

Information Provided by Saudi Arabia's Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority (NAZAHA)

With reference to the requested pertinent information by the Secretary of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption in its Note Verbale (CU 2022/47(A)/DTA/CEB/ISS) dated 23 February 2022, we have the pleasure to highlight the following pertinent information regarding “(a) Promoting the use of information and communications technologies for the implementation of the Convention; and (b) Challenges to and good practices in anti-corruption awareness-raising, education, training and research:

(A) Promoting the use of information and communications technologies for the implementation of the Convention:

Please describe (cite and summarize) the measures/steps your country has taken, if any (or is planning to take, together with the related appropriate time frame) to use ICT to ensure full compliance with the Convention:

1. In relation to integrity in public procurement and management of public finances (article9):

The Ministry of Finance (MOF) launched Etimad platform in 2018, in line with the Kingdom's strategy to enable and improve the efficiency of government entities to realize the objectives of Vision 2030. Etimad is a unified digital services platform that allows government entities and private sector contractors to make full use of the advanced procurement e-services, enhancing the speed of process, ensuring accuracy of data and increasing the ease of doing business, in a way that reflects the values of transparency, commitment, partnership, and fulfilment. The platform offers services such as:

- **Budget Management:** Providing electronic services with everything related to the budget of government agencies and the necessary movements on them.
- **Procurement Management:** Offering tenders, examining tenders and awarding them electronically, and enabling the private to view tenders, receive invitations, purchase brochures, and apply online.
- **Contract Management:** Managing everything related to contracts and approvals in order to register them electronically until obtaining the necessary approvals from the government agency and the MOF.
- **Payments Management:** Enabling the private sector to submit their financial claims for their projects with government agencies through exchange and payment orders electronically.
- **Unified Government Payroll:** Enabling government agencies to raise orders requests electronic disbursement and payment of workers compensation.
- **Revenue Collection:** All management services related to the collection of non-oil revenues through better means of modern technology.

- **Reports and Indicators:** Enabling government agencies to use business intelligence capabilities to obtain data, reports, and support decision-making.

The platform also includes a number of key indicators of potential corruption, of which six are routinely checked for any present red-flags for corruption risk. Examples of such indicators include: (1) when only one bid is submitted; (2) potential bid-rigging; (3) contract awarded is less than 35% of the designated department's predicted cost; (4) withdrawal of offers after submission; (5) canceled contracts; (6) offers from multiple companies submitted from the same IP address.

In regards to the management of public finances, The government bodies responsible of the management of the general budget align their budget preparation process in accordance with the country's general strategic plan and the objectives of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 for the entire fiscal year, using government finance statistics (GFS), in order to strive for advanced digital governance to facilitate the exchange of information, build a financial database at the state level and provide accurate data to serve decision makers in the country. Furthermore, after publishing the national general budget, the general budget expenditures are also followed-up through utilizing modern technological systems, and accounting systems during the fiscal year. In addition, In case of any violation or failure to comply with the guidelines set forth in the general budget decree, those in question will be held accountable through the country's oversight and supervision bodies.

Additionally, the General Court of Auditing (GCA) reviews the government agencies and relevant bodies that are subject to the GCA's jurisdiction, and directly requests those bodies to address the observations revealed to it by the results of its financial audits, compliance, and performance control, in order to ensure the proper use of public funds. The GCA also evaluates the efficiency and performance of the internal audit departments of the bodies that fall under their control. Moreover, there is a direct communication and cooperation between the GCA and the Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) through relevant committees to exchange information on common issues.

2. In relation to public reporting (article 10):

Open data is considered to be a vital pillar that contributes to achieving the goals set out in Saudi Arabia's vision 2030 and the commitments of the Kingdom's 2020 National Transformation Program. The Kingdom also seeks to keep pace with developments in technology at the international and local levels by utilizing ICT, in order to facilitate the access of information to citizens and residents, and implementing the principle of transparency in government procedures. Thus, the Kingdom developed various electronic government platforms, examples of such platforms are as follows:

- **The National Open Data Portal:** The open data portal is considered to be one of the most prominent initiatives in this field, as it aims at implementing a public data hub and strategy to enable transparency, promote e-participation and inspire innovation. The primary role of the platform is to publish datasets from ministries and government agencies within the Kingdom in an open format and

make this data available to the public. The Open data platform's legal basis is Article 1 of e-Government Implementation Rules, issued by the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 40 dated 27/3/2006, which states that the access to real-time data is critical in the effective decision-making process, as providing accurate and updated data through a single application allows everyone to access such data rather than replicating the data in several applications. Moreover, the portal beneficiaries (citizens and residents) could also benefit from the data provided in various ways, such as:

- a. Being acquainted with the way in which government agencies work
- b. Providing the opportunity to evaluate the performance of the various administrative units.
- c. Allowing the use of information to conduct research, and provide comments and opinions.

