

Supreme Council for Family Affairs

**Report containing additional information about the initial report submitted
by the State of Qatar to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on
implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
(CRC/C/51/Add.5)**

July 2001

Introduction

This report constitutes a reply to the preliminary list of issues (CRC/C/Q/QAT/1) raised by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in connection with the initial report submitted to it by the State of Qatar under article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/51/Add.5).

The present document may be viewed as an addendum providing data and information that explain particular sections of and clarify certain issues addressed fully in the initial report.

Since the initial report has been under the Committee's consideration for more than one year, the scope of the present document has been limited to replying to the requests for clarification in connection with that initial report. Data have been collected and analyzed in accordance with the aims of the initial report.

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PART I

A. Data and statistics

1. Demography of the under-18 population in the State of Qatar

In 1997 the number of persons under the age of 18 stood at 169,668, of whom 87,528, or 51.6 per cent, were male and 82,140, or 48.4 per cent, were female. The number of Qatari children amounted to 78,732, representing 46.4 per cent of the total number of children. The following table shows the distribution of the under-18 population, by sex, nationality and age group.

Distribution of the under-18 population, by sex, nationality and age group

Age group	Qatari			Non-Qatari			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0 - 4	11,860	11,351	23,211	13,137	12,490	52,627	24,997	23,841	48,838
5 - 9	11,202	10,365	13,567	13,688	12,912	26,600	24,890	23,277	48,167
10 - 14	9,313	9,058	18,371	11,496	10,833	22,329	20,809	19,891	40,700
15 - 19	7,852	7,731	15,583	8,980	7,400	15,380	16,832	15,131	31,963
Total	40,227	38,505	78,732	47,301	43,635	89,936	87,528	82,140	169,668

Source: General census, March 1997

(Translator's note: The figures in the fourth column, second row, and seventh column, first, fourth and final rows are incorrect.)

2. Spending on social needs, as percentages of total state expenditures

(a) Education and health spending for the years 1996-1997, 1997-1998, and 1998-1999

Government spending on education and health services for the above-mentioned years consisted of expenditure on wages and salaries, current expenditure, and capital expenditure on major projects.

Total spending on education and health for those years amounted to QR 6,331,162,000, representing 28.6 per cent of total government expenditure of QR 22,106,228,000. Education services accounted for QR 3,971,554,000, or 17.9 per cent of total expenditure, while spending on health services amounted to QR 2,359,608,000, or 10.7 per cent of total expenditure. The table below provides a detailed breakdown of government spending on education and health services.

Government spending on education and health (in thousands of Qatari riyals)

<i>Year Expenditure</i>	<i>1996/1997</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>	<i>1998/1999</i>	<i>Total</i>
Education				
Wages and salaries	957,083	1,046,489	1,089,292	
Current expenditure	197,789	227,666	233,496	
Capital expenditure	2,540	48,835	54,817	
Total	1,196,444	1,355,562	141,948	3,971,554
Public health				
Wages and salaries	114,200	122,906	126,006	
Current expenditure	468,224	658,075	765,512	
Capital expenditure	14,099	29,277	14,183	
Total	607,689	834,277	917,642	2,359,608
Total expenditure				
Wages and salaries	2,842,487	3,611,204	3,180,516	
Current expenditure	2,062,114	2,045,607	2,446,940	
Capital expenditure	2,089,431	1,946,638	1,881,291	
Total	6,994,032	7,603,449	7,508,747	22,106,228

Source: Planning Council, Statistical Yearbook No. 20 (October 2000), Tables 274, 275 and 276.

(Translator's note: The totals given under the heading education do not correspond to the figures provided. The first three totals under the heading health do not correspond to the figures provided).

3. Children deprived of a family environment and separated from their parents

In 2001 the number of child orphans (registered with the Department of Social Affairs of the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing and receiving social benefits) stood at 539. Of these, only two had lost both parents and were living with relatives, while those children who had lost their father only were living with their mother. The total number of children born of a father or of parents unknown stood at 113; most children of unknown parentage were living with foster families. There were 17 children whose fathers were unknown and who were living with their mothers. The table below provides details about the distribution of these children, by sex and according to personal circumstances.

Children deprived of a family environment, by sex and according to circumstances

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Orphans</i>		<i>Of unknown parentage</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Father</i>	<i>Both parents</i>	<i>Father</i>	<i>Both parents</i>	
Male	271	1	7	51	330
Female	266	-	10	45	321
Total	537	1	17	96	651

Source: Social Security Department, Department of Social Affairs, Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing, July 2001

As the following table shows, most of the children in question were in the 11 to 20 age group.

Children deprived of a family environment, by sex and age group

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Father deceased</i>		<i>Both parents deceased</i>		<i>Father unknown</i>		<i>Parents unknown</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
1 – 10	26	43	-	-	5	7	24	16	121
11 – 20	245	223	1	-	2	3	27	29	530
Total	271	266	1	-	7	10	51	45	651

4. Enrolment and completion rates, disaggregated by sex, age, and according to type of school (i.e. public, and private) in percentages

The following tables show the numbers of students and enrolment and completion rates at the elementary, intermediate and secondary levels, in private, and public schools, for the last three years.

