



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

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

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

**Replies of Morocco to the list of issues and questions in
relation to its combined fifth and sixth periodic reports*****

[Date received: 12 March 2021]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present report may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Legislative framework and definition of discrimination against women

Reply 1

1. The preamble of the 2011 Constitution provides that the international treaties that Morocco has ratified, within the framework of the Constitution, domestic law and its established national identity, shall, immediately upon their publication, have primacy over domestic legislation, and that such legislation must be harmonized with the requirements of those treaties.

2. Moreover, the preamble provides that all forms of discrimination based on sex, colour, belief, culture, social or regional identity, language, disability or personal circumstance are prohibited and must be opposed. That prohibition is reiterated in several articles of the Constitution, including, in particular, its article 19.¹ It is also reinforced by national laws, such as the Labour Code,² and by laws concerning public freedoms and the right to work, participate in economic life and have access to health and educational services, and the law on combating violence against women. Moreover, the definition of discrimination has been further delineated through changes made to article 431 of the Criminal Code, pursuant to article 2 of the Combating Violence Act (see para. 11 of the report).

3. The Family Code takes a new approach to the relationship between spouses by applying the principle of equality, in order to ensure that:

- Both spouses are able to conclude a marriage contract;
- Caring for the family is the joint responsibility of the couple;
- The spouses are equal in rights and responsibilities;
- There is equality and balance between the spouses should the marital relationship be terminated.

4. Article 9 of the Labour Code prohibits all forms of discrimination between employees. Accordingly:

- Women have the right to conclude a labour contract;
- All discriminatory measures against workers based on trade union affiliation or activity are prohibited;
- Women have the right to join and manage trade unions.

5. Article 36 of the Labour Code provides that race, colour, sex, marital status or family responsibilities cannot be used as justification for disciplinary penalties and dismissal from employment. Under article 346, any form of pay discrimination between the sexes for work of equal value is prohibited, while article 478 prohibits private employment agencies from breaching the principle of equality of opportunity in respect of employment.

6. With regard to positive discrimination in politics, systems have been put in place to encourage women's participation in public bodies and organizations (articles 30, 115 and 146). Other measures taken in that regard include the promulgation of the Regulatory Act for the Election of Members of Local Government Councils, Parliament and Political Parties. Women can avail themselves of the support fund to encourage the representation of women and networks of local elected women at the

¹ Constitution of Morocco (2011): articles 6, 14–15, 19, 31–32, 115, 154 and 164.

² Labour Code: preamble and articles 9, 12, 36, 40, 152–154, 156, 159, 162, 172, 179, 183, 346 and 478.

national, regional and local levels. In addition, an authority to promote equality, equal opportunity and a gender-based approach has been established within local government councils. This authority includes representatives of civil society.

7. Moroccan criminal law³ makes no distinction between the sexes with regard to the requirements for hearing witness testimony. The sex of the witness has no impact on the significance of the person's testimony, and neither the Civil Code nor the Civil Procedure Code (84.71) make such a distinction with regard to testimony. Indeed, women have entered the notary public profession, and they now notarize and witness contracts and other legal documents.

Withdrawal of reservations and ratification of the Optional Protocol

Reply 2

8. On 8 April 2011, Morocco notified the Secretary-General that it had withdrawn its reservations. The withdrawal was published in the *Official Gazette* for judicial application. The sole remaining reservation relates to article 29, paragraph 1. The declarations relating to article 2 and article 15, paragraph 4, of the Convention do not exclude, amend or restrict the legal effect of the relevant provisions, because the rights of women under national law have broken the bounds of a number of those declarations.

9. In November 2012, the Cabinet endorsed bill 12.125 authorizing accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention. In December 2012, the bill was referred to Parliament, which ratified it in July 2015. A Royal Decree was issued ordering implementation of the law and its publication in the *Official Gazette* (August 2015).⁴ Deposit of the instrument of ratification with the United Nations Secretariat is pending.

Access to justice

Reply 3

10. A series of institutional and legislative measures⁵ have been adopted and implemented through various sectoral action plans. Additional information can be found in reply 7 regarding raising women's awareness. The justice sector supports collective initiatives to combat legal illiteracy among women. The number of such initiatives increased from 43 in 2016 to 52 in 2017, and most of those were carried out in rural and remote areas.

11. With regard to the redress mechanisms available to women, Act 103.13, which entered into force in September 2018, has helped to ensure that women victims of violence enjoy a minimum level of protection. The National Commission for the Care of Women Victims of Violence⁶ and regional and local committees were established in order to give effect to section IV of that Act. Efforts have been made to improve intake mechanisms for victims, enhance coordination and strengthen support units in the courts and health-care facilities and within the General Directorate for National

³ Articles 343 to 347 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

⁴ Annex I: Royal Decree ordering implementation of Act 12.125.

