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The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and would like to refer to the letter received regarding the call for inputs on the subject of Human Rights Council resolution 52/8 on promoting human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals through transparent, accountable and efficient public service delivery. In that regard, the Permanent Mission has the honor to attach herewith contribution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the afore-mentioned request.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurance of its highest consideration.





Identify the role of public service delivery in the promotion and protection of human rights and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

1. **What are the main challenges identified in your country in relation to public service delivery? Please address institutional and practical barriers in your answer.**
 - The provision of digital public services is an urgent necessity and governments are expected to keep pace with this development, and what the world has witnessed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic where speed and flexibility of service delivery were paramount.
 - The Smart Government Strategy (2020-2024) has outlined the Kingdom's ambition, vision, goals, initiatives and plans for digital government. Whereas most of the strategy's initiatives are geared towards achieving sustainable development by aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Kingdom's Vision 2030, and determining how the Kingdom will work to achieve its vision of digitally transforming government and building smart government capabilities on a global level, and the smart government strategy sets an ambitious goal of making the government by 2024 flexible, qualified and innovative, the government's aspirations include the following: Provide a unified and globally intelligent service experience, equip all government employees with smart and pioneering capabilities, provide leaders with insights to find solutions to tomorrow's challenges before they happen, reach the future through an inclusive and digitally capable workforce, digital fast track through a partner ecosystem, and leverage shared resources to deliver more at a lower cost.
2. **What are examples of good practices and methods taken to overcome the challenges of public service delivery?**
 - The Kingdom achieved first place in the e-Government Services Maturity Index for 2022 issued by the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)** of the United Nations, which measures the maturity of government services provided through electronic portals and smart applications according to three sub-indicators: service availability and development, service use and satisfaction, and access to the public, as the measurement included 18 countries in the index report.
 - The index focuses on (84) government services necessary for individuals and businesses in priority sectors, where Saudi Arabia was distinguished in the three sub-indicators, and maintained its lead in the first sub-index, which is concerned with the availability and development of the service, as it ranked (first) with a percentage of (96.00%), while the second sub-indicator is concerned with the use of the service and satisfaction with it, and Saudi Arabia ranked (first). Where it continued to rise in this field and achieved progress by more than (37%) during the past two editions to reach



a maturity rate of (79.24%), with regard to the third indicator of reaching the public, and Saudi Arabia achieved an increase at the level of this sub-indicator to reach a maturity rate of (86.48%) and thus rank (third).

- It is worth noting that the Kingdom recently ranked third globally among (198) countries, according to the data of the Digital Government Maturity Index for 2022 issued by the World Bank Group, and achieved its highest historical result in the e-government development index issued by the United Nations since its launch more than 20 years ago, and the city of Riyadh ranked fourth globally in the use of technology and its applications within the "very high" range among (193) cities around the world.
- 3. **To what extent does corruption play in excluding individuals and families from accessing public services? How does corruption affect the delivery of public services to populations in your country?**
 - The Kingdom, represented by its administrative bodies, provides many public services to all individuals, citizens and residents, and these services vary in many areas, including: health, education, and cultural, and whereas these services are provided through the employees of those agencies, they may issue practices that prevent these individuals from benefiting from the services in whole or in part.
 - The most prominent of these practices is the employee's refusal to provide a service that falls within his job duties in order to profit from his job, by asking for a bribe in exchange for performing that service, or the employee recommending the appointment of an incompetent person in exchange for his personal interest, thus exploiting his job authority. It may also be represented in recommending one of the employees in charge of procurement tasks and procedures to award one of the competing companies to conclude a contract with it to implement one of the services it provides despite the company's unworthiness to provide the service, and the presence of other companies that provide the service better, either because of the employee's personal interest or because the company provides a sum of money to contract with it, which affects the quality and quality of services provided by the government entity, or to benefit from those services as desired, and in a way that undermines the sense of confidence of individuals in government agencies. and the services provided by it.
 - Whereas the concept of corruption is broad, it has several manifestations, including those above-mentioned and other practices related to the provision of public services, and these practices are considered corruption crimes when the elements of the crime are realized.
 - In recent years, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has focused its efforts in combating corruption and has taken many measures to address the outlets for corruption and to confront the causes that enable it to be practiced, in the light of its obligations arising from the United Nations Convention against Corruption ratified by Royal Decree No. (M/5) dated 11/03/1434 AH (23/01/2013 AD), including the obligation contained in article (5) thereof. It reads: "1. Each State Party shall, in



accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system, develop, implement or establish effective and coordinated anti-corruption policies that promote community participation and embody the principles of the rule of law, good management of public affairs and property, integrity, transparency and accountability.

4. What percentage of eligible individuals and households do not claim or benefit from public services in your country (not benefiting from them)? What are the barriers that prevent them from accessing the public services to which they are entitled?

- The General Authority for Statistics implements the Service Statistics Bulletin at the level of the regions and governorates of the Kingdom to be a reference for all ministries, departments, departments and government institutions, and aims to provide basic data for planners, development policy makers and decision makers, because the bulletin derives its data from the records of service providers, which include educational, public, agricultural, social, developmental, financial, banking, and administrative services. The bulletin also provides detailed data on educational services such as: (the number of schools, students, classes, and teachers) classified by educational stage and sex for the government and private sectors, in addition to a range of services: (public, social and developmental, financial, banking, and agricultural).
- According to the Service Statistics Bulletin, public and administrative services include a wide range of services such as ambulance stations, airports, sports clubs, police and traffic stations... And others, and they were as follows in 2019: The total number of airports reached (28) airports, the total number of sports clubs reached (170) clubs, the total number of ambulance centers reached (468) ambulance centers, the total number of municipal branches reached (681) branches, and the total number of police and traffic stations reached (906) police stations, and the service statistics bulletin was concerned with monitoring educational services such as the number of public and private schools, and the number of students and teachers at all educational levels, and they were as follows In 2019, the total number of schools Governmental and private schools for all educational levels, boys and girls, (43.017) schools, government schools represented (83%), while private schools represented (17%), and the rate of private schools for government schools is estimated at about one private school for every five government schools. With regard to developmental and social services, the Services Statistics Bulletin monitored many developmental and social services such as civil defense centers and commercial banks, and they were as follows In 2019, the total number of branches of civil defense centers reached (883) civil defense centers, and the total number of commercial banks reached (2.111) commercial banks.

5. Please indicate the challenges and good practices in the provision of public services to persons belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups including people living in poverty, women and girls, children, youth, ethnic, national and linguistic minorities, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants and older persons?



- The Kingdom is focused on transforming its services to be all electronic, and to ensure that these services are accessible to all, the Kingdom is working to find alternative channels to provide them. Those who require individual assistance in being able to deal with e-government services or to clarify some complex legal issues can get assistance at the agency's service center website, including: Active Service Centers: (such as headquarters, local branches or community centers), Saudi business centers, Najiz Center - judicial services, government agencies - branches and offices, and all government agencies provide their services through their offices and branches (as alternative channels for services), and work usually starts from 7:30 am to 2:30 from Sunday to Thursday, and most government agencies have call centers that work around the clock and throughout the week, and work to serve customers and provide other services through the response system Automated or by sending text messages in a specific format, the Ministry of Health, notaries and civil status have developed mobile units to provide services to people in remote and rural areas, and the Absher platform at the Ministry of Interior has launched a number of electronic devices to serve customers through self-service machines in (airports, shopping centers, etc.) to find new channels that facilitate customer registration, and all government e-services can be accessed through 60,000 Wi-Fi hotspots provided by the Communications and Information Technology Commission across the Kingdom, and Saudi government platforms provide direct sign language calling to help those who are hard of hearing benefit from government services online.
- 6. **Are public services digital in your country? Please provide details including challenges and good practices in the digitization of public services that ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in the delivery of public services.**
 - The unified national platform is the source specialized in facilitating citizens, residents, businessmen and visitors to search for e-government services and help them obtain information related to the Kingdom. The platform is the primary source for all other government sources by providing a large amount of information, in addition to being designed to be direct and show services based on personal information and needs such as loans and financial obligations, and your educational, work, and social records, and you can also view the most prominent events in the Kingdom, and many government services can be accessed, including the most used services, project services, businessmen, life events, family events, as well as health services, personal documents, and others. All services are offered through several channels that work in conjunction with each other in order to provide a simple and efficient user experience, integrated with the latest technology and built on a system of centralization, reliability and personalization. In addition, you can find the latest news related to upcoming events in the Kingdom, access to performance statistics, service level agreements and surveys for example.