Public schools

Elementary level

<i>Year</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>						<i>1998/1999</i>						<i>1999/2000</i>					
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Kindergarten</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Kindergarten</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Kindergarten</i>	
Number of students	7,694		18,838		10,554		7,827		19,392		11,037		6,757		19,129		11,827	
Enrolment rate (%)	9.9		19.5		82.8		9.3		20.3		29		8.1		19.1		25.4	
Completion rate (%)	90		98		96		89		98		95		91		97		95	
Average age at enrolment	6 - 8		6 - 8		6 - 8		6 - 8		6 - 8		6 - 8		6 - 8		6 - 8		6 - 8	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	11	8	11	6	9	6	12	1	11	5	10	1	11	10	11	5	10	2

Note: Kindergarten only up to fifth grade

(Translator's note: the figure of 82.2% in the fourth column, second row of the table, looks out of place compared with the other figures provided).

Public schools

Intermediate level

<i>Year</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>				<i>1998/1999</i>				<i>1999/2000</i>			
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
Number of students	8,265		8,440		8,487		8,699		8,462		8,985	
Enrolment rate (%)	5.9		3		5.2		3.8		6.3		3.3	
Completion rate (%)	88		91		88		91		90		97	
Average age at enrolment	11 - 15		11 - 15		11 - 15		11 - 15		11 - 15		11 - 15	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	14	9	14	5	14	10	14	8	14	9	11	6

Secondary level

<i>Year</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>				<i>1998/1999</i>				<i>1999/2000</i>			
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
No. of pupils	6,845		7,689		1,833		8,000		6,610		7,896	
Enrolment rate (%)	3.5		1.6		4.7		2.1		4.4		2	
Completion rate (%)	64		85		72		85		69		84	
Average age at enrolment	14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	18	2	17	7	18	2	17	10	17	6	17	5

Private education

Nursery school

<i>Year</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>				<i>1998/1999</i>				<i>1999/2000</i>			
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
Number of students	2,541		2,292		7,534		2,432		2,682		2,427	
Enrolment rate (%)	83.5		79.5		75.7		69.3		74		74.2	
Completion rate (%)	-		-		-		-		-		-	
Average age at enrolment	2 years, 9 months		2 years, 9 months		2 years, 9 months		2 years, 9 months		2 years, 9 months		2 years, 9 months	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	5	-	5	-	5	-	5	-	5	-	5	-

Private education

Elementary

<i>Year</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>				<i>1998/1999</i>				<i>1999/2000</i>			
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
Number of students	4,605		2,887		4,774		3,005		4,593		3,072	
Enrolment rate (%)	29		29		31		26		28		30	
Completion rate (%)	99		99		97		99		99		100	
Average age at enrolment	4 years, 9 months		4 years, 9 months		4 years, 9 months		4 years, 9 months		4 years, 9 months		4 years, 9 months	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	12	9	12	9	12	9	12	9	12	9	12	9

Private education

Intermediate

<i>Year</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>				<i>1998/1999</i>				<i>1999/2000</i>			
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
Number of students	858		450		995		468		1,173		494	
Enrolment rate (%)	33		20		21		24		14		23	
Completion rate (%)	88		88		93		92		98		98	
Average age at enrolment	10 years, 9 months		10 years, 9 months		10 years, 9 months		10 years, 9 months		10 years, 9 months		10 years, 9 months	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	17	9	17	9	17	9	17	9	17	9	17	9

Private education

Secondary

<i>Year</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>				<i>1998/1999</i>				<i>1999/2000</i>			
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
Number of students	231		380		253		415		420		483	
Enrolment rate (%)	26		46		18		45		12		40	
Completion rate (%)	56		71		66		70		81		82	
Average age at enrolment	13 years, 9 months		13 years, 9 months		13 years, 9 months		13 years, 9 months		13 years, 9 months		13 years, 9 months	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	20	9	20	9	20	9	20	9	20	9	20	9

Technical schools for boys

Secondary (technical schools)

<i>Year</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>						<i>1998/1999</i>						<i>1999/2000</i>					
	<i>Business</i>		<i>Industry</i>		<i>Industrial technology</i>		<i>Business</i>		<i>Industry</i>		<i>Business technology</i>		<i>Business</i>		<i>Industry</i>		<i>Business technology</i>	
Number of students	201		278		-		194		380		-		220		274		100	
Enrolment rate (%)	3.5		5.4		-		4.1		7.1		-		8.2		2.6		8	
Completion rate (%)	48		67		-		55		58		-		78		51		-	
Average age at enrolment	14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18		14 - 18	
Average age upon completion	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	20	8	19	9	-	-	20	8	20	5	-	-	19	2	18	11	-	-

Religious Institute for Boys

Intermediate and secondary

<i>Year</i>	<i>1997/1998</i>				<i>1998/1999</i>				<i>1999/2000</i>			
	<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>		<i>Boys</i>		<i>Girls</i>	
82	120		64		103		75		91			
20.7	6.7		31.3		16.5		22.7		14.3			
87	18		87		71		92		77			
11 -15	14 -18		11 -15		14 -18		11 -15		14 -18			
	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months	Years	Months
	15	6	19	4	15	1	20	4	16	4	19	8

5. Children with special needs

Number of children with disabilities, disaggregated by sex and level of educational achievement (data for the age group from birth to 18 years)

<i>Type of education</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
None	504	401	905
Receiving some form of training (residing in a hospital in order to receive treatment)	21	36	47
Attending a regular school	120	100	220
Attending a special needs school	315	200	515
Grand total	960	727	1,687

Source: Qatari Association for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (July 2001)

(Translator's note: the figure in the second column, third row (36) appears to be incorrect. If changed to 26 it would be consistent with the totals given).

