



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

Distr.: General  
11 December 2013

Original: English

---

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**

**Fifty-seventh session**

10-28 February 2014

Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention on the  
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

**Reports by the specialized agencies on the implementation  
of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of  
Discrimination against Women in areas falling within the  
scope of their activities**

**Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization**

*Summary*

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the specialized agencies of the United Nations have been invited to submit to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, at its fifty-seventh session, reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

---

\* CEDAW/C/57/1.



## I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-seventh session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will examine the national reports of Bahrain, Cameroon, Finland, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

2. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture and communication and information. In accordance with the UNESCO medium-term strategy for 2008-2013, gender equality has been designated as one of the two global priorities of the Organization. The priority of gender equality is pursued through a two-pronged approach: gender-specific programming and mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in all the UNESCO fields of competence.

3. Within the United Nations system, UNESCO has a major role in and responsibility for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Article 10 of the Convention provides that States parties are to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education. The right to education is at the very heart of the mission of UNESCO and represents an integral part of its constitutional mandate.

4. Efforts by UNESCO to promote women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality are guided by its medium-term strategy for 2008-2013, its biannual programme and budget document, its organization-wide gender equality action plan for 2008-2013, which supports and guides the implementation of its global priority of gender equality, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women and resolutions and international and regional instruments relevant to areas of action by UNESCO.

5. The commitment of UNESCO to pursuing the priority of gender equality is facilitated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director General. As the UNESCO focal point for gender equality, the Division provides policy guidance and recommendations to the senior management and the programme sectors for mainstreaming gender equality considerations in UNESCO policies, strategies and programmes; carries out capacity-building; monitors gender parity and work-life balance within the UNESCO secretariat; and develops and establishes partnerships with other United Nations bodies, regional bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, private foundations and private sector partners that support women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives.

## II. Measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the countries to be considered at the fifty-seventh session of the Committee

### Bahrain

6. Bahrain is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, but reported to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States

on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

7. Article 18 of the Constitution of 2002 provides that people are equal in human dignity and that citizens are equal before the law in public rights and duties. The article also guarantees that there will be no discrimination among citizens on the basis of sex, origin, language, religion or creed. The Constitution also provides for equal opportunities among all citizens in all fields, including education as one of the pillars of society that the State guarantees.

8. Article 7 of the Constitution stipulates that the State guarantees educational and cultural services to its citizens. Education is compulsory and free in the early stages as specified and provided by law. The necessary plan to combat illiteracy is laid down by law. The law regulates care for religious and national instruction in the various stages and forms of education, and at all stages is concerned to develop the citizen's personality and her or his pride in Arabism. Individuals and bodies may establish private schools and universities under the supervision of the State and in accordance with the law. The State also guarantees the inviolability of places of learning.

9. In accordance with the education law of 2005, education aims to develop the learner at the cultural, vocational, scientific, national, emotional, ethical, mental, social, health, behavioural and sport levels within the tenets of Islam, Arab heritage, modern culture and the customs and traditions of Bahraini society. Education also aims to inculcate in the learner the spirit of citizenship, patriotism and allegiance to the King, emphasizing the role of Islam in the integration of personality, family cohesion and unity within society and highlighting the role of Islam as a guide in everyday life and its ability to keep pace with all modern development at all times and places. The law provides that education is a right guaranteed for all citizens. Education is free up to and including the secondary level. Basic education (nine years of schooling) is compulsory and free of charge for children between 6 and 15 years of age.

10. The constitutional foundations of Bahraini education are based upon two principles. The first is that education must be provided for all school-age children throughout the country. It is free of charge, compulsory and available without discrimination or exclusion. The second principle is that the quality of education should be improved to meet the needs of pupils and of the country's social and economic development, i.e. to ensure equitable access to basic and continuing education so that the basic learning needs of all young people and adults are met through elimination of illiteracy and equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes, strengthening respect for human rights and promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, as well as peace. At the policy level, Bahrain pays special attention to inclusive education. It seeks to eliminate discrimination in education against persons with disabilities and focuses on integrating children with disabilities into regular schools. In addition, regulatory frameworks for private educational institutions have been developed to ensure equality of educational opportunities and treatment.

