



**Convention on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities**

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

**Concluding observations on the combined initial and second
periodic reports of Bahrain***

* Adopted by the Committee at its thirtieth session (4–22 March 2024).



I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the combined initial and second periodic reports of Bahrain¹ at its 696th and 697th meetings,² held on 7 and 8 March 2024. It adopted the present concluding observations at its 716th meeting, held on 22 March 2024.
2. The Committee welcomes the combined initial and second periodic reports of Bahrain, which were prepared in accordance with the Committee's reporting guidelines, and thanks the State party for its written replies³ to the list of issues prepared by the Committee.⁴
3. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the State party's high-level delegation, which covered a wide array of issues. The delegation included representatives of relevant government ministries, who provided further clarifications on the questions posed by the Committee.
4. The Committee regrets the lack of participation of civil society organizations, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities and the National Institution for Human Rights.

II. Positive aspects

5. The Committee welcomes the actions taken by the State party to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, in particular policy and legislative measures, including:
 - (a) The implementation of the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2012–2016;
 - (b) The promulgation of Act No. 35 of 2017 amending Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities and the replacement of the term "the disabled" with the term "persons with disabilities" in the title of the Act and wherever it appeared in the text;
 - (c) The promulgation of Act No. 22 of 2017 amending Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities by applying its provisions to non-Bahraini citizens with disabilities born to Bahraini mothers;
 - (d) The launch of the National Plan 2023–2027 for the implementation of the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
 - (e) The implementation of the 2017 Inclusive Design Guide and Accessibility Standards.

III. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

A. General principles and obligations (arts. 1–4)

6. The Committee is concerned about:
 - (a) The widespread use of the medical model in national laws, including the definition of disability contained in Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, as amended;
 - (b) The adoption of ableist provisions, especially in articles 11 and 25 of the Civil Service Act, as well as in the Civil Code and the Criminal Code.
7. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

¹ CRPD/C/BHR/1-2.

² See CRPD/C/SR.697 and CRPD/C/SR.696.

³ CRPD/C/BHR/RQ/1-2.

⁴ CRPD/C/BHR/Q/1-2.

(a) **Align the definition of disability in its national laws and policies with the general principles of the Convention and the human rights-based model;**

(b) **Repeal provisions referring to the criterion of “health capacity and fitness” in its national legislation and introduce provisions to ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, including persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities.**

8. The Committee is deeply concerned at the complete lack of participation of, and consultation with, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in decision-making processes in all matters relating to their rights and interests, including active participation in the implementation and monitoring of the Convention.

9. **Recalling its general comment No. 7 (2018), in particular paragraphs 15, 16 and 60 thereof, the Committee recommends that the State party immediately:**

(a) **Develop a transparent national mechanism to enable persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including organizations of persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities, organizations of children with disabilities and family organizations, to participate actively in policy development, the enactment, implementation and monitoring of legislation, and the design of programmes and services;**

(b) **Remove all legislative and practical obstacles that prevent or restrict the expression of views and opinions by persons with disabilities and their representative organizations on all matters relating to their rights and interests and public affairs;**

(c) **Provide support to organizations of persons with disabilities, including organizations of persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities, to strengthen their institutional and technical capacities to participate effectively in all matters relating to the rights and interests of persons with disabilities.**

B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

10. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The complete absence of a definition of disability-based discrimination in the State party’s national laws;

(b) The absence of a mechanism to receive and investigate complaints of direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of disability;

(c) The absence of a definition of reasonable accommodation and the fact that denial of reasonable accommodation is not considered a form of discrimination;

(d) The fact that persons with disabilities born to non-Bahraini parents are not entitled to benefit from the measures and services provided for in Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities and other legislation.

11. **Recalling its general comment No. 6 (2018), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Include in national legislation a clear definition of disability-based discrimination consistent with the general principles of the Convention;**

(b) **Establish an accessible national mechanism for seeking redress in cases of direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of disability;**

(c) **Include in national legislation provisions recognizing denial of reasonable accommodation as a form of discrimination and develop measures to combat it;**

(d) **Abolish the requirement for a person or one of his or her parents to have Bahraini nationality, as contained in Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation**

and employment of persons with disabilities, in order to obtain access to services available to persons with disabilities.