Number of children with special needs, disaggregated by sex and place of residence (data for the age group from birth to 18 years)

<i>Place of residence</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Hospital	21	26	47
With own family	939	701	1,640
Grand total	960	727	1,687

Source: Qatari Association for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (July 2001)

6. Number of children involved in illegal activities (disaggregated by sex, age, type of crime and duration of sanction), for the last three years

Number of children who allegedly committed a crime (act of juvenile delinquency) which was reported to the authorities (all the children in question are male)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Remanded in custody and sentenced</i>	<i>Released on bail and case subsequently investigated</i>	<i>Total</i>
1998	112	58	170
1999	153	83	236
2000	133	43	176
Total	398	184	582

Source: Department of Juvenile Police, Public Relations Department, Ministry of the Interior (July 2001)

Number of children remanded in custody and sentenced for the last three years, by age

<i>Age Year</i>	<i>7-10 years</i>	<i>10-13 years</i>	<i>13-16 years</i>	<i>Total</i>
1998	3	23	86	112
1999	2	26	125	153
2000	1	22	110	133
Total	6	71	321	398

Source: Department of Juvenile Police, Public Relations Department, Ministry of the Interior (July 2001)

Number of children remanded in custody and sentenced for the last three years, according to the type of crime

<i>Year</i>	<i>Against property</i>	<i>Against persons</i>	<i>Against public morals</i>	<i>Sniffing of chemical solvents</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
1998	55	4	33	1	19	112
1999	82	13	40	4	14	153
2000	72	36	10	-	15	133
Total	209	53	83	5	48	398

Source: Department of Juvenile Police, Public Relations Department, Ministry of the Interior, (July 2001)

Number of cases of recidivism (acts of juvenile delinquency) for the last three years among persons given custodial sentences and those left at liberty

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of cases of recidivism among persons given custodial sentences</i>	<i>Number of cases of recidivism among persons left at liberty</i>	<i>Total</i>
1998	7	-	7
1999	26	1	27
2000	19	1	20
Total	52	2	54

Source: Department of Juvenile Police, Public Relations Department, Ministry of the Interior (July 2001)

Minors whose cases were examined by the courts in 1998, 1999 and 2000, by number and the type of sanction or decision taken in their regard (taken from the juvenile court records)

<i>Sanction or sentence</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Total</i>
Placement (three to six months' detention in a social reform institution)	13 suspended sentences	-	-	13
Placement (one to two months' detention in a social reform institution)	17 suspended sentences	3	14	34
For a period of 10 days	5	2	1	7
Judicial probation (minor remained in home environment)	78	136	81	295
Fine of 100 to 1,000 riyals (with suspended sentence)	39	23	9	71
Fine of 100 to 1,000 riyals (with sentence imposed)	9	-	4	13
Delivered into the custody of a guardian	8	4	5	17
Reprimand	16	11	-	27
Taken into consideration in another case involving the minor	-	3	-	3
Charges dropped or proceedings halted and case dismissed	12	-	11	23
Found not guilty	7	14	28	49
Total	204	196	152	552

Source: Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Relations, Department of Juvenile Police (July 2001)

(Translator's note: The total in the fifth column, third row, should be 8 (not 7) and the totals in the fourth and fifth columns, final row, should be 153 and 553 respectively).

B. General Measures of Implementation

1. The general position of the State of Qatar vis-à-vis the Convention:

The competent authorities in the State of Qatar are examining the reservation made by Qatar upon ratification of the Convention with a view to evaluating the possibility of amending or withdrawing it.

2. The roles of various government departments with respect to child issues and the implementation of the Convention

(a) Coordination and cooperation between government departments

In view of the particular characteristics of the State of Qatar, namely that over 75 per cent of the population lives in and around Doha (the capital city) with the rest living in the remaining cities and villages, all government departments are centralized and consist of ministries and government agencies. Coordination is assured through the Council of Ministers and the committees that are established for specific purposes and in which the ministries and relevant agencies are members.

The Supreme Council for Family Affairs is considered a supreme coordinating and supervisory body which comes directly under the Council of Ministers. The Council works for the preservation, protection and promotion of the family by recommending legislation, adopting policies, formulating plans, and implementing programmes and projects intended to preserve the family unit and assure the welfare, protection and development of its members, particularly children, in coordination and cooperation with the competent authorities. The Council does not offer services to the public directly, but may sponsor the execution of innovative projects which could help to achieve its aims.

The Council's structure and working methods reflect a determination to achieve the highest degree of intersectoral cooperation and coordination at and between government departments and institutions, and non-governmental organizations which are involved in child issues.

The Council is made up of the Board of Directors, presided over by Her Highness Shaikhah Muzah Bint Nasir al-Musnid, the wife of His Highness the Emir, and of representatives of the government authorities concerned with children's affairs, namely the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Planning Council, the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing (which has two important departments as regards children's affairs, namely the Department of Social Affairs and the Department of Labour), the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Public Authority for Youth, one representative of non-governmental organizations, and another from the private sector.

Although the Supreme Council for Family Affairs is directly subordinate to the Council of Ministers, its financial resources are not limited to the appropriated funds which the State allocates from the budget to enable it to finance the programmes and projects that help achieve its goals.

The Council has competence for strengthening the role of the family in society and assuring its welfare and protection in various domains as well as for working to realize the objectives set forth in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other instruments that concern family affairs (article 3 of the Council's statutes). The Council is the agency responsible for monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the State of Qatar. It also has a

responsibility to endeavour to improve the situation of women and encourage them to participate in the life of society.