11. Among activities relating to gender equality, a project on empowering women adult leaders professionally was carried out under the Participation Programme.

## **Cameroon**

12. Cameroon is not party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education, but reported to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

13. According to the Constitution (as amended in 2008) and the law on educational guidelines of 1998, all persons have equal rights and obligations. The State guarantees the child's right to education. Public primary education is secular, compulsory and available to all, without distinction. The organization and supervision of education at all levels are the primary duties of the State. Since 2000, primary education has been free of charge.

14. The Cameroonian education system is very popular in Africa. Historically, the method of learning was not the same in the eastern part of Cameroon as in the western part, where the systems were based on the French and British models, respectively. In 1976, the two systems merged, making a stronger learning system. Education is divided into primary, secondary and higher education. Education is compulsory until the age of 14 years, when six years of primary schooling are complete. Some primary schools belong to the Government, while others are run by religious organizations. The secondary system is divided into secondary schools, vocational schools and apprenticeships. Unfortunately, parents are expected to pay for uniforms, book fees and, sometimes, even anti-malaria prophylaxis for pupils. Tuition and fees at the secondary school level remain unaffordable for many families.

15. Funded under the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005), the Association des femmes handicapées actives du Cameroun carried out a project offering opportunities to women with disabilities in Cameroonian cultural industries. The main objectives of the project were to empower women with disabilities through professionalization in design, arts and crafts and to build their artistic and entrepreneurial skills.

16. Within the Fellowship Programme, 19 fellowships were granted to women scientists from Cameroon in such areas as geotourism, biotechnology, ecohydrology, management of microenterprises, water management and gender and sustainable development in agriculture. In addition, in the framework of the 2011 UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme, a research grant was awarded to a young woman researcher from Cameroon for a water sciences project.

## **Finland**

17. Finland has been party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1971, but did not report to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

18. In Finland, education is considered to be one of the fundamental rights of all citizens. Traditionally, the main goal of Finnish education policy has been to raise the level of education and to offer equal educational opportunities to all citizens, regardless of their place of residence, wealth, mother tongue or sex.

19. Under section 6 of the Constitution of 1999 (amended in 2011), everyone is equal before the law and no one is, without an acceptable reason, to be treated differently from other persons on the ground of sex, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or other reason that concerns his or her person. Children are to be treated equally and as individuals and are to be allowed to influence matters pertaining to them to a degree corresponding to their level of development. Equality of the sexes is promoted in societal activity and working life, especially in the determination of pay and the other terms of employment, as provided in law. Equality legislation of 2004 prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, ethnic or national origin, language, religion, belief, opinion, health, disability or sexual orientation. It applies to education and to working life.

20. According to section 16 of the Constitution, everyone has the right to basic education free of charge. Provisions on the duty to receive education are laid down by law. The public authorities are to guarantee for everyone equal opportunity to receive other educational services in accordance with their ability and special needs, in addition to the opportunity to develop themselves without being prevented by economic hardship. The freedom of science, the arts and higher education is guaranteed.

21. Basic, secondary and adult education were reformed in 1999 through legislation. This uniform legal framework focuses on the objectives, content and levels of education, in addition to pupils' rights and responsibilities. The new legislation has substantially increased the independent decision-making powers of local authorities, other education providers and schools, in addition to pupils' freedom of choice.

22. There are no tuition fees and fully subsidized meals are served to full-time pupils. The current education system consists of day-care programmes and one-year preschool (or kindergarten for children of 6 years of age), nine-year compulsory basic comprehensive education (between 7 and 15 years of age), post-compulsory secondary general academic and vocational education, higher education and adult (lifelong, continuing) education.

23. All children have the right to education. According to day-care legislation, from birth to the age of 6 years, children can attend day-care centres with reasonable fees depending on parental income. During the year before compulsory education begins, children can participate in pre-primary education, which must be provided by the local authorities free of charge. While participation is voluntary, in practice all children of 6 years of age are enrolled.