Women with disabilities (art. 6)

12. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of disaggregated information and data on women with disabilities indicating the extent to which they are subjected to abuse and violence;

(b) The lack of measures in national policies and legislation, including the Protection from Domestic Violence Act, to ensure that women with disabilities are protected from all forms of violence and have access to complaint and protection mechanisms;

(c) The fact that women with disabilities in residential institutions and day-care centres are deprived of their fundamental freedoms and rights, including the rights to live independently, to education and to employment;

(d) The lack of participation of women with disabilities in decision-making processes and their lack of representation in national councils and institutions, including those dealing with women's and family issues and rights.

13. Recalling the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,⁵ the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Provide disaggregated information on the situation of women with disabilities in the areas of prevention and protection against violence, access to sexual and reproductive health care and access to equal employment opportunities;

(b) Include in national policies and legislation effective measures to ensure that women with disabilities are protected from all forms of violence and have access to complaint mechanisms;

(c) Review the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (No. 17) of 2015 and include provisions guaranteeing full protection of girls and women with disabilities from violence and access to programmes for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of violence;

(d) Involve women with disabilities in decision-making processes in all matters relating to their rights and interests and ensure their representation in national bodies and councils, including those for women.

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

14. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) The lack of national policies and legislation to ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities in all aspects of life and their representation and participation in decision-making processes on all matters relating to their rights and interests;

(b) The placement of children with disabilities in residential institutions from the age of 4;

(c) The absence of legislative and practical measures to ensure the protection of children with disabilities from all forms of violence in institutions and from domestic violence, including corporal punishment;

(d) The fact that it is permitted to send children with disabilities, particularly children with intellectual disabilities, to other States for placement in residential institutions, with no follow-up mechanisms to monitor the children's situation;

(e) The fact that child marriage, including of children with disabilities, is legal, in accordance with article 20 of the Family Code (Act No. 19) of 2017, which sets the age of

⁵ CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/4, para. 27.

marriage for girls at 16 years and permits the marriage of girls under this age with the authorization of the sharia court.

15. **Recalling the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child⁶ and the joint statement of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2021),⁷ the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that policies and legislation governing the rights of the child in the State party include measures that are fully inclusive of the rights and interests of children with disabilities, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of children with disabilities and their representative organizations;**

(b) **Repeal the provisions of Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities that allow for the licensing and provision of residential services;**

(c) **Amend policies and legislation on protection against violence and include measures to ensure the full protection of children with disabilities from all forms of violence;**

(d) **Prohibit the transfer of children with disabilities to other States for placement in residential institutions;**

(e) **Amend article 20 of the Family Code (Act No. 19) of 2017 to set the marriage age at 18 years for both men and women, and do not provide for any exceptions allowing the courts to authorize the marriage of persons under the age of 18.**

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

16. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The absence of a specific strategy to raise awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities and to combat stereotypes and prejudices about disability, particularly in the areas of education, employment and health;

(b) Information and awareness-raising campaigns that carry false and misleading messages about the rights of persons with disabilities by adopting stereotypes that portray them as “superheroes” and calling for the use of terms that are not in line with the human rights model and the Convention, in particular the term “people of determination”.

17. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, a national awareness-raising strategy and programme of action based on the principles of the Convention and the human rights model to promote a culture of diversity and combat stereotypes about disability;**

(b) **Adopt and use terminology and language that reflect the concepts and principles on which the Convention is based rather than stereotypes.**

Accessibility (art. 9)

18. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of comprehensive accessibility standards and the inadequacy of the standards contained in the guidance manual for construction in urban heritage areas;

(b) The absence of legal mechanisms and weak oversight mechanisms to ensure the application of the universal design criteria contained in the guidance manual;

⁶ [CRC/C/BHR/CO/1-4](#), para. 36.

⁷ www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/CRC-CRPD-joint-statement_18March2022.docx.

(c) The lack of standards to ensure the accessibility of information, especially websites and digital platforms.

19. **Recalling its general comment No. 2 (2014), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Include in national legislation provisions to ensure mandatory accessibility of public and private facilities;**

(b) **Develop comprehensive accessibility standards in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations;**

(c) **Ensure the accessibility of websites and digital platforms.**

Right to life (art. 10)

20. The Committee is seriously concerned that the State party's Constitution does not explicitly recognize the right to life as an inviolable fundamental right that must be respected. In particular, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The absence of fair trial guarantees for persons with disabilities in the many cases involving offences punishable by death under the Criminal Code (Act No. 15) of 1976, as amended, Act No. 58 of 2006 on the protection of society against terrorist acts and Act No. 15 of 2007 on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

(b) The health conditions faced by convicted persons with disabilities that may pose a threat to their lives as a result of poor health-care services and lack of reasonable accommodation.