In coordination and cooperation with the competent authorities, the Council has the authority to draw up a national plan, within the framework of the State's General Plan, for the protection and welfare of the family in various domains, particularly in the social, health, educational and cultural spheres; to scrutinize and comment upon family legislation; to comment on and monitor the implementation of draft conventions relating to the protection of the family; and to set up a centralized database containing data and statistics on the family.¹

The Council endeavours to achieve these objectives by mobilizing the existing mechanisms and resources of the authorities and promoting a culture of partnership between ministries, national government institutions and non-governmental organizations. It uses the mechanisms described below to open up to the community at large.

(a) Voluntary committees

In pursuit of its goals, the Council is supported by five voluntary committees of experts, made up of men and women who work in the government and non-governmental sectors and have significant experience and expertise in their respective professions. The experts promote the rights of the particular groups for which the committees have competence, namely children; women; persons with special needs; youth; and older persons.

The remit, structure, voluntary nature, and social, political and professional standing of the members of these committees allow the committees to play a significant role in strengthening coordination between the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and the departments and institutions which their members represent. The committees also recommend policies, legislation, plans and programmes for the welfare, protection and development of the groups included in their plans of action and priorities with a view to responding to the real needs of society.

Four committees have direct or indirect responsibility for child issues and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as described here below.

The Committee on Maternity and the Child

The following are some of the projects which this committee is currently overseeing:

- Drafting of a Children's Bill which, upon enactment, will constitute a comprehensive legal reference on the rights of the child prior to and following birth, including the child's right to health-care, educational, social, and cultural services; care of children with special needs; and protection of the child against all forms of exploitation;
- Implementation of ordinances regulating camel racing in terms of safety and security on the track;
- Establishment of a maternity and child centre in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);
- A national programme for the publication and dissemination of children's literature;

¹ Article 4, Royal Decree No. 53 (1998), concerning the establishment of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs

- The establishment of a national children's library to encourage children to take a life-long interest in reading and learning as an enjoyable pursuit and means of developing their personal skills and social awareness;
- A children's television programme to familiarize children with their rights and raise their health and environmental awareness in a positive and entertaining way;
- The establishment of an annual prize for children's literature the purpose of which is to encourage writers to write for children and thus to provide literary output for the library, to develop the public's taste for children's literature, and to further the cultural development of children in the region and the Arab world.

Women's Affairs Committee

This committee's achievements include the following:

- The committee scrutinized the Personal Status Bill and helped shape the Council's views thereon, drawing on input from experts and specialists. The committee recommended a number of amendments to the Bill which were discussed at a symposium attended by all of the interested parties from all of the relevant departments and institutions. Most of the committee's recommendations were taken up, including a proposal about raising the minimum marrying age.
- A public symposium on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women was convened to raise awareness of the contents and aims of the Convention.
- In cooperation with the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing, the committee reviewed a new government housing project and provided input intended to assure the safety of children of divorcees and widows by providing them with suitable accommodation.

National Committee for Persons with Special Needs

This committee's achievements are described below.

- Design of a project, in cooperation with the Hamad Medical Foundation, for the creation of a genetic counselling centre whose object is to diagnose rare diseases, research the causes of congenital deformities, conduct a comprehensive survey of all cases of disability in the State of Qatar, and offer pre-marital testing. In this regard, a decree has recently been promulgated providing for the establishment of a genetic testing laboratory at the Hamad Medical Foundation;
- Drafting of the Persons with Special Needs Bill which is currently before the Prime Minister;
- Drafting of the Employment of Persons with Special Needs Bill which is currently before the Prime Minister;
- A library project for persons with special needs;
- A range of awareness and education campaigns designed to promote public awareness of the concept of disability, provide information about services available to persons with special needs, and educate mothers about ways of dealing with disability;
- Efforts to integrate persons with special needs into society.

Youth Affairs Committee

- Creation of the Crown Prince Youth Award which is targeted at young persons in the 14 to 20 age group and aims at developing their individual talents and skills in the areas of sport, culture and community service, through designated programmes;
- A youth welfare centre project the purpose of which is to establish three centres respectively for children in detention, juveniles at risk of delinquency, and convicted minors, so as to develop the range of services available to them, offer them treatment and counselling, and deter them from delinquency or the risk of delinquency in the future;
- The Qatar Club for Girls, established as an all-inclusive sports and cultural club where girls can take part in a variety of social, cultural, artistic and sports activities and programmes and thus put their spare time to good and profitable use.

Committee for Coordination between Government Agencies and Non-governmental Associations

As part of its efforts to strengthen and deepen cooperation between the sectors involved in child issues, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs has established a supreme coordinating committee which ensures coordination between government agencies and non-governmental associations working in the family domain in order to optimize resources, avoid duplication of effort in the planning and implementation of programmes, and encourage associations to become involved, in addition to their charitable work, in the financing and execution of social development projects. This approach has resulted in the adoption of two projects the implementation of which is being overseen by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs in partnership with non-governmental associations. The projects in question are:

- A family counselling centre;
- A home for orphans.

Cooperation with regional and international organizations

The State of Qatar endeavours to maintain constant communication and cooperation with regional and international organizations, primarily the United Nations and its various agencies. It uses the technical assistance and training programmes provided to it to develop and implement various programmes. It also participates in all activities and efforts aimed at enhancing the quality of life, dignity and development of the human person. Pursuant to Royal Decree No. 53 (1998), concerning the establishment of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, the Council was assigned the task of coordination as between the government authorities and non-governmental associations in Qatar and regional and international organizations.