In terms of regulations allowing members of the general public to obtain information on government organizations through ICT, the Freedom of Information Interim Regulations published by the National Data Management Office (NDMO) sets the legal basis for the rights of Individuals to access public sector information and obligations of public entities for all requests coming from any individual to access or obtain unprotected public information produced or held by public entities, regardless of the source, form or nature. This includes paper records, emails, information stored on computers, audio or video cassettes, microfiche, maps, photographs, handwritten notes or any other form of recorded information. The Regulation also defines the roles and responsibilities of The Saudi Authority for Data and Artificial Intelligence (SDAIA) and its sub-entities, as well as the obligations of the NDMO, and the National Information Center (NIC). Additionally, the Ministry of Commerce (MCI) has also launched an open data platform to enhance transparency in business matters. The platform provides information such as report, statistics, and information related to the ministry's work.

3. In relation to participation of society (article 13):

The Oversight and Anti-corruption Authority (Nazaha) encourages the participation of society members through providing the different means of reporting, as any person may file a report on what he or she believes to be a case of corruption, with full confidentiality, through the following means:

- **Toll Free Number:** 980
- **Email:** 980@nazaha.gov.sa
- **In person submission**
- **Fax:** 0114420057
- **Telegram**
- **Postal address submission**
- **Website:** nazaha.gov.sa

In terms of raising awareness, Nazaha utilizes nation-wide text messages, to update the public of the work that the authority does in combating corruption, including statistics regarding recent corruption cases. Moreover, Nazaha uses social media platforms to raise awareness and involve the public on matter related to corruption, in both English and Arabic. On the other hand, with regards to promoting and protecting the freedom to seek, receive, publish and disseminate information concerning corruption, Nazaha's website publishes corruption related information, including news articles and other corruption related information.

Please outline actions required to ensure or improve the implementation of these articles and describe any specific challenges you might be facing in this respect.

- No actions are currently required in this respect.

Do you require technical assistance for the implementation of these articles? If so, please specify the forms of technical assistance that would be required.

- No specific technical assistance is currently needed for the implementation of these articles.

Is any technical assistance already being provided to you? If so, please provide a general description of the nature of assistance, including donor information.

- No technical assistance of any nature is currently being provided.

(B) Challenges to and good practices in anti-corruption awareness-raising, education, training and research:

Please describe (cite and summarize) the measures your country has taken, if any, (or is planning to take, together with the related envisaged time frame) to ensure full compliance with article 13(1) (c) of the Convention and, in particular, anti-corruption awareness-raising programmes, education, training and research.

Awareness and education programs:

The Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) works to achieve the objectives contained in the national strategy to protect integrity, enhance transparency, and combat corruption, and to follow-up on its implementation of the Authority's strategy. The most prominent awareness and education programs are as follows:

1. "Watanona Amanah" or "Our Homeland is precious" Initiative, which aims to enhance the trust of the public in the branches of government agencies in the Kingdom by spreading a culture of integrity, enhancing transparency and accountability, and spreading awareness of the concepts of job behavior and professional ethics, and raising awareness of the effects of corruption, and showing its social, economic, and national dangers.

2. Within the framework of partnership and cooperation between Nazaha and the Ministry of Education, Nazaha works to enhance the values of integrity among male and female students in educational environments through the following:

- An integrity project for education and training, which aims at building integrity values among male and female students, consolidate positive practices and initiatives, and spread awareness of the importance of integrity values and practices in the educational community. Moreover, the project aims at building a qualified cadres specialized in promoting integrity values by providing a package of electronic and direct training and interactive programs directed at promoting those values. The activities and events carried out by schools include the following:
 - School radio activities specialized in promoting integrity.
 - Distributing informational publications on integrity.
 - Delivering guiding speeches on integrity and combating corruption.
 - Presenting theatrical performances.
 - Implementing activities related to the competition for the best tweet.
 - Implementing activities related to the integrity values wall.
 - Producing video content on integrity and combating corruption.
 - Activities related to the preservation of public property.
 - Implementing activities related to volunteering to promote integrity.
 - Drawing activities related integrity and combating corruption.
 - Implementation of activities for murals related to the values of integrity.
 - An event for the best design that expresses the values of integrity.
 - Dialogue meetings specialized in promoting integrity.
 - Training courses for the "We Apply" program to enhance the values of integrity.
 - Specialized training workshops on promoting integrity.
 - Activities on the International Anti-Corruption Day.