21. **Recalling the recommendation of the Human Rights Committee,⁸ the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Impose an immediate moratorium on executions and not impose any new death sentences, especially against persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Provide accommodations for convicted and remand prisoners with disabilities and allow independent inspection and fact-finding committees to visit them and assess the state of their physical and psychological health.**

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

22. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in national plans and programmes to respond to crises and natural disasters;

(b) The lack of specialized training for staff working in emergency services and civil defence to ensure that such services are accessible to persons with disabilities in an effective and timely manner.

23. **Recalling the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the Guidelines for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review emergency, risk, crisis and disaster response plans and include measures to ensure that they are inclusive of persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Develop and implement specialized training, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, for civil defence and emergency services personnel on how to effectively deliver services to persons with disabilities and reach them in a timely manner.**

⁸ CCPR/C/BHR/CO/1, para. 32.

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

24. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) Limitations on the exercise of legal capacity by persons with disabilities, in particular persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities, in accordance with articles 77, 78, 79 and 80 of the Civil Code (Act No. 19) of 2001, under which any act performed by a person with an intellectual disability or a person with a psychosocial disability is considered voidable, and a request may be made to subject the person to an interdiction regime;

(b) The absence of any mechanism to provide support for the exercise of legal capacity and decision-making by persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities.

25. Recalling its general comment No. 1 (2014), the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Repeal provisions in national laws, in particular the Civil Code and the Family Code, that deny persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities the right to exercise their legal capacity;**

(b) **Eliminate all forms of substitute decision-making and replace them with an effective mechanism to support decision-making in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.**

Access to justice (art. 13)

26. The Committee is concerned about obstacles to access to justice for persons with disabilities, in particular:

(a) The absence of procedural and administrative accommodations in the justice sector, the judiciary and the related administration system at all stages of proceedings;

(b) The lack of specialized training for justice sector personnel on the requirements to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to access to justice;

(c) The lack of accessibility in security centres and courts and the lack of information and communication in accessible formats in investigation records and court hearings.

27. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Provide procedural accommodations and ensure accessibility for all persons with disabilities in the justice and administrative sectors;**

(b) **Develop specialized training, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, for persons working in the justice sector and the related administrative sector, including judges, on the right of persons with disabilities to access to justice and procedural accommodations;**

(c) **Develop an implementation plan with a specific timeline to ensure accessibility in security centres, courts, places of detention and reform centres, and provide information at various stages of proceedings in accessible formats for persons with disabilities.**

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

28. The Committee is seriously concerned about:

(a) Practices of forced placement of children and adults in residential institutions within and outside the State party on the basis of disability;

(b) The absence of a specific law regulating the mental health sector and guaranteeing respect for the individual autonomy, freedom of choice and free and informed consent of persons with psychosocial disabilities;

(c) The forced hospitalization of persons with psychosocial disabilities, without specific controls or time limits.

29. **Recalling its guidelines on the right to liberty and security of persons with disabilities (2016) and its guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies (2022), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Prohibit the placement of persons with disabilities in residential institutions inside and outside Bahrain and launch a comprehensive national plan to replace the residential system with family alternatives and inclusive community services;**

(b) **Review the draft mental health law submitted to the Council of Representatives, in close consultation with persons with disabilities, in particular persons with psychosocial disabilities and their representative organizations, to include measures and provisions that guarantee the individual autonomy of persons with disabilities and prohibit forced institutionalization and treatment.**

Freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 15)

30. The Committee is seriously concerned about:

(a) The fact that a number of prisoners of conscience with disabilities have been subjected to torture during interrogation and while in prison and have been denied accommodations to enable them to have access to the available basic care services;

(b) The lack of a transparent, safe and accessible mechanism for persons with disabilities to report cases of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and for such cases to be verified and investigated.

31. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Conduct a transparent and independent investigation through an impartial commission with the participation of independent experts, including experts with disabilities, into reported cases of torture against convicted and remand prisoners with disabilities, publish the results of the investigation, and take legal action against those found guilty of torture or cruel or inhuman treatment;**

(b) **Establish an independent and transparent mechanism for reporting cases of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and ensure accessibility, reasonable accommodation and information in accessible formats to enable persons with disabilities to use it independently and safely.**

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)

32. The Committee is deeply concerned about the lack of:

(a) An inclusive national strategy for prevention of and protection against all forms of violence;

(b) Measures to ensure the protection of persons with disabilities against violence in the Protection from Domestic Violence Act (No. 17) of 2015;

(c) Information on cases of violence against persons with disabilities and how they have been dealt with;

(d) Inclusive services and programmes for prevention and protection against violence and the rehabilitation of survivors.