In December 2000 the Council concluded an agreement with the Office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the Middle East and North Africa Region for the establishment of a liaison unit between Qatar and UNICEF. Work is under way to define the steps needed to enable the unit to play its part in deepening the channels of communication, cooperation and coordination between the Supreme Council as the agency responsible for overseeing and guiding child policies, programmes and projects in the State of Qatar, and UNICEF.

In the same context, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs has signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) concerning the formulation of a national strategy for the advancement of women in Qatar.

(b) Monitoring implementation of the Convention

Administrative units of the various government departments concerned with family welfare, protection and promotion monitor the progress achieved on child issues using international indicators.

Departments of statistics at the Ministry of Health, the Hamad Medical Foundation, and the Ministry of Education monitor indicators and measure progress made in terms of the survival, protection, development and participation of the child.

The task of monitoring the implementation and evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of projects and programmes is performed internally within each sector. The Council is endeavouring to remedy this deficiency by working in cooperation with the relevant authorities to create a centralized database and to harmonize the monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of programmes and projects carried out by government and non-governmental institutions in the fields of family welfare, protection and promotion.

(c) Receiving and addressing complaints of violations of child rights

In spite of the extreme importance which is attached to the child in the State of Qatar and the significant successes which the State has scored in this domain, no specific apparatus has yet been put in place to receive complaints of violations of child rights. The Supreme Council for Family Affairs is examining all aspects of this matter. The competent executive authorities and institutions in the State do, however, take action to deal with violations of child rights in conformity with the applicable laws governing these same institutions. Any person who violates a child's rights, whether by omission or by intentionally or unintentionally causing harm or injury to a child, is liable to prosecution.

Ministry of Education

The school social counsellor investigates students' behavioural problems and deals with them in cooperation with the legal guardian and the school. If the counsellor observes any violation of a student's rights or act of aggression against him or her, or receives a complaint from a student in this regard, he looks into the situation and sends a report about it to the Department of Students' Individual Welfare of the Social Education Department of the Ministry of Education, which is the body responsible for monitoring and counselling students with behavioural or educational problems. In its turn, the department follows up on the case with the child's parents and refers the matter to the Ministry of the Interior, if the child's protection so requires.

Ministry of Health and the Hamad Medical Foundation

The Hamad Medical Foundation and health centres pick up on cases of non-compliance with or violation or infringement of child rights, and a qualified social worker then investigates the situation of the child and the family. The competent staff in these centres deal with some cases directly and refer others to the competent authorities of the Ministry of Interior, if the latter's intervention is needed to protect the child.

Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing- Department of Social Affairs

The Social Welfare Department of the Department of Social Affairs oversees social welfare programmes for older persons, minors, persons with disabilities, and the sick, and keeps a regular eye on issues affecting these categories. The department also receives complaints of violations by omission or commission of the rights of these categories, investigates them and takes action such as referring complaints to the Ministry of the Interior and submitting recommendations to the Shari'a Court. A coordinating mechanism does exist between the Department of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health respectively to follow up on issues affecting the children for whom they have a duty of care.

Department of Labour

The labour laws prohibit the employment of children under the age of 15, regardless of the work involved, and forbid them from entering work premises. The law regulates the employment of minors who are aged 15 or over, but are under the age of 18. These minors are forbidden by law from engaging

in any work which may endanger their health, safety or morals. A minor or his legal guardian may lodge a complaint with the Department of Labour concerning any infringement by an employer of the law on the employment of minors. The Labour Inspection Unit carries out inspections of premises, with particular stress on work being done by minors, if present. The inspector prepares a report on infractions and submits it to the Director of the Department, who in turn institutes administrative measures to bring a halt to the infraction or refer the matter to the courts for urgent action.

Ministry of the Interior

The Ministry of the Interior handles individual complaints filed with the security forces concerning any violation of child rights or infractions or felonies perpetrated by minors, including complaints lodged by minors themselves. It also deals with the complaints which are referred to it by various departments.

Supreme Council for Family Affairs

At present, the Council deals with complaints which are sent to it directly or come to its attention via the mass media.

- (d) Collection and analysis of disaggregated data, and definition of appropriate indicators in order to design policies and programmes affecting all persons under 18 years

The Department of Statistics of the Planning Council is considered the foremost central authority for data collection and analysis. Some of the other competent authorities, such as the ministries respectively of health, education, labour, and of the interior, employ statisticians to carry out specific studies and surveys for use in policy-making and programmes.

Census data, family health and other periodic surveys in the economic, social and educational fields are the principal sources of information that are used to define appropriate indicators for child policies and programmes, including, for example, educational programmes and policies relating to enrolment and drop-out rates, the performance of the education system and educational outcomes, and programmes on health, health coverage and health performance.

The absence of an integrated information and statistical database on the family, particularly on children and women, is one of the obstacles that affects planning, the conduct of studies and research on children and women, and the realization of certain objectives.² The Council, in coordination with the competent State authorities, is therefore working to create an integrated information and data network on the family, based on a review and appraisal of the current status and modus operandi of existing national databases as well as of any shortcomings they may have.

- (i) Operating resources of these institutions, including budget and human resources

Within the context of the State's efforts to accord high priority to child welfare programmes, some 28.6 per cent of total government expenditure is now accounted for by spending on health and education services.

