved in the prevention of human trafficking and taking measures to facilitate the repatriation of victims to their countries of origin, or to any other country they choose and that agrees to accept them;
- Issuing and disseminating a national guide containing guidance and educational materials relevant to the unit's work;
- Raising awareness among employers, customers and persons involved in the recruitment of workers about issues related to the prevention of human trafficking; this includes conferences, seminars, training and educational programmes and other means;
- Examining international, regional and local reports on the prevention of human trafficking, then taking the necessary action and measures;
- Cooperating with official and unofficial bodies on the roll out of programmes intended to ensure the physical, mental and social recovery of victims and persons who have suffered harm as a result of human trafficking, and ensuring they are accommodated in appropriate facilities;
- Forming one or more subcommittees to assist the unit in carrying out its functions and to make recommendations;
- Undertaking any other functions related to its work, assigned by the head of the unit.

234. Strict judicial and legal provisions are in place for the prosecution of perpetrators of human trafficking.

235. The bill to amend the Act envisages more severe penalties for perpetrators of human trafficking, particularly if the victim is a child or a woman.

236. The table below includes details about the meetings, workshops, training courses and lectures organized by the Public Security Directorate between 2014 and 2018.

Meetings	64
Workshops and courses	118
Lectures	393
No. of participating law enforcement officials	1 423

237. Statistics from the anti-trafficking unit relative to the period 2014–2018 are shown in the following table.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Human trafficking cases</i>
2014	56
2015	28
2016	31
2017	23
2018	20

238. Statistics from the Public Security Directorate show that no children were involved in any of the cases handled.

239. The Public Security Directorate’s anti-trafficking unit has adopted the main themes outlined in article 2 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which have also been reaffirmed in the national strategy to combat human trafficking, as is shown in the following paragraphs.

240. *Prevention:*

The purpose here is to educate the local community about the dangers of this offence, develop the capacity of law enforcement personnel and raise awareness via lectures and training workshops for law enforcement officials and civil society organizations.

241. *Protection:*

Services and assistance are provided to victims in coordination with governmental and non-governmental agencies. This includes providing the victim with accommodation in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development as well as offering health care and legal assistance.

242. *Prosecution:*

The unit receives complaints and investigates cases in which human trafficking offences exist or are suspected to exist, and it refers the perpetrators to the competent courts.

243. *Local, regional and international partnerships:*

The unit consolidates channels of communication with governmental and non-governmental institutions and the national, regional and international levels.

244. Child victims, who are considered to be in need of protection and care, are placed in shelters where full health-care, educational and social integration services and programmes are provided.

245. At the end of 2016, a section for children who have suffered sexual exploitation online was opened by the Public Security Directorate’s Family Protection Department. The section deals with all cases involving the online exploitation of children including the circulation of pornographic images of children, exploitation, sexual blackmail and cyberbullying.

246. The section’s database is linked to that of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) in the French city of Lyon and there is an ongoing partnership and coordination between the section and INTERPOL. The section for children who have suffered sexual exploitation online is a law enforcement agency operating in the area of

cybercrime against children. It is an official body that is accredited with all international social media platforms with whom it maintains constant contact with a view to reducing online crime against children.

247. The section works to raise awareness about the dangers of Internet use by children and about the best ways to protect them from the risk of exploitation.

<i>Cases of the online sexual abuse of children</i>	<i>No. of pieces of digital evidence in cases of sexual assault analysed by the section</i>
84	125

248. Mindful of the impact that awareness-raising has on curbing violence against children, particularly vis-à-vis sexual offences, the Family Protection Department has focused particular attention on that area. The following table shows the number of lectures held in the period between 2015 and 2019.

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of lectures</i>
2015	333 lectures attended by 16,650 persons
2016	20 campaigns benefiting 1,000 persons 619 lectures 30,950 attendees
2017	20 campaigns benefiting 1,000 persons 687 lectures 34,350 attendees
2018	20 campaigns benefiting 1,000 persons 698 lectures 34,900 attendees
30 June 2019	20 campaigns benefiting 1,000 persons 295 lectures 14,750 attendees

13.5 Administration of juvenile justice

249. The age of criminal responsibility has been raised to 12 and restorative justice has been integrated into the Juveniles Act.

250. The Government and civil society institutions have broadened their field of joint action to include the provision of services and alternatives to detention, in line with the concept of restorative justice as contained in the bill for the amendment of the Juvenile Act.

251. The following actions have been taken with regard to the use of modern technology in the courts:

- Repeal of article 308 of the Criminal Code, under which a person committing a crime of honour could be exempted from punishment;
- Amendment of article 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure allowing for modern videoconferencing technology to be used for hearing witnesses;
- Preparation of draft regulations to protect witnesses and informants, and regulations concerning community-based measures pursuant to Domestic Violence Act No. 15 of 2017; the two regulations and supporting documentation have been submitted to the Legislation Bureau;

- The issuance of the National Juvenile Justice Strategy 2017–2019, pursuant to the Juveniles Act No. 32 of 2014, which focuses on the protection of children in situations of exploitation through programmes run by the Ministry of Social Development and other stakeholders. The programmes envisage an action plan as well as the provision of statistics and data that will help weaknesses to be identified and studied;
- Amendment of article 62 (2) (c) of the Criminal Code, concerning the consent of a mother regarding medical treatment for her minor children. This came about as part of the 2017 amendments to the Code. In addition, article 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure has been amended to admit the use of modern technology.