33. **The Committee recommends that the State party take urgent measures to:**

(a) **Develop a comprehensive and inclusive national strategy for the prevention of violence and protection of persons with disabilities against all forms of violence, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations;**

(b) **Review the Protection from Domestic Violence Act and the Criminal Code and introduce provisions to criminalize physical and verbal abuse and bullying against persons with disabilities;**

(c) **Collect information and data on cases of domestic, institutional and other forms of violence against persons with disabilities and the action taken;**

(d) **Ensure accessibility and provide reasonable accommodation in programmes and services for prevention and protection against violence, provide rehabilitation to survivors and train staff working in this area on how to communicate effectively with persons with disabilities;**

(e) **Develop specialized training for persons with disabilities, including persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities, on the prevention and reporting of violence.**

Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)

34. The Committee is deeply concerned about the lack of information on:

(a) Practices of sterilization and forced abortion on the basis of disability, in particular in residential care institutions, and the measures taken to prevent such practices;

(b) Forced treatment and the use of physical and chemical restraints and electroshock therapy in psychiatric hospitals, especially as there is a legislative vacuum when it comes to guaranteeing the rights of mental health service users.

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Collect information and data on cases of sterilization and forced abortion committed against persons with disabilities and the action taken in response;**

(b) **Explicitly criminalize sterilization and forced abortion on the basis of disability in national legislation;**

(c) **Prohibit forced psychiatric treatment and hospitalization and prohibit the use of physical and chemical restraints and electroshock therapy.**

Liberty of movement and nationality (art. 18)

36. Recalling the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,⁹ the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The discriminatory provisions in the Bahraini Nationality Act of 1963, which prevent Bahraini women from transferring their nationality to their children if they are married to a foreign man, putting children with disabilities born to a Bahraini mother and a foreign father at risk of statelessness;

(b) The fact that persons with disabilities born to non-Bahraini parents are denied the rights and access to the services provided for in Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities;

(c) Discrimination against persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities in the Bahraini Nationality Act of 1963, article 6 of which stipulates that nationality is granted to a person with full capacity, and article 2 of which defines a person with full capacity as “a person who is not a minor and is not of unsound mind”.

37. **Recalling the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,¹⁰ the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Amend the Bahraini Nationality Act of 1963 to grant Bahraini women, particularly women with disabilities, including those who are married to a foreign man,**

⁹ CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/4, para. 34.

¹⁰ Ibid, para. 35

the right to transfer their nationality to their children, including children with disabilities;

(b) Repeal the provision contained in Act No. 74 of 2006 that deprives persons with disabilities born to non-Bahraini parents of the enjoyment of their rights and access to the services provided for therein;

(c) Repeal the provision in the Bahraini Nationality Act of 1963 that prevents persons from acquiring nationality on the basis of a psychosocial disability.

Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)

38. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) The continued granting of licences to establish residential institutions and sheltered workplaces for persons with disabilities, including children, under article 4 of Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, as well as the continued placement of persons with disabilities in residential institutions outside the State party's territory;

(b) The lack of measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can freely choose their place of residence and have access to the support services needed to live independently, including personal assistance.

39. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2017) and its guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies, the Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, especially persons with intellectual disabilities, take immediate steps to:

(a) Prohibit all forms of institutionalization and launch a national strategy and action plan to replace institutional services with an inclusive community service system;

(b) Provide services to promote independent living for persons with disabilities and grant allowances for additional expenses incurred by persons with disabilities for activities of daily living.

Personal mobility (art. 20)

40. The Committee is concerned about the lack of mobility training programmes for persons with disabilities and the absence of clear mechanisms to provide them with aids and assistive technologies that help them to move around independently and safely.

41. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, develop specialized mobility training for children and adults with disabilities and provide the necessary assistive technologies, tools and aids to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to mobility safely and independently.

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)

42. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) Restrictions on the freedom of expression of a number of persons with disabilities, who have been arrested and sentenced to long prison terms of up to life imprisonment for their political opinions, and the lack of information made available on their situation in detention;

(b) The lack of accessible information for persons with disabilities in facilities and institutions;

(c) The absence of a law on the right to information guaranteeing access to information for persons with disabilities.

43. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Respect the right of persons with disabilities to exercise their freedom of expression and not to be harassed and arrested for their political views and provide information on the situation of persons with disabilities in prison;**

(b) **Provide public information and data in formats accessible to persons with disabilities, including sign language, Easy Read and electronic formats;**

(c) **Enact a law on the right to information and include measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can have access to information independently and effectively.**

Respect for privacy (art. 22)

44. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The exceptions contained in article 5 of Act No. 30 of 2018 promulgating the Personal Data Protection Act, which allow access to and processing of personal data without the consent of the holder, including its classification, use and disclosure to third parties, for the purposes of medical diagnosis, treatment and prevention, as well as for persons under guardianship and trusteeship;

(b) The lack of mechanisms for the protection of the personal data of persons with disabilities who use mental health services and care homes and are in receipt of the disability allowance.

45. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal the exceptions contained in the Personal Data Protection Act (No. 30) of 2018 that allow access to and circulation, disclosure and dissemination of data without the consent of the holder for the purposes of diagnosis, treatment and prevention and for those under guardianship and trusteeship;**

(b) **Develop a clear and accessible mechanism for persons with disabilities to protect their personal data and report any breaches of their privacy.**

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

46. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The suspension of the marriages of persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities by the sharia court, noting the use of discriminatory language against them in articles 21 and 22 of the Family Code (Act No. 19) of 2017;

(b) The fact that persons with disabilities are deprived of their right to custody on the basis of disability in accordance with articles 126 and 136 of the Family Code, which establishes vague requirements that are open to interpretation, such as “freedom from infectious and dangerous diseases” (article 126-f);

(c) The fact that children aged 16 and under, especially girls, are allowed to marry with the authorization of the court;

(d) The absence of measures to provide persons with disabilities with independent and confidential access to sexual and reproductive health services;

(e) The fact that marital rape is not a criminal offence, which puts women with disabilities, particularly women with psychosocial disabilities and women with intellectual disabilities, at risk of marital rape.

47. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal provisions restricting the right of persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities to marry and found a family;**

(b) **Guarantee the right of persons with disabilities to custody, ensuring that they are not denied custody on the basis of disability, and provide them with family support programmes;**

(c) **Repeal legal provisions and eliminate social practices that allow for the marriage of children under the age of 18 and abolish any powers granted to the courts to authorize the marriage of girls under the age of 16;**

(d) **Provide sexual and reproductive health services to persons with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities in remote areas;**

(e) **Taking into account the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,¹¹ criminalize marital rape and consider disability as an aggravating circumstance.**

Education (art. 24)

48. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The absence of a national strategy for inclusive education and the absence of any provision in Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities on the right of persons with disabilities to inclusive education;

(b) The use of restricted educational environments and special education at the expense of inclusive education and the lack of clear data on the number and status of students enrolled in mainstream schools;

(c) The absence of specialized training programmes for teaching and administrative staff to promote inclusive education;

(d) The lack of availability of school and university curricula in accessible formats, especially for students with intellectual disabilities and blind students, particularly in science and maths.

49. **Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop a national strategy and implementation plan for the transition to inclusive education for all persons with disabilities at all educational levels;**

(b) **Provide reliable disaggregated data on students with disabilities enrolled in special education centres and education programmes run by non-governmental organizations, their academic status and the steps to be taken to transfer them to inclusive education;**

(c) **Develop specialized training programmes for teachers and administrators working in the education sector to enable them to understand inclusive education and the requirements for providing an inclusive and safe school environment for all;**

(d) **Provide school and university curricula in accessible formats, including sign language, Easy Read, Braille and electronic formats.**

Health (art. 25)

50. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of accessible health-care services for persons with disabilities;

(b) The lack of accessibility in a number of health-care facilities;

(c) The lack of trained personnel to provide health-care services, in particular emergency care and reproductive health services for persons with disabilities;

(d) The absence of a legislative framework to ensure the free and informed consent of persons with disabilities prior to any medical intervention;

(e) The forced hospitalization and treatment of persons with psychosocial disabilities, without any controls governing this practice in the Public Health Act (No. 34) of 2018, except as provided for at the end of article 50 thereof, which permits forced

¹¹ CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/4, para. 27 (a).

hospitalization and treatment at the discretion of a physician and for the purposes of protecting others.

51. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop a national strategy and implementation plan for the comprehensive and inclusive provision of health-care and specialized health services for persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Ensure the accessibility of public and private health-care facilities;**

(c) **Develop and implement specialized training for health personnel in the provision of health-care services for persons with disabilities;**

(d) **Establish a practical framework that ensures the free and informed consent of persons with disabilities prior to any medical procedure or intervention;**

(e) **Enact the mental health law and include measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have the right to free and informed consent or refusal of treatment, prohibit forced hospitalization and treatment on the basis of disability, and prohibit the use of physical and chemical restraints and electroshock therapy in the mental health sector.**

Habilitation and rehabilitation (art. 26)

52. The Committee is concerned about the lack of a clear strategy for habilitation and rehabilitation programmes to ensure that they are comprehensive and achieve inclusion as their primary goal, and about the lack of data showing the effectiveness of these programmes in promoting independent living and achieving inclusion.

53. **The Committee recommends that the State party develop a clear national strategy and implementation plan to ensure that rehabilitation programmes and services are comprehensive and designed to promote and support the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in all aspects of life, and that they are provided free of charge and close to the places of residence of persons with disabilities.**

Work and employment (art. 27)

54. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) The use of the criterion of “health capacity or fitness” as a precondition for appointment to public posts and a reason for termination of employment, as set forth in articles 11 (6) and 25 (c) of the Civil Service Act (No. 48) of 2010;

(b) The absence of mechanisms to ensure reasonable accommodation in the workplace and to recognize the denial of reasonable accommodation as a form of discrimination;

(c) The existence of a list of specific jobs for which persons with disabilities are qualified and to which their employment is restricted, in accordance with the vocational registration and qualification certificate issued pursuant to articles 10 and 11 of Act No. 74 of 2006 on the welfare, rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities.

55. **Recalling its general comment No. 8 (2022), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal legislative provisions that establish “health capacity and fitness” as a condition for appointment and grounds for termination;**

(b) **Ensure accessibility, provide reasonable accommodation in the workplace, establish mechanisms that oblige government and private employers to provide them, and investigate cases of denial of reasonable accommodation;**

(c) **Ensure the accessibility of vocational training institutes and centres and provide programmes and curricula in accessible formats for persons with disabilities and not deny them access on the basis of disability.**

Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)

56. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The absence of social protection programmes and services that take into account the individual and living requirements of persons with disabilities and the additional expenses they incur in carrying out activities of daily living;

(b) The fact that the disability allowance provided by the Ministry of Social Development does not cover all types of disabilities, is insufficient, and is determined according to medical criteria that do not take into account the diversity of individual requirements and surrounding environmental conditions.

57. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop a comprehensive and inclusive social protection system that guarantees persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities, an adequate standard of living;**

(b) **Revise the criteria for granting disability allowance to cover all types of disabilities and take into account the diversity and differences in the individual and living requirements of persons with disabilities.**

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

58. Recalling the concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee¹² regarding allegations of gerrymandering and voter fraud during elections, the Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities are most at risk of such unlawful practices, especially in the absence of measures to ensure that they can exercise their right to vote independently and confidentially. The Committee is particularly concerned about:

(a) The fact that the Act on the Exercise of Political Rights (No. 14) of 2002, the Act on the Consultative Council and Council of Representatives (No. 15) of 2002, and the Municipalities Act (No. 35) of 2001 do not contain any measures to ensure the effective participation of persons with disabilities in political life, including parliamentary and local elections, whether as voters or candidates;

(b) The low level of accessibility and reasonable accommodation provided at polling stations and the lack of information and materials on elections in accessible formats, in particular sign language and Easy Read;

(c) The fact that persons with disabilities are not represented in trade unions, political bodies and associations.

59. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review the laws governing political rights and parliamentary and municipal elections and include provisions to ensure the effective participation of persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities, in political life;**

(b) **Ensure the accessibility of polling stations and provide electoral materials and legislation in accessible formats for persons with disabilities;**

(c) **Involve persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities, and their representative organizations in monitoring parliamentary and municipal elections.**

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)

60. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The absence of a national strategy to make cultural life and creative arts inclusive for persons with disabilities;

¹² CCPR/C/BHR/CO/1, para. 63.