24. Basic compulsory education takes the form of a nine-year comprehensive system, for which school attendance is mandatory (homeschooling is allowed, but rare). There are no programmes for gifted children, with more able children expected to help those who are slower to catch on. Compulsory education begins in the year when a child turns 7 years of age and ends when the basic education syllabus has been completed or nine years after the beginning of compulsory schooling. If, as a result of a child's disability or illness, the objectives set for basic education cannot be achieved in nine years, compulsory schooling begins a year earlier. An additional year of basic education is available for those pupils who need an opportunity to improve their grades and clarify their career plans.

25. Upper secondary education begins at the age of 16 or 17 years and lasts for three to four years. It is not compulsory. Pupils may choose an academic track or a vocational track. There are no tuition fees and pupils on either track are entitled to school health care and a free lunch. They must, however, buy their own books and materials.

26. Schools up to university level are almost exclusively funded and administered by municipalities (local government). There are few private schools. The Council of State must approve the founding of new private comprehensive schools. When founded, private schools are given a State grant comparable to that given to a municipal school of the same size. Even in private schools, however, the use of tuition fees is strictly prohibited, as is selective admission. Private schools must admit all pupils on the same basis as the corresponding public (municipal) school. In addition, private schools are required to give their pupils all the social entitlements that are offered to pupils at municipal schools. Accordingly, existing private schools are mostly faith based. Teachers follow State curriculum guidelines, but are accorded a great deal of autonomy as to methods of instruction and are even allowed to choose their own textbooks.

27. There are two sectors in tertiary education: traditional universities and universities of applied sciences. The selection process is fully transparent, objective and based on merit. Traditional universities focus on research, providing theoretical education. Universities of applied sciences focus more on responding to the needs of the world of work and engage in industry development projects. The research that they conduct is more practical in nature, with theories applied to solve problems. Vocational schools and universities of applied sciences are run by municipalities, or, in special cases, by private entities. All traditional universities, however, are owned by the State.

28. The country's strategy for achieving equality and excellence in education is based on constructing a publicly funded comprehensive school system without selecting, tracking or streaming pupils during their common basic education. Part of the strategy is, whenever possible, to spread the school network so that pupils have a school near their homes or, if not feasible, such as in rural areas, to provide free transportation to more widely dispersed schools. Inclusive special education within the classroom and instructional efforts to minimize low achievement are also typical of the education system.

## **Iraq**

29. Iraq has been party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1977, but did not report to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

30. According to article 14 of the Constitution of 2010, Iraqis are equal before the law without discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, origin, colour, religion, creed, belief or opinion, or economic and social status. Under article 16, equal opportunities are guaranteed for all Iraqis and the State guarantees the taking of the measures necessary to achieve such equal opportunities.

31. Article 34 of the Constitution provides that education is a fundamental factor in the progress of society and is a right guaranteed by the State. Primary education is mandatory and the State guarantees to eradicate illiteracy. Free education in all its stages is a right for all Iraqis. The State encourages scientific research for peaceful purposes that serve the people and supports excellence, creativity, invention and different aspects of ingenuity. Private and public education is guaranteed and regulated by law.

32. Educational legislation aims at ensuring the State's supervision over educational policy, as well as organizing, financing and orienting the types of education in accordance with the philosophy, general objectives and aims of the various educational levels. Traditionally, the education system has been based on values and principles derived from religious, human and national characteristics. The most prominent is the belief that education is a social process, sensitive to time and place factors, and dependent on social ideology, needs and material and human resources. Within this framework, the State ensures the right to free education for all citizens at all levels. Primary education is compulsory for children between 6 and 11 years of age. In implementing the principle of democratization of education, the State undertakes to provide equal learning opportunities for all citizens without discrimination, regardless of sex, race or religion; encourage talent and creativity in all intellectual, scientific and artistic activities, with special attention to females and inhabitants of rural and remote areas; overcome economic and social obstacles, so as to facilitate access to educational institutions; and promote the role of education in establishing mutual understanding, cooperation and peace at the international level and respect for the rights and basic freedoms of human beings.