The total number of persons working in the government education and health sectors in 1999 stood at 35,007, of whom 14,076 were employed in the education sector (40.2 per cent of all government

² Report of the State of Qatar on follow-up to the resolutions adopted by the 1990 World Summit for Children (final report of the Summit, p.21)

employees). The number of persons working in the health sector stood at 1,642 (4.7 per cent of all government employees).³

(ii) Overlap or duplication in the functions of these institutions and measures taken to remedy the situation

The establishment of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs in 1998 as a supreme coordinating and supervisory authority facilitated the development of a high level of coordination between institutions working in the field of family welfare, protection and promotion, by making these institutions members of the Council's governing body.

The Committee for Coordination between Government Agencies and Non-governmental Associations, which was set up by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, has also helped to prevent overlap in the social functions of the non-governmental sector.

(iii) Comprehensive plan of action for the implementation of the Convention

The Supreme Council for Family Affairs is the authority responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the national level. Its efforts in this domain are exemplified below.

Review and evaluation of the current situation

The Supreme Council for Family Affairs coordinated national efforts to produce the national report on follow-up to the resolutions of the 1990 World Summit for Children (the Summit's final report). It used that exercise to carry out an appraisal, in cooperation with all government and non-governmental organizations involved in child issues in Qatar, of the situation of the child, looking at institutional performance, programme efficiency, the effectiveness of services, and the success of State policies for the protection and development of the child.

The process helped identify a number of strengths which had contributed to the success of programmes and the achievement of goals, as well as the obstacles which impede progress in certain programmes. It also facilitated the identification of future activities to be carried out at the national and international levels, and highlighted the need to prepare a more detailed report intended for those who make and implement policies. The Council used the process to prepare the report, raising public awareness of child issues through coverage by the media of the report's aims and significance. The Council called a press conference to publicize the results of the appraisal and distributed the report widely among the relevant government bodies and non-governmental organizations as well as interested members of the public.

Formulation of a national strategy for children and women

The strategy for children

Based on the progress which the State has made in promoting the welfare (protection, development, survival and participation) of the child, and in an effort to preserve these gains and effect a shift towards new priorities, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs has adopted a national plan of action to carry out a comprehensive survey and assessment of the situation of the child, in accordance with the spirit and substance of the Convention.

³ Ibid.

The survey, which involves over 100 national figures representing all government and non-governmental organizations and sectors involved in child issues, shall be the cornerstone on which national goals for the advancement of the child shall be built over the next 10 years (the first decade of the present century). A national plan of action for the realization of strategic goals will be drawn up and endorsed at the national conference to be held under the aegis of his Excellency the Emir of Qatar in 2002.

The survey will cover the following core areas: planning and management of the requisite human and financial resources; legislation; pregnant women's health; nursery schools and kindergartens; academic curricula and basic education; the family, education and society; children with special needs; health service universalization; children's culture; the role of the media; and safety and social security.

Strategy for the advancement of women

In the same context, the Council is currently engaged in a project to formulate a strategy for the advancement of women in cooperation with UNIFEM. A comprehensive review based on the core elements of the Beijing Platform for Action will be used to define national priorities for the strategy and to draw up a plan of action for its implementation. It is expected that the strategy will be completed in time for its unveiling at the national conference in the middle of 2002. Some 75 national experts from government and non-governmental organizations as well as civil society are involved in this national project.

National programme for the dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

In 2000 the Supreme Council for Family Affairs set up a joint committee to oversee implementation of the national programme for the dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in cooperation with the competent authorities. The first stage of the programme, designed to publicize information about the Convention via the various mass media and the Ministry of Education, has now been completed. The activities carried out during that stage are described here below.

- A campaign slogan ('Yes to the rights of the child!') was adopted and used in all campaign publications.
- Leaflets of the text of the Convention were printed (the official text, an unofficial, simplified version, and a colouring book containing extracts from the Convention for children in the first three grades of school). The leaflets will be distributed at the beginning of the school year (September 2001) to teachers, social counsellors and students.
- Campaign publications have been prepared (leaflets, academic curricula, posters, sports apparel, and so on).
- The text of the Convention has been published in the local Arab and English newspapers and programme events given wide coverage.
- Two television discussions have been held on the contents of the Convention.
- Three radio discussions have been held on the contents of the Convention and the aims of the national programme for the dissemination of the Convention.
- Three training sessions have been run at the Ministry of Education for male and female social counsellors (working in the government and non-governmental sectors) in order to familiarize them with the Convention.
- In September the committee will take part in the festival for the new school year so as to gain publicity for the national campaign.

Based on an evaluation of what was achieved in stage one, the following activities are those that will be undertaken in stage two of the programme:

- The Ministry of Education will sponsor a number of activities in the form of symposia, the use of school broadcasts, the press and educational theatre.
- The Convention will be publicized through advertisements placed on streets, in restaurants and at post offices (and with the issuance of a special postage stamp).

As a corollary to this programme, and in cooperation with UNICEF, the Council is planning a Gulf media conference on television and the rights of the child for the first quarter of 2002. The event will include a meeting for children from the region. The Council has further decided to make the rights of the child one of the central themes of the annual civil defence fair which it is organizing with the Ministry of the Interior.