- The training program "Integrity: Values and Applications: We Apply", which targets both male and female students by training them on specific values such as honesty, citizenship, and preservation of public property. Furthermore, the program aims at educating students about the importance of adhering to the values of integrity as the first line of defense towards the protection from corruption.
- In the framework of partnership and cooperation with the Ministry of Education, and through the Tatweer Company for Educational Services, Nazaha worked to include the vocabulary of integrity in the general education curricula of primary, middle, and secondary school levels. In addition, Nazaha coordinated with the ministry to work on urging universities to include an academic course on protecting integrity, promoting transparency, and combating corruption in university education curricula. As a result, a number of universities interacted; either by dedicating an independent course in the general preparation subjects, or by adding specific vocabulary related to this aspect in some subjects.
- One of the awareness programs is the allocation of the (Integrity Awareness) page on the (Ain) educational platform with Tatweer Company for Educational Services to allocate the (Awareness Integrity) page on the (Ain) educational platform, which aims to enhance the values of integrity in educational environments for male and female students, where the page included a group of expressive images and videos for each of the values of integrity, and at each stage of study, the platform is highly viewed by male and female students at all levels of study.
- As an extension of the coordination with the Ministry of Education, which resulted in the implementation of three awareness competitions with the aim of motivating students to participate in promoting integrity values in educational institutions; Nazaha is working with the Ministry of Education to implement the fourth awareness competition entitled "Preserving Public Property". The competition involves plastic painting activities for elementary school students, and photography activities for middle school students.
- Within the framework of coordination between Nazaha and the Ministry of Education to urge educational institutions to participate in the celebration of the International Anti-Corruption Day, a number of universities, technical colleges, and education departments organized various awareness-raising events and programs, to take advantage of this occasion to spread the concepts and values of integrity and combating corruption in educational environments. Among these programs is an awareness program to enhance the principle of transparency in government sectors through electronic platforms by preparing a set of awareness messages aimed at enhancing the principle of transparency.

3. Nazaha is working in cooperation with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development to complete the launch of the "Integrity Electronic Center" initiative in social development centers and committees in various regions in the Kingdom. The initiative aims to implement a number of programs and activities aimed at enhancing the values of integrity and combating corruption.

4. Nazaha is also working in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior to publish a number of awareness messages aimed at protecting integrity and combating corruption. The messages includes topics such as protecting public funds, combating bribery, abuse of power, and abuse of authority. The dissemination of such messages is done through

the electronic platforms of the Ministry of Interior and internal screens in the ministry's building.

5. Within the framework of the partnership with the Ministry of Sports to enhance the values of integrity among the public and those working in the sports community, work has been done to formulate a project that aims to build educational awareness programs for sports communities, and discuss appropriate work mechanisms to implement them, and identify aspects that need measures to enhance integrity in the sports community, in addition to disseminating awareness messages on protecting integrity and combating corruption through the ministry's electronic platforms, and through electronic screens in stadiums.

6. Nazaha is also working to cooperate with the Family Affairs Council to implement a number of awareness tracks aimed at enhancing the values of integrity among family groups.

7. Among the awareness and education programs, Nazaha cooperated with civil society institutions to involve community institutions in the authority's efforts to protect integrity, enhance transparency, and combat corruption, through awareness campaigns aimed at protecting integrity and combating corruption, and raising awareness of the concepts of job behavior and professional ethics.

8. Nazaha has prepared a guiding manual for programs and activities specialized in promoting integrity that aims to motivate government agencies to implement a number of awareness programs and activities, and to take effective measures in promoting integrity, and creating a work environment that helps to achieve the principles of integrity, transparency and justice, and combating corruption within those agencies. As a result, a number of government agencies provided Nazaha with their plans for the implementation of the guiding manual and its activities and programs.

9. Nazaha also works on producing visual content that contribute to strengthening the culture of protecting integrity and combating corruption among citizens and residents by raising awareness of the values of integrity and warning against the dangers of corruption and its corrosive effects.