As of January 1, 2022, the number of users of the unified national platform reached more than 40 million users and the number of visits to the platform is more than 72 million visits.

7. How is private participation in the provision of public services regulated and monitored in your country? Please share challenges and good practices.

- The Government of the Kingdom is working to support and develop the private sector, create long-term alliances to implement development plans, and achieve national goals and objectives for the welfare and advancement of the country and its people, as the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 110 dated 04/05/1425 AH (22/06/2004 AD) was issued approving the rules governing the participation of the private sector in e-business. A number of rules are applied when government agencies contract with private sector institutions to finance and implement various projects in the field of e-business according to the expected income sharing approach, and the partnership with the private sector is a cooperation agreement between a government agency and a private institution; this partnership provides the possibility of exchanging experiences and assets for both parties to provide a service or product for the public benefit.
- **Economic policy description Promising legislation, practices, strategies and national, regional or local processes aimed at:**
 - **Increase social spending, through national and local budgets for the provision of public services.**
 - **Address structural discrimination in the delivery of public services.**
 - **Preventing corruption and associated illicit financial flows in the provision of public services**
 - **Reallocation of public spending to the provision of public services**
- The Expenditure Efficiency and Government Projects Authority (Expro) was formed by the Cabinet decision issued on February 23, 2021, to contribute to achieving spending efficiency in government agencies, improving the quality of projects, assets and facilities, planning infrastructure, programs, initiatives and operational processes funded from the state's general budget, and following up on the implementation of these entities for their programs and initiatives in order to achieve the authority's objectives, and its most prominent tasks are: (Setting policies and strategies, proposing legislation and regulations, studying spending details, setting indicators and standards).
- On the basis of the principle of equality enshrined in Article (8) of the Basic Law of Governance, the Kingdom's laws combine to prohibit any discrimination, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, national or ethnic origin or on the basis of sex that results in the impairment or obstruction of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in various fields of public life, the authorities concerned, in accordance with their competences, implement



human rights without any discrimination and deal with discriminatory practices through monitoring and awareness-raising measures, etc., the Human Rights Commission ensures that the concerned government agencies implement the laws and regulations related to human rights, detect abuses that constitute a violation of human rights and take the necessary legal measures in this regard, and follows up on government agencies to implement the relevant international human rights instruments to which the Kingdom has acceded, and ensures that those bodies take the necessary measures to implement them.

- The Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority is competent to arrest and seize those suspected of committing financial and administrative corruption crimes, as clause (VI) of the organizational and structural arrangements related to combating financial and administrative corruption issued by Royal Decree No. (A/277) dated 15/04/1441 AH (13/12/2019 AD) stipulates that "the Control and Anti-Corruption Authority shall take the necessary measures against financial or administrative corruption crimes and their perpetrators and parties, whether they are natural persons of a civil or military state employee or the like who are contracted or others, or persons of moral standing related to such crimes, including arresting, hearing and seizing those suspected of committing financial and administrative corruption crimes in accordance with the period prescribed by law, in preparation for referring the evidence and documents related thereto to the Criminal Investigation and Prosecution Unit in the Authority to complete the necessary legal procedures in this regard." The most prominent efforts are as follows:

First: Issuing a number of legislations aimed at protecting integrity, enhancing transparency, and combating and preventing corruption, most notably:

- Royal Decree No. (M/43) dated 29/11/1377 AH (17/06/1958 AD) and its amendments, which included a number of crimes of public office, including: abuse of the influence of office, abuse of functional authority, crimes of assault on public funds, and exploitation of contracts, and imposed on these crimes a penalty of imprisonment for a period not exceeding ten years or a fine not exceeding twenty thousand riyals on the employee and all those who participated or colluded with him to commit them, whether employees or non-employees.
- The Law on the Functions of Direct Public Funds promulgated by Royal Decree (M/77) dated 23/10/1395 AH (29/10/1975 AD), which increased the penalty against those covered by its provisions, including perpetrators of embezzlement, waste or illegal disposal of public state funds, objects, stamps or papers of value delivered to them.
- Anti-Bribery Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. (M/36) dated 29/12/1412 AH (30/06/1992 AD) and its amendments, which criminalizes bribery and its various forms, including: breach of the duties of his office by a public employee as a result of a plea,



recommendation or mediation, or the request of the public employee for himself or for others, his acceptance, or taking a promise or gift by reason of his job to pursue a transaction in a government entity, or the request of each person for himself or for others, or his acceptance or taking of a promise or gift to use real or alleged influence to obtain or attempt to obtain any Public authority over an action, order, decision, obligation, license, supply agreement or over a job, service or advantage of any kind. The scope of application of the law in terms of persons extended to workers in the private sector, and included severe penalties, considering that the crime of bribery is the most prevalent crime compared to other corruption crimes.

- The Execution Law before the Board of Grievances issued by Royal Decree No. (M/15) dated 27/01/1443 AH (05/09/2021 AD), which decided severe penalties in respect of a public employee who uses his influence or functional authority to prevent the execution of a bond covered by the provisions of the Law, or a public employee who deliberately refrains from executing a bond if execution is within his competence, in accordance with a number of determinants contained in the Law.
- The Anti-Money Laundering Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. (M/20) dated 05/02/1439 AH (26/10/2017 AD), which establishes severe penalties for the commission of the crime of money-laundering when the crime is associated with the public office held by the offender or with the abuse of power or influence.
- The organizational and structural arrangements related to combating financial and administrative corruption, issued by Royal Decree No. (A/277) dated 15/04/1441 AH (13/12/2019 AD), which included in clause (IV) the following: "... 2. A judgment issued by the competent court convicting any employee or his equivalent of a criminal offence related to financial or administrative corruption shall result in his dismissal from his post regardless of the amount or duration of the penalty imposed. 3. If the investigation with the public servant or the like results in strong suspicions affecting the dignity of the job or integrity, the Chairman of the Authority may, after consulting the head of the agency to which the employee belongs, propose his dismissal by Royal Order, without affecting the completion of the criminal proceedings against him..." Clause (VI) reads: "The Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority shall take the necessary measures against financial and administrative corruption crimes, their perpetrators and parties, whether they are natural civil or military state employees, contracted or other persons of similar status, or persons of moral character related to such crimes, this includes arresting those suspected of committing financial and administrative corruption crimes, hearing their statements and seizing them in accordance with the period prescribed by law, in preparation for referring the evidence and related documents to the Criminal Investigation and Prosecution Unit in the Authority to complete the necessary legal procedures in this regard.