33. Before 1990, the education system was one of the best in the region in terms of access and quality. The situation began to deteriorate rapidly, however, following several wars and economic sanctions, the provision of basics through the oil-for-food programme notwithstanding. Northern Iraq did not suffer as much as a result of rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes organized through several United Nations agencies. Today, the major problems hindering the education system include lack of resources, politicization, uneven emigration, internal displacement of teachers and pupils, security threats and corruption.

34. At the primary level, Iraq is struggling to recover from more than a decade of violence during which many schools were destroyed and many teachers became dead soldiers. There is also conflict between fundamentalist religion and the concept of free and open education for all. While this continues, children suffer. The situation is particularly depressing among primary-school-age girls in poor areas, caused by a combination of child employment and a complete lack of some facilities.

35. Those children who do complete primary education but who are unable to afford private school fees often find a similarly depressing environment when they enter State secondary schools. Teachers are far too few and undersupported, all their well-meaning efforts notwithstanding.

36. Among UNESCO gender-related activities in Iraq, a toolkit on revision or adaptation of curricula, school textbooks and other learning materials to remove cultural, religious and gender stereotypes was developed within the framework of the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue. Curriculum developers and textbooks authors were trained on

mainstreaming gender in school textbooks and curricula. In addition, activities were carried out relating to the safety and security of female media professionals and journalists in conflict and post-conflict situations.

37. Among extrabudgetary projects, several activities on mainstreaming gender perspectives were carried out, including a project to support government efforts in developing the capacity of the education sector by enhancing the learning environment in vulnerable areas in order to meet the Education for All goals; a project on information and communications technology in education; a project on literacy for empowerment; an educational support programme targeting internally displaced persons and refugee communities in the Kurdistan Region, Mosul and Kirkuk; a project on combating youth unemployment through education; a project on promoting civic values and life skills for adolescents (between 12 and 19 years of age) through education; and a project on protection of media professionals, human rights defenders and members of the academic community.

38. Within the Fellowship Programme, two fellowships were granted to female researchers from Iraq in the area of pharmacology.

39. Within the Participation Programme, funds were granted for a project to establish a communications department in a vocational school for girls in Najaf Governorate.

## **Kazakhstan**

40. Kazakhstan is not party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

41. Article 14 of the Constitution of 1995 provides that everyone is to be equal before the law and the courts. No one is to be subject to any discrimination for reasons of origin, social, property status, occupation, sex, race, nationality, language, attitude towards religion, convictions, place of residence or any other circumstances.

42. According to the Constitution, citizens are to be guaranteed free primary and secondary education in State educational establishments. Primary and secondary education is to be obligatory. A citizen is to have the right to receive on a competitive basis a higher education in a State higher educational establishment. Citizens are to have the right to pay for and receive an education in private educational establishments on the basis and terms established by law. The State is to set uniform compulsory standards in education. The activity of any educational establishment must comply with those standards.

43. The law on education of 2007 establishes the principles and objectives of education. In accordance with article 3, the basic principles of education in the country are equality of citizens in their right to receive education; diversification of educational institutions in terms of ownership, direction of activities, forms of education and training; continuity in the process of education; the scientific and secular character and ecological orientation of education in State educational institutions; and democracy in the management of the education system. The law guarantees the autonomy of academic institutions, colleges and secondary schools.



44. Parity across genders, regions and income levels in terms of educational access is generally very high in Kazakhstan all the way through secondary school. There is, however, serious concern about access to education for children with special needs. Children with disabilities have largely not been mainstreamed in the public education system because of varying factors. For example, because of low preschool enrolment rates, many special needs of children go undiagnosed or unnoticed until primary school. In addition, there is a severe lack of services to address disabilities before or during school; there are very few education professionals trained to work with children with disabilities, technology is not available to schools to support children with special needs and medical services are not available for children with severe developmental problems. Lastly, there are no legislative measures to insist that children with special needs be included in the public education system, nor are there any regulatory processes to hold the system accountable.