3. Involvement of civil society throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention

The policies pursued by the Council in discharging all of its mandated functions, including the realization of the goals set forth in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other international instruments relating to family issues, are described as follows:

1. The Council seeks to widen the involvement of the public in planning and decision-making through the voluntary committees. It involves representatives from the various relevant sectors, including non-governmental organizations and parties with a personal interest in child issues, in all committees responsible for scrutinizing and implementing projects and programmes. Such projects and programmes include:
 - (a) The strategy for children;
 - (b) The strategy for the advancement of women;
 - (c) The programme for the dissemination of the Convention;
 - (d) The culture for children programme.
2. The Council encourages non-governmental organizations and the private sector to get involved in the financing and execution of development projects in the field of child welfare, protection and development, and not to confine themselves to a charitable and voluntary role.
3. The Council supports voluntary work in child-related areas such as child welfare and the integration of children with special needs.
4. The Council offers material and moral support for individual and community initiatives on behalf of families and the child.
5. The Council encourages receptiveness to recent international developments in child issues, and supports the participation by those in non-governmental organizations and academia who are actively involved in child issues in relevant regional and international congresses and conferences, including, for example, the regional preparations for the United Nations Special Session on Children.
6. The Council organizes training programmes to improve the effectiveness of professionals working in social affairs. It encourages them to take part in external training programmes in order to make up for the shortage of qualified personnel.

7. The Council strives to mobilize journalists with an interest in child and family issues, encouraging the media to bring the public's attention to the local and international challenges facing the child, including issues such as the exploitation of and violence against children.

4. Measures taken to raise awareness of the Convention, particularly for professionals working for and with children, and the public-at-large, including children themselves. Human rights training and education activities for professionals, especially those working for and with children

The first stage of the national programme for the dissemination of the Convention showed that there was little general awareness of the existence and aims of the Convention. The Council did, however, enjoy the full cooperation of the government departments and private institutions that were contacted to take part in this programme. One of the greatest challenges for the implementation of the programme is the shortage of cadres with training about the Convention. Indeed, it was for this reason that the first stage of the programme was limited to publicizing the Convention through the mass media and the Ministry of Education. The Council was unable to satisfy the wishes of other bodies which had wanted to take part in the first stage of the programme, although copies of the Convention were provided to them and they were encouraged to undertake programmes for children. In order to guarantee the programme's continuity, the Council intends to create a group of cadres with training about the Convention, particularly since the regular training sessions organized for social workers at the Ministry of Health have already shown that a number of them are well prepared to play an active part in these efforts.

The Council also feels the need to provide training on the rights of the child for all persons who work with children through the ministries respectively of education, health, the interior, and justice. The Council is now looking at the experiences of other Arab States in this regard and has asked UNICEF to help it obtain this information.

PART II

The Arabic language is the official language of the State of Qatar. Within the context of the national programme for the dissemination of the Convention, the Convention was printed (the official text and an unofficial simplified version) together with a leaflet containing extracts from the Convention for children in the first three grades of school. The publications will be distributed during the second stage of the national programme in September 2001.

PART III

1. New bills and enacted legislation

(a) 1999

- Prime Ministerial Decree No. 1 (1999), concerning the establishment of the standing committee on drug and alcohol issues. (The committee recommends general policy on combating the unlawful use of psychotropic substances and on the treatment and rehabilitation of addicts. It also designs the plans and programmes needed to implement general policy as well as awareness programmes, and promotes studies and research into combating drugs);
- Ordinance No. 49 of the Minister of Education, concerning the establishment of a committee focusing on autistic children. (The committee designs intervention programmes suitable for school children from this particular category and makes proposals concerning teaching methods, examinations, and new and appropriate educational alternatives for autistic children at regular schools).

(b) 2000

- Ordinance No. 11 (2000), concerning the establishment of the Supreme Council for the Environment and Natural Conservation Areas;
- Prime Ministerial Decree No. 24 (2000), concerning ratification of the State of Qatar's educational policy document (the purpose of which is to develop public education goals which incorporate national objectives aimed at educating the new generation to become good and active citizens; instilling in them love and respect for productive work; and encouraging them to take part in vocational education. The document stipulates free education at all levels and compulsory education for all citizens, male and female, for the nine years from elementary to intermediate levels. It further stresses the importance of offering and progressively expanding preschool education, of developing education for persons with special needs, of adult literacy, adult education, and continuous learning);
- Ordinance No. 48 (2000) of the Minister of Education and Higher Education, concerning the implementation of educational policy and the establishment of a high-level committee of ministries and other relevant State agencies to formulate an educational strategy for the State of Qatar in the form of an integrated project.

(c) 2001

- Royal Decree No. 29 (2001), concerning the ratification of the 1999 Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ILO Convention No. 182);
- Prime Ministerial Decree No. 13 (2001), concerning the issuance of an executive ordinance to the Civil Service Act. (The most important section of the Act regulates maternity leave, granting female employees a break of two hours each day for one year for breastfeeding and offering Qatari women who have been working for the State for more than four years a maximum of two years' leave to take care of children under the age of 16 on two occasions during their working lives, subject to specific conditions. Leave is granted on full pay on the first occasion and on half pay on the second. The conditions regarding age and frequency of leave are waived for women employees who have children with special needs);
- A decision by the President of the Qatari National Olympic Committee to establish a sports federation for disabled sports;
- Application of the new Personal Status Bill on an experimental basis for a one-year period. The purpose is to identify any shortcomings of the Bill by applying it in practice and making amendments thereto prior to its ratification. The Bill contains a number of provisions relating to family protection, including with regard to alimony and custody. One of the positive aspects of the text is the stipulation that custody is a right both of the person who is granted custody and the child itself, and that the rights of the child are paramount.