13.6 Child victims and witnesses of crimes

252. The State has enacted all necessary legislation – laws, regulations and instructions – to protect child witnesses and victims, as shown below:

- Juveniles Act No. 32 of 2014 and legislation issued pursuant thereto;
- Bill to amend the Juveniles Act, 2019;
- Domestic Violence Act No. 15 of 2017;
- Draft regulations to protect witnesses and informants, and regulations concerning community-based measures pursuant to articles 6 and 11 of the Domestic Violence Act No. 15 of 2017; the regulations are ready to be enacted;
- Amendment of article 62 (2) (c) of the Criminal Code, concerning the consent of a mother regarding medical treatment for her minor children, as part of the 2017 amendments to the Code;
- Repeal of article 308 of the Criminal Code, under which a rape offender could be exempted from punishment if he married his victim, and amendment of article 158 of the Code of Criminal Procedure regarding the use of modern technology;
- Drafting of the children’s rights bill has been completed and it has been submitted to the Legislation Bureau for it to give its opinion and complete the legislative process through official channels;
- Proposed legal amendments to address the issue of children dropping out of school and to prevent child labour;
- A cybercrime bill is being drafted and proposed amendments regarding the safe and positive use of the Internet have been submitted to parliament in the form of an official letter.

253. The legislation includes provision for protecting children via protection mechanisms for child victims and witnesses during questioning, be it by the police, prosecutors or the courts, or during detention.

254. The 2019 bill to amend the Juveniles Act stipulates that adolescents cannot be detained for misdemeanours. Moreover, juveniles who are in detention or have been convicted cannot be held with adult suspects or convicts at any stage of the investigation, trial or enforcement of sentence.

255. According to article 42 of the current Juveniles Act, anyone who causes a juvenile to be held in detention with adults in any legally approved detention or holding centre, or at any stage of the trial or enforcement of sentence, is liable to a term of imprisonment of between 3 months and 1 year. Article 34 of the same Act reads:

(a) In either of the two following circumstances, the judge for the enforcement of sentences – on the basis of a report from the head of the directorate, which in turn is based on a report from the probation officer – may refer juveniles who have served their sentence and who require care to a care home for juveniles:

- If in the view of the judge for the enforcement of sentences they require protection or care in accordance with article 33 of the present Act; if the period

of any education or training course in which the juveniles are enrolled has not expired.

(b) If satisfied that the circumstances outlined in subparagraph (a) of the present article subsist, the judge for the enforcement of sentences may – on the basis of a report from the head of the directorate – issue a decision stating that the juvenile in question is in need of care and protection.

Article 40 of the Act states:

The judge for the enforcement of sentences may order that any juvenile in need of protection or care be taken into a care home, under conditions specified to that end, if the judge believes that the interests of the juvenile in question so require.

Article 41 reads:

Aftercare is provided to juveniles after they leave the educational, rehabilitation or care home in which they have been placed. The purpose of this is to reintegrate them into society and to protect them against reoffending. The principles and procedures governing aftercare are to be set forth in a specific regulation.

256. The Domestic Violence Act includes provision for specialized bodies to deal with cases of violence and it broadens the definition of family so as to protect the broadest possible segment of family members. The regulations to protect witnesses and informants, as well as other regulations and instructions, seek to ensure that protection and care is available for all children and adolescents.

14. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

257. The Government of Jordan remains seriously committed to the protection of children's rights. To that end, it is working to create a national system in which legislation, policies and practices come together to protect the rights of the child in line with the basic principles enshrined in the Convention. Since, the Convention and its Optional Protocols are not an alternative but a bulwark and support to domestic legislation, they will be among the international instruments to be examined by the ministerial committee which was created in 2018 to align domestic legislation with international human rights treaties.

15. Ratification of international human rights instruments

258. The Government continues to interact with international human rights protection mechanisms, both treaty-based and non-treaty based, just as it seeks to adapt its domestic systems by bringing them into line with the country's international obligations. A legislative review committee was set up in 2018 to amend legislation and make it consistent with the core human rights treaties that Jordan has ratified. This includes taking steps to ensure that children's rights can be applied and exercised at the practical level. Jordan submits its periodic reports to the treaty bodies as well as reports under the universal periodic review mechanism. In the latter case, its latest report was submitted in November 2018, following which Jordan received 226 recommendations of which it accepted 149 and took note of 77. Entry into treaties and protocols is one item on the government agenda and the matter is constantly being considered and examined. Jordan has announced that the Government is moving towards ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Jordan has extended an open invitation to special procedures mandate holders.

16. Follow-up, dissemination and implementation of the recommendations

259. In line with the Committee's recommendation to make the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports, the written replies by the State party and the related recommendations (concluding observations) widely available in the languages of the country, 2,000 booklets containing the report and the recommendations – half of them in English – were distributed during the course of 2017. The distribution, which took place in cooperation with UNICEF in Jordan, covered universities and associations. In addition, a two-day workshop was held at which delegates from State bodies came together to discuss the recommendations.

260. Some of the more significant publications aimed at raising awareness about the Convention and the recommendations are:

- A child-friendly book on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recommendations issued thereunder;
- An interactive book on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- A child-friendly edition of which 26,000 copies have been distributed to schools in cooperation with UNICEF with the aim of raising awareness about the Convention and the 2014 recommendations to the periodic report.

261. The National Council for Family Affairs holds workshops for stakeholders, in cooperation with UNICEF and UNHCR. It also offers ongoing training courses and capacity development in areas such as the use of modern technology, the Juveniles Act and the Domestic Violence Act. The National Commission for Women, the Justice Centre for Legal Aid, UNHCR and the Jordanian Women's Union held a meeting in March 2019 to discuss the country's international reports.

262. The National Council has rolled out its safe Internet package project to raise awareness about the safe use of the Internet by children. It has also launched a school bag project and it works to develop the gifts of children and to strengthen their ties to their school.