45. There are major challenges with regard to the quality of education. A shortage of schools is compounded by poor heating and sanitation facilities that make still more schools unsafe. The poor state of school infrastructure impedes both access to education and the quality of learning. When the Government is spending the bulk of its resources on repairing school buildings, spending on learning materials suffers. While compulsory education is free by law, in practice parents and communities often bear a portion of the cost of schooling in the form of textbooks, supplies, school fees, school meals and, in some cases, school maintenance. Problems in the country's monitoring and evaluation system mean that specific information is not always available on learning outcomes. There is a shortage of trained teachers, especially in remote areas where city-trained teachers are unwilling to work. There is the challenge of updating the curriculum and instructional materials. There is a need to establish a specific set of uniform standards to maintain accountability and equality across school districts. Dropout rates are thought to be on the rise, given that the national curriculum is increasingly seen as irrelevant to the modern job market, although official figures are not available.

46. UNESCO worked in Kazakhstan and three other countries in the region to promote awareness among labour migrants of HIV risks, focusing on the special challenges facing female labour migrants. Within this project, training and outreach activities were conducted for more than 1,000 labour migrants. Education was provided to more than 60 civil society entities, the Government and the media on non-stigmatizing terminology and how to communicate effectively regarding labour migration and development in Central Asia. UNESCO partnered with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to create a unique network of journalists committed to producing fact-based, non-stigmatizing material on labour migration in the region. UNESCO also partnered with the Entity in sending a pool of journalists from Kazakhstan on field visits to migrant source regions in Tajikistan and southern Kazakhstan (on the border with Uzbekistan), providing them with field training on how to cover labour migrant issues and unique access to migrants and their families and giving them a first-hand look at the serious challenges facing migrants and their families left at home.

47. Within the Fellowship Programme, three fellowships were granted to female scientific researchers from Kazakhstan working on renewable energy and power generation.

## **Qatar**

48. Qatar is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

49. According to articles 18, 34 and 35 of the Constitution of 2003, Qatari society is to be based on justice, kindness, freedom, equality and morals. All citizens are equal in general rights and duties. All people are equal before the law. There is to be no discrimination on account of sex, origin, language or religion.

50. Under article 25 of the Constitution, education is to be a significant foundation for the progress of society. The State is to promote education. Article 49 guarantees the right to education to every citizen. The State is to extend efforts to achieve free and compulsory general education in accordance with the applicable laws and rules in the State. Based on this constitutional provision, education in Qatar is free at all levels for Qatari nationals. According to the compulsory education law adopted in 2001 and amended in 2009, education is free of charge and compulsory from the beginning of the primary stage to the end of the secondary stage, or until the child reaches the age of 18 years, whichever of the two comes first. To ensure universal access to high-quality education, the national development strategy covering the period 2011-2016 envisages mandatory kindergarten attendance for Qatari children from 3 years of age and compulsory primary and secondary education.

51. The Doha Centre for Media Freedom is a key partner of the Global Forum on Media and Gender, held in Bangkok from 2 to 4 December 2013. UNESCO partnered with the Centre to organize a panel on the safety of women journalists, online and offline, with a focus on the Arab States. A key outcome of the Forum was the establishment of a global alliance on media and gender, of which UNESCO became a member so as to promote gender equality in the region.

## **Senegal**

52. Senegal has been party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1967 and reported to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

53. According to article 7 of the Constitution of 2001, all human beings are equal before the law. Men and women are equal in law.

54. Under articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution, the State and the public collectivities are to create the preliminary conditions and the public institutions that are to guarantee the education of children. The State is to have the duty and the task of educating and training young people through public schools. All children are to have the right to attend school. Religious and non-religious institutions and communities are also to be recognized as educational facilities. All national, public or private institutions are to have the duty to see to it that their members learn to read and write, including by participating in the national literacy effort that aims to ensure that everyone can read and write one of the national languages. Under

article 23, private schools may be opened with the authorization and under the supervision of the State.