New institutions

Women's sports centres

The Women's Sports Committee was established in 2000, pursuant to a decision of the President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, in order to promote women's sports in Qatar, enhance women's participation in sports activities, develop awareness of the importance of women taking part in sports, and encourage Qatari women to take part in specialist sports conferences, seminars and studies at all levels nationally and internationally. (Hitherto, Qatari women's involvement in sports had been limited to private schools and clubs). The committee was subsequently incorporated into the Qatari National

Olympic Committee under the name the “Qatari Women’s Sports Committee”. In this connection, three centres were officially inaugurated on 5 May 2001. In January 2001, the State of Qatar, through the Women’s Sports Committee, became a member of the Women’s Sports Federation of the Islamic States.

The Qatari Centre for gifted children

This centre, the first of its kind in the Arab world, was set up in 2001 under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. The centre aims at offering activities, services and programmes to help gifted and exceptionally intelligent students master their intellectual abilities and use them to solve problems and make decisions. The centre is also there to help educational institutions in Qatar to design, plan and deliver educational services to gifted children. The centre further offers gifted students personalized services as well as academic and vocational counselling.

Newly implemented programmes

The rights of the child

The national programme for the dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Supreme Council for Family Affairs).

Information

Social statistics development programme

Convinced that social statistics are a tool for the empowerment of women and the strengthening of their participation in society, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs adopted in February 2001 the designated project which is now being implemented by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The aims of the project, which involves the Planning Council and relevant ministries, are to make statisticians, data analysts and policy-makers aware of the significance of social statistics; to prepare a national report (statistical picture) on men and women in the State of Qatar; to identify key issues and concerns of a social nature in Qatar; and to construct a website containing social data and indicators.

The statistical report on men and women has been completed and a first national workshop held for producers and analysts of social statistics in the State of Qatar.

Health

Maternity and child health programme

Within the context of an integrated programme being carried out by the Hamad Medical Foundation to develop maternity and child services, the following activities have been undertaken:

- A department of maternity and paediatric care was set up in the Hamad Medical Foundation in December 1999 to draw up comprehensive plans and an operational policy for maternity and paediatric services.
- A training programme has been offered to maternity health professionals, including doctors, nurses and social workers. The programme includes training of primary care physicians in the use of ultrasound technology.
- Educational lectures have been held at the Women’s and Lying in Hospital and health centres, in order to teach mothers about nutrition respectively for expectant mothers, women in confinement and children, and to promote natural breastfeeding.

- Ultrasound scanning services have been introduced at health centres.
- A committee for breastfeeding was established in August 2000 and a breastfeeding policy issued to hospitals and health centres. Two Child-Friendly Initiative workshops were held to launch the breastfeeding policy.
- The International Madonna Committee was established in August 2000 to sell maternity wear.

National programme for the early detection of cancer

This is a joint programme between the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and the Qatari Anti-Cancer Association. As part of the programme, a campaign will be launched in September 2001 in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Hamad Medical Foundation to draw attention to the importance of early detection of cancer and to encourage regular screening. Twenty-four girls' secondary schools have been selected for use as campaign centres over a six-month period.

Education

Programme to assess the effectiveness of education in Qatar using United Nations (UNESCO) educational, scientific and cultural criteria

The purpose of the Education for All 2000 Assessment, an exercise in which Qatar took part along with many states throughout the world, was to gauge what has been achieved in terms of Education for All since the March 1990 Jomtien Conference established the operational framework for guaranteeing basic education based on six key goals. The Assessment sought to paint a picture of the achievements of the Education for All policy, using indicators devised by the international working group on Education for All.

Programme to develop kindergartens in the State of Qatar

Thanks to an initiative by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, work is currently under way to implement this programme, in cooperation with the Faculty of Education of the University of Qatar, and with Canadian technical assistance. As part of the programme, the University of Qatar, with technical assistance from York University, Canada, has introduced a diploma course in special education and another one in early childhood. The courses, which were set to begin in spring 2001, aim at training local cadres in promoting education in these particular areas.

Culture and recreation

Annual cultural civil defence fair

The Ministry of the Interior organizes this fair every year. The Supreme Council for Family Affairs has been involved in the management and running of the fair since last year. This event, which lasts for two months each year and is visited by thousands of school children, is used to raise social awareness. Its themes have been broadened to include, in addition to child safety in and outside of the home, issues such as prevention of child illness; family safety in and outside of the home, particularly for mothers, older persons and persons with special needs; and environmental security and safety as key components of human safety. The fair also encourages and promotes voluntary efforts in the domains of security and safety. The rights of the child will be one of the new themes to be introduced at the upcoming fair scheduled for spring 2002. A television special on the rights of the child, which is currently in production, will be shown at that event.

Road safety campaign

Under the auspices of His Highness Crown Prince Jasim Bin Hamad Al Thani, a one-year road safety campaign is being run to focus attention on traffic problems and their attendant dangers, with a view

to protecting and saving the lives of citizens and residents. The campaign is sponsored by the Institute for the Promotion of the Family, in partnership with the security and educational authorities and all relevant agencies.

The “A flower each spring” programme

This programme (1999-2001), which is being carried out under the auspices of the Office of His Highness the Emir, aims at making children aware of their environment. It organizes field trips where boys and girls can learn about their environment as well as artistic competitions and painting workshops around this theme.