10. Nazaha also works towards raising awareness among employees of the private sector by launching awareness campaigns that include the concepts of job behavior and professional ethics, clarifying regulations, procedures and policies, and warning against the various types of corruption. These awareness campaigns also includes governance and its application, the policy of reporting infringing practices, and conflict of interest.

11. Nazaha urged government agencies, the private sector, and specialized professional associations to participate in the International Anti-Corruption Day, by publishing targeted awareness messages to promote a culture of integrity and combating corruption.

Training

The Integrity Training Center (ICT) was established based on the profound belief of Nazaha in the importance of training, development, and qualification in the areas of protecting integrity, enhancing transparency and fighting corruption. It also comes in

line with the Nazaha's mandate, where Article 20/3 stated that one of the goals and competencies of the authority is "organizing conferences, seminars and training courses on transparency, integrity and combating corruption.". The ICT have also partnered with prominent organizations in the field of anti-corruption such as the World Bank Group (WBG), International Monetary Funds (IMF), International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The ICT aims at the following:

- Implementing effective training programs in the areas of protecting integrity and combating corruption.
- Raising awareness of the importance of protecting integrity and combating corruption.
- Building a scientific partnership and exchanging experiences between the center and similar centers in the Kingdom and abroad.
- Providing trainees with the knowledge and necessary skills to raise their performance.
- Meet the training needs of workers in the public and private sectors in light of the needs and develop training policies for those needs.
- Designing training programs and preparing training packages in various fields to enhance integrity and combat corruption.
- Transfer of knowledge and keep abreast of developments at the theoretical and applied levels.
- Providing qualified human capabilities, and the necessary material capabilities to continue advancing the training process.
- Strengthening community partnership by providing training programs for civil society institutions and students in universities.

The ICT has also organized a number of specialized training programs for employees of various government agencies. These training programs included the following:

- Necessary skills to detect corruption in privatization projects.
- Public procurement from the perspective of fighting corruption.
- Investigation skills in cases of administrative and financial corruption.
- Asset Recovery: Procedures, Challenges, and International Best Practices.
- Employing digital tools to reduce corruption risks in government procurement.
- Conducting and managing successful investigation in the public sector.
- Investigation methods and sources of information.
- Skills for Internal Auditors to detect corruption cases.
- The role of E-Control in Mitigating Corruption.
- Analysis of corruption risks in privatization projects.
- Stolen Assets Recovery: Mechanisms to Combat Money Laundering.
- Illegal wealth and conflict of interest.

Nazaha Clubs initiative in higher education institutions.

Nazaha Clubs initiative was launched with the inauguration of the first Integrity Club at King Saud University in 2017. The initiative aims at making Nazaha Club among the distinguished student clubs in educational institutions that seek to achieve integrity as a religious duty, moral behavior, and national action. The initiative's

mission is to work towards protecting integrity, enhancing transparency and combating corruption, by spreading a culture of integrity and immunizing future generations against corruption, by involving students in implementing awareness and educational activities and events in this field.

Nazaha oversees the initiative through evaluating the efforts and activities of the clubs on an annual basis, and involves specialists and experts from the authority in the club's activities on topics related to the authority's functions and topics related to promoting integrity values in educational environments. An example of such activities is a competition entitled "Lets Inspire Integrity", which is concerned with summarizing foreign scientific research in the field of protecting integrity and combating corruption, in order to highlight these efforts to the international academic community. Moreover, Nazaha launched a competition related to the protection of integrity, targeting members of integrity clubs and students of universities and college, in which nearly (162) participants took part in the competition, and the total value of the rewards amounted to (132.000) thousand riyals.

Please outline actions required to ensure or improve the implementation of article 13(1)(c) on undertaking anti-corruption education programmes in schools and universities and any specific challenges you might be facing in this respect.

There is a close cooperation between Nazaha and the Ministry of Education in every initiative, policy, project or procedure, which aims at raising awareness of protecting integrity, promoting transparency, and combating corruption. This cooperation includes permanent communication between the two sides, as the Ministry of Education is considered a strategic partner for the Authority, given the huge number that the Ministry supervises, represented in male and female students in private and public universities, as well as all employees in the Ministry and its organizational units. Therefore, Nazaha does not face any challenges implementing article 13 (1)(c) of the Convention.

Do you consider that any technical assistance is required in order to allow you to fully implement this provision? If so, what specific forms of technical assistance would you require?

- No technical assistance is currently needed to implement the provision.

Is any technical assistance already being provided to you? If so, please provide a general description of the nature of assistance, including donor information.

- No technical assistance is currently being provided.