55. Secular primary education is compulsory and free in Senegal up to the age of 16 years. This policy is not enforced in areas where Islamic education is preferred, however. A combination of poverty and an uncaring administrative attitude also drives many parents and children away from education. Even though education is free of charge in State schools, which are open to all children without distinction within the limit of the places available, the current conditions are not sufficient for all school-age children to enrol. Consequently, many school-age children seek education and training through more informal means. Many children (more than 100,000) receive little training in the informal sector and craft shops and go unpaid. Various donor agencies are endeavouring to reverse the trend by introducing pupil-centred vocational training colleges. Secondary school is not affordable for most children from poor families. Many girls never even reach secondary education, having by then already been sent out to work or become mothers.

56. UNESCO has partnered with the African Union of Broadcasting to promote gender equality in the staffing of media organizations and reporting on issues affecting women in Senegal. Under this arrangement, the Senegalese public broadcasting company, consisting of three television channels and four radio stations, is carrying out activities to pilot UNESCO gender-sensitive indicators for the media. The project includes internal self-assessment based on selected indicators, related capacity-building and the development of gender-sensitive policies and strategies to improve equality in staffing and content.

57. The literacy project in Senegal within the framework of the Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education has had many benefits. There has been increased access to literacy, with some 4,000 girls and women enrolled in literacy classes and income-generating activities (193 classes opened and 200 teachers and facilitators trained). A total of 900 girls and young women have received literacy and vocational training, 54 per cent of whom will continue in formal education. Some 2,300 profiled girls and women are soon to benefit from tailor-made online courses. In addition, the quality of education has improved, with 96 per cent of beneficiaries who received after-school support and who were at high risk of dropping out passing their exams or moving to the next level and an average of 20 per cent of those beneficiaries making significant progress in various subjects.

58. To better understand the particular challenges around the transition of learners from primary to secondary education, UNESCO supported a series of country studies, including in Senegal, on best practice with regard to retaining girls in secondary education. UNESCO has also been leading research on gender equality and technical vocational education and training so as to inform national policies and strategies. Young women received vocational training. Within the HIV/AIDS gender-sensitive education programme, national capacity was developed through a training workshop on literacy, HIV and gender aimed at empowering women to talk about sexual and reproductive health.

59. Extrabudgetary projects targeting women and girls were implemented, focusing on, among other things, literacy of girls and young women, reinforcing the empowerment of women and awareness among women of HIV, literacy for girls and women through the use of information and communications technology, analysis of the social movements of women and gender-based violence to reinforce social

inclusion and women's human rights in the Sahel, and strengthening free, independent and pluralistic media, civic participation and gender-responsive communication for sustainable development.

60. Within the Fellowship Programme, 15 fellowships were granted to women researchers from Senegal, for a total amount of \$184,611, in such areas as management of microenterprises, teacher training in basic education, water management, renewable energy, gender and sustainable development, and capacity-building for teacher education.

61. Within the Participation Programme, three events relating to gender equality were approved, for a total amount of \$67,000. They were a national seminar on literacy policies and programmes for political and economic empowerment of women and for gender equality in Senegal, a subregional seminar concerning current and future challenges with regard to a strategy of didactical approaches to human rights education concerning young people and gender-based violence and an event on female scientists.

## **Sierra Leone**

62. Sierra Leone has been party to the Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1967, but did not report to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

63. According to article 27 of the Constitution of 1991 (as amended in 2001), no law is to make provision which is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect; no person is to be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority; and the expression "discriminatory" means affording different treatment to different persons attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions by race, tribe, sex, place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed.

64. According to article 9 of the Constitution (dedicated to educational objectives) the Government is to direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal rights and adequate educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels by ensuring that every citizen is given the opportunity to be educated to the best of his or her ability, aptitude and inclination by providing educational facilities at all levels and aspects of education, such as primary, secondary, vocational, technical, college and university; safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups, such as children, women and persons with disabilities in security educational facilities; and providing the necessary structures, finance and supportive facilities for education, as and when practicable.

65. Under the same provision, the Government is to strive to eradicate illiteracy and to that end is to direct its educational policy towards achieving free adult literacy programmes, free compulsory basic education at the primary and junior secondary school levels and free senior secondary education, as and when practicable.