(b) The lack of accessibility in theatres, cinemas, museums and tourist attractions, and the lack of cultural information and materials in accessible formats for persons with disabilities, in particular sign language and Easy Read;

(c) The failure to promote the cultural and linguistic identity of the deaf community;

(d) The lack of availability of books, magazines and cultural materials in accessible formats, including Braille, audio and Easy Read formats;

(e) The lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in sports clubs and activities, and the insufficient support available for disability sports.

61. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Develop, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, a comprehensive national strategy aimed at achieving the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in cultural life;**

(b) **Ensure accessibility and provide reasonable accommodation and information in accessible formats, including sign language interpretation, Easy Read and audio description in cultural, recreational and tourist venues;**

(c) **Recognize and promote the cultural and linguistic identity of the deaf community through educational curricula and awareness-raising campaigns, with the active participation of deaf persons and their representative organizations;**

(d) **Ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled and ensure full access to information and cultural materials for persons with disabilities;**

(e) **Take legal and practical measures to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in sports clubs and activities and provide support for disability sports.**

C. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)

Statistics and data collection (art. 31)

62. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The inaccuracy of the figures concerning the number of persons with disabilities, which indicate that there were 10,712 persons with disabilities in 2016, representing 1 per cent of the total population. These figures reflect a gap between the State party's official data and global estimates of the proportion of persons with disabilities in society;

(b) The absence of disaggregated data on persons with disabilities showing their numbers and the status of their rights in specific areas such as education, employment and social services;

(c) The lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in qualitative surveys conducted by the Central Information Organization.

63. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Adopt an inclusive definition of disability based on the human rights model and using reliable statistical tools such as the Washington Group short set of questions on functioning to produce realistic figures and data on persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Establish a database containing information and disaggregated data on persons with disabilities in areas including education, labour, health, social protection and political participation;**

(c) **Include questions in qualitative surveys conducted by various executive bodies to ensure that they are inclusive of persons with disabilities.**

International cooperation (art. 32)

64. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The failure to include the rights and interests of persons with disabilities in international cooperation agreements in the field of development;

(b) The failure to involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in identifying their priorities in international cooperation programmes in which the State party is a partner;

(c) The absence of indicators showing the extent to which the Sustainable Development Goals have been achieved in the Disability Strategy 2012–2016 and its implementation plan 2023–2027.

65. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that international cooperation agreements and programmes are inclusive of and responsive to the rights and interests of persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Ensure close consultation with and the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including children, women, persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities, in the establishment of priorities for international cooperation programmes and projects;**

(c) **Develop indicators that allow stakeholders, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to monitor and evaluate the implementation of international cooperation programmes and measure the extent to which they achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.**

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

66. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) The absence of a national coordination mechanism to monitor implementation of the Convention and provide technical support to the implementing bodies;

(b) The absence of an independent national mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Convention at the national level;

(c) The lack of support provided to the National Institution for Human Rights to enable it to monitor the implementation of human rights covenants and conventions, including the Convention, at the national level.

67. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Establish a national coordinating mechanism to support the implementation of the Convention at the national level, ensuring the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations;**

(b) **Establish an independent national mechanism with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to monitor the implementation of the Convention;**

(c) **Strengthen the National Institution for Human Rights to enable it to be accredited with “A” status and enable it to play its role, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), in monitoring the implementation of the Convention at the national level in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.**

IV. Follow-up**Dissemination of information**

68. The Committee emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. With regard to urgent measures that must be taken, the

Committee would like to draw the State party's attention to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 21, on the right to life, 31, on freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and 49, on education.

69. **The Committee requests the State party to implement the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. It recommends that the State party transmit the concluding observations for consideration and action to members of the Government and parliament, officials in relevant ministries and local authorities and members of relevant professional groups, such as education, medical and legal professionals, as well as to the media, using modern social communication strategies.**

70. **The Committee strongly encourages the State party to involve civil society organizations, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities, in the preparation of its periodic report.**

71. **The Committee requests the State party to disseminate the present concluding observations widely, including to non-governmental organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities and to persons with disabilities themselves and members of their families, in national and minority languages, including sign language, and in accessible formats, and to make them available on the government website on human rights.**

Next periodic report

72. Under the simplified reporting procedure, the Committee will transmit to the State party a list of issues prior to reporting at least one year prior to 28 October 2030, the date by which the State party's third periodic report is due. The replies of the State party to that list of issues will constitute its third periodic report. The State party may choose not to follow the simplified reporting procedure within one year of the Committee's adoption of the present concluding observations.