- The National Strategy for Protecting Integrity and Combating Corruption issued by Cabinet Resolution No. (43) dated 01/02/1428 AH (19/02/2007 AD), which included several means to protect integrity and combat corruption, include: selecting officials in executive departments related to the public with competencies and good dealing with auditors, emphasizing on department managers to end the procedures for citizens' transactions and monitor employees so that they do not put obstacles to those transactions, working with the principle of accountability for each official, regardless of his position, ensuring clarity of instructions on fees, dues and fines and paying them, and finding preventive ways to fill the gaps that lead to corruption entering them, Including payment through banks, according to well-studied controls, and the adoption and strengthening of the principle of clarity (transparency) within state institutions by clarifying the procedures for procurement contracts for the government, public institutions and joint stock companies, giving the public, civil institutions and the media the right to view and criticize them, and urging citizens and residents to cooperate with the authorities concerned with combating corruption, and reporting corruption crimes and their perpetrators.
- The Government Tenders and Procurement Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. (M/128) dated 13/11/1440 AH (16/07/2019 AD), which aims to regulate procedures related to government business and procurement, prevent the abuse of influence and the influence of personal interests in them, enhance integrity and competition, and ensure transparency in all business and procurement procedures. Under this Law, a special regulation was issued to regulate the conflict of interest of employees implementing the provisions of the Law and dealing with the government entity, which obligated a number of government employees to disclose a conflict of interest, and to establish disciplinary responsibility in the event of their violation, and obligated the customer to disclose, and a regulation was issued regulating the behaviors and ethics of those in charge of implementing the Law and its regulations.
- The Civil Service Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. (M/49) dated 10/07/1397 AH (27/06/1977 AD), and the Executive Regulations for Human Resources issued by Ministerial Resolution No. 1550 dated 09/06/1440 AH (15/02/2019 AD), which referred to the acts prohibited from the employee, including: abuse of functional authority, abuse of influence, accepting or requesting bribes in any of the forms stipulated in the Anti-Bribery Law.
- The Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics of the Public Service issued by the Council of Ministers Resolution No. (555) dated 25/12/1437 AH (28/09/2016 AD), which aims to enhance the citizen's confidence in the services provided by the state, combat corruption in all its forms, and develop the culture of the public employee with the importance of



the role he plays and the ethical frameworks in which he works, it has imposed on public servants several duties towards the public, the most important of which are: dealing with them impartially and objectively without discrimination, completing their transactions objectively and accurately, and refraining from any action that negatively affects public confidence in public office, it also obliges the public employee to disclose any case of conflict of interest, a case or potential, before taking a decision or expressing an opinion on the incident in question, and not to participate in any decision that directly or indirectly affects the award of any contract to which one of his relatives is a party.

Second: Approving a number of means aimed at preventing corrupt practices in the field of public service delivery:

- Establishing an electronic portal (Etimad platform) that regulates the process of implementing government works and procurement and is available to the public, in order to ensure transparency and ensure the selection of competitors with competence in providing services.
- Establishing a unified national platform for employment (Jadarat) aimed at achieving efficiency, transparency and justice in recruitment procedures.
- Providing special channels for receiving reports of financial and administrative corruption practices.
- The commitment of the Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority - in accordance with its legally prescribed competencies - to review the working methods and procedures in the entities covered by its competences, with the aim of identifying weaknesses that could lead to corruption, working to address them, and proposing the necessary regulations and policies to prevent and combat corruption, in addition to periodically reviewing the relevant laws and regulations to determine their adequacy and work to develop and lift them.
- Digital transformation in the provision of government services.

Third: Promulgating a number of legislations and mechanisms aimed at preventing and recovering illicit financial flows:

- Whereas funds resulting from corruption crimes pose a serious threat, the Kingdom has issued several legislations and mechanisms to prevent and recover illicit financial flows, in view of the negative effects of such looted funds, the depletion of economic and development resources, and its obligation resulting from its accession to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which stipulates in Article (31): "1. Each State Party shall, to the maximum extent possible within its domestic legal system, take such measures as may be necessary to enable the confiscation of: (a) Proceeds of crime



derived from offences established in accordance with this Convention or property of the value of which is equivalent to that of such proceeds; (b) property, equipment or other instrumentalities that have been used or intended for use in the commission of offences established in accordance with this Convention...", the most prominent legislation is as follows:

- The Law of Criminal Procedure promulgated by Royal Decree No. (M/2) dated 22/01/1435 AH (26/11/2013 AD), Article (216) stipulates that: "The President of the Court shall send the enforceable criminal judgment issued by the Court to the Administrative Governor to take enforcement measures. The administrative governor shall take the necessary measures to implement the judgment immediately."
- The Executive Regulations of the Law of Criminal Procedure issued by the Council of Ministers Resolution No. (142) dated 21/03/1436 AH (12/01/2015 AD), where Article (X) stipulates: "... 3- The expiry of the general criminal case shall not prevent the proceeding of the procedures for the confiscation of what is considered to be the object of confiscation..."
- Royal Decree No. (43) dated 29/11/1377 AH (17/06/1958 AD), Article (3) of which stipulates that "in addition to the penalties mentioned in the preceding article, whoever is found guilty shall be sentenced to appropriate compensation to those who suffered the damage by returning the sums illegally taken to their owners."
- Clause (II) of Royal Decree No. (M/18) dated 23/2/1436 AH (16/12/2014 AD) containing the continuation of the provisions of Article (9) of the Law of Functions of Directing Public Funds issued by Royal Decree No. (M/77) dated 23/10/1395 AH (29/10/1975 AD), which stipulates: "... In addition to obliging them to return funds, objects, stamps and papers of embezzled, wasted, lost or equivalent value. Such crimes shall be adjudicated in accordance with the personnel disciplinary system."
- The Anti-Bribery Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. (M/36) dated 29/12/1412 AH (30/06/1992 AD), where Article (15) stipulates that: "Whoever is found guilty of the crime of bribery shall be sentenced to confiscation of the money, advantage or interest subject of the crime whenever possible, or confiscation of its value, as the case may be, and confiscation of any proceeds resulting from such money, advantage or interest".
- Anti-Money Laundering Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/20 dated 05/02/1439 AH (26/10/2017 AD), article (34) stipulates that: "The competent court shall order the confiscation of funds associated with a money-laundering crime that is not based on a conviction in the event that the perpetrator cannot be prosecuted because of his death, escape, absence or identification." Article (36) also stipulates that: "Unless otherwise provided by another law, confiscated funds shall devolve to the public treasury, and such



funds shall remain charged within the limits of their value with any rights legitimately determined by any other party in good faith.

- The organizational and structural arrangements related to combating financial and administrative corruption, issued by Royal Decree No. (A/277) dated 15/04/1441 AH (13/12/2019 AD), which include in clause (VIII) the following: "If the wealth of a public employee and the like increases after assuming office that is not commensurate with his income or resources based on evidence based on financial investigations that he has committed crimes of financial or administrative corruption, the burden of proof shall be on him to verify that his cash or in-kind funds have been acquired by lawful means, this includes the husband, children and relatives up to the first degree, and in the event that he is unable to prove their legitimate source, the results of the financial investigations shall be referred to the Criminal Investigation and Prosecution Unit at the Authority, to investigate the concerned employee and take the necessary measures to file a criminal case... The lawsuit shall include a request for the recovery or confiscation of funds related to the crime, if proven" In Clause (IX) it reads: "In the event that the person involved, suspected or accused of a crime of financial or administrative corruption escapes outside the Kingdom or dies with sufficient evidence to convict him, The Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority, in coordination with the relevant authorities, shall work to obtain evidence, documents and investigation results, if any, for the purpose of taking the necessary measures to file a case before the competent court requesting consideration of the return of the proceeds of the crime. After the judgment is issued and it acquires the final status appended to the executive form, the Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority shall coordinate with the Ministry of Justice to take the necessary measures to implement the judgment internally or externally in accordance with the implementation system, the relevant international conventions, and the rule of reciprocity."