66. The education system is divided into four stages. Primary education lasts for six years, junior secondary education for three years, either senior secondary education or technical vocational education for three years and university or other

tertiary education for four years. In 2004, school fees for all children at primary school and at junior secondary school for girls in the northern and eastern areas were abolished. Fees were also abolished for the national primary school examination that is taken at the end of primary school and has to be passed in order to progress to secondary education.

67. Education is compulsory and free of charge for all children for six years at the primary level and for three years in junior secondary education for girls in the northern and eastern regions. The shortage of schools and teachers during long periods of political and social instability has, however, made the implementation of this legal norm impossible. Children enter junior secondary school at around the age of 12 years and typically remain there until the age of 15 years. At senior secondary schools, pupils studying there for three years have a choice between either continuing their academic education or shifting to vocational education where they learn more practical skills. Efforts directed towards vocational training focus on agricultural skills and related proficiencies such as mechanics, carpentry and bricklaying.

68. In 2012, Sierra Leone began instituting major reforms to its education system after reporting some of the poorest academic results in West Africa. It began by adding an extra year to the end of secondary school to give senior secondary school pupils an additional year of education before sitting the standardized exams and increasing the school day from four to seven hours. Although, according to the Government, spending on public education has increased by 36 per cent since 2008, financial constraints stemming from the economic crisis remain a common complaint at all levels of the education system. Given that pupils pay school fees, an additional year in secondary school represents further costs that they often cannot afford.

69. Within the Fellowship Programme, five fellowships were granted to women from Sierra Leone, for a total amount of \$141,352, in such areas as aquaculture, hydrology and capacity development for basic education.

## Annex

**Educational statistics for countries reporting to the  
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against  
Women at its fifty-seventh session: gross enrolment ratios of  
females and males and gender parity index**

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary		Gross enrolment ratio, secondary		Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, primary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, secondary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, tertiary
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
Bahrain	2008	–	–	92	92	–	–	–	0.99	–
	2009	–	–	94	93	–	–	–	0.98	–
	2010	–	–	98	95	30	47	–	0.98	1.57
	2011	–	–	106	101	26	49	–	0.96	1.88
Cameroon	2008	109	94	40	32	9	7	0.86	0.80	0.79
	2009	111	96	43	36	10	8	0.87	0.83	0.79
	2010	114	98	47 <sup>a</sup>	40 <sup>a</sup>	12	10	0.86	0.84 <sup>a</sup>	0.81
	2011	113	98	51	43	14	10	0.87	0.85	0.73
Finland	2008	99	98	106	111	85	106	0.99	1.05	1.24
	2009	99	98	105	110	82	102	0.99	1.05	1.23
	2010	99	99	105	110	85	104	0.99	1.05	1.22
	2011	100	99	105	110	86	106	0.99	1.04	1.23
Iraq	2008	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2009	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2010	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2011	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Kazakhstan	2008	106	106	94	92	39	54	0.99	0.98	1.40
	2009	106	105	95	93	34	48	1.00	0.97	1.40
	2010	104	105	97	95	33	46	1.00	0.97	1.40
	2011	104	105	99	96	35	49	1.01	0.97	1.41
Qatar	2008	–	–	81	111	6	27	–	1.37	4.76
	2009	–	–	84	113	5	26	–	1.34	5.41
	2010	–	–	95	117	5	27	–	1.23	5.50
	2011	–	–	107	117	5	32	–	1.10	5.93
Senegal	2008	84	86	34	27	10	6	1.02	0.79	0.54
	2009	83	87	–	–	10	6	1.04	–	0.58
	2010	82	86	39	34	10 <sup>a</sup>	6 <sup>a</sup>	1.05	0.87	0.59 <sup>a</sup>
	2011	81	86	43 <sup>a</sup>	39 <sup>b</sup>	–	–	1.06	0.91 <sup>b</sup>	–

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Gross enrolment ratio, primary</i>		<i>Gross enrolment ratio, secondary</i>		<i>Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary</i>		<i>Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, primary</i>	<i>Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, secondary</i>	<i>Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, tertiary</i>
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>			
Sierra Leone	2008	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2009	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2010	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2011	132	125	—	—	—	—	0.95	—	—

A dash indicates data not available.

<sup>a</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimate.

<sup>b</sup> National estimate.