⁵ The Government Plan for Equality (ICRAM 2) 2017–2021, implementation outcome, 2019, p. 90. http://81.192.52.121/sites/default/files/BILAN%202017-2018%20du%20plan%20ICRAM2_%20FR.pdf.

⁶ Headed by the Prime Minister or his/her appointee.

Security (DGSN) and the Royal Gendarmerie. In addition, cooperation mechanisms with various stakeholders have been strengthened. Act 65.15 concerning social welfare institutions was adopted and specifications were established for multifunction centres where victims are heard, provided with escorts and emergency accommodation, and given economic support. In order to support implementation of that Act, activities have been organized to raise awareness of it. In addition, mechanisms for assisting women have been given support, the array of services has been enhanced and a draft of the 2030 national strategy to combat violence against women and girls has been prepared.

12. Article 52 of the Judicial Regulation Act stipulates the creation of units in the courts of first instance and appeal to provide support services and escorts for special groups, conduct social research at the request of the judiciary and make use of mediation in disputes before it.

13. The courts:

- Provide women's and children's support units with human and logistical resources, including, in particular, specialized social workers, leaflets on services and signs;
- Develop uniform quality standards for the units' work, provide a practical guide and a guide on listening techniques, strengthen the capacities of judicial management staff, organize workshops and share international experiences;
- Strengthen coordination between members of women's and children's support units in the courts, on the one hand, and other partners from regional and local committees, on the other;
- Make the service for receiving complaints more accessible by creating an electronic complaint service,⁷ providing telephone numbers and updating complainants about the status of their complaints.

14. Article 2 of the Code of Criminal Procedure establishes the right to prosecute any offence and impose penalties and the right to bring civil action in order to claim damages, including for such things as discrimination and gender-based violence. It should be noted that, pursuant to article 82.4 of the Code, the victim must be informed of his/her right to redress, such as filing a suit for damages with the investigating judge or the court, and of his/her rights under the law.

Impact of the pandemic on women's rights and gender equality

Reply 4

15. Following the declaration of a state of health emergency on 20 March 2020, the Government took more than 400 health, economic and social measures in response to the quarantine, and it took various preventive and protective measures to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. A special fund was established that has provided more than 33,000,000,000 dirhams. In addition, the new Economic Monitoring Committee has kept an eye on the national economic situation and taken appropriate measures for the benefit of the most affected sectors and socio-professional groups. A scientific and technical committee and sectoral monitoring units were established to follow up on the medical and scientific aspects as well as developments in the epidemiological situation. Following are the most significant measures that were taken:

⁷ The most important authorities available on the electronic complaint service are the Office of the Public Prosecutor and the Ministry of Justice.

- A digital awareness-raising campaign entitled “Violence only makes the epidemic worse” was launched on 26 March 2020 to raise awareness of and combat violence against women and girls;
- The “We Are All with You” platform was established in partnership with stakeholders. The platform, which provides listening and support services around the clock every day of the week, is operated in coordination with 63 centres for women victims of violence and can be accessed via a hotline (8350) and a free smart app. In addition, a remote reporting and support platform for victims was developed;⁸
- A social support service to protect victims was launched. Under the system, social workers, operating in shifts, are available in the courts, and they have been given telephone and fax numbers;
- The courts have held remote hearings. In the period from 27 April to 11 December 2020, some 12,016 such hearings were held and 212,698 cases were adjudicated, while the number of judgements was 79,577;
- As at 1 June 2020, a total of 6,050 homeless persons, 549 of whom were women, were in shelters.

16. The Chief Public Prosecutor issued a circular on violence against women during quarantine calling for the development of digital or telephone platforms for complaints, addressing such cases as a matter of priority and taking measures, such as the provision of services at public prosecution offices, to protect women who are in difficult and special situations.⁹

17. The circular calls for continued monitoring of statistics concerning cases of violence against women. In the period from 20 March to 20 April 2020, public prosecutors registered 892 complaints in court, with prosecution initiated in 148 cases. In addition, it is specified in the circular that these measures relate to reporting complaints electronically to the Office of the Chief Public Prosecutor through its email account,¹⁰ the electronic accounts of prosecutors attached to the courts, the telephone numbers for lodging complaints and the regional committees’ platform.

18. To reduce the toll of violence on women,¹¹ shelter services have been expanded following the establishment of 65 multifunction centres to protect women and report and follow up incidents, depending on the case. In 2019, there were 54 shelters in place with female 16,076 beneficiaries (96.04 per cent of all beneficiaries).

19. The “Salama” preventive health kit, which has been put at the disposal of the relevant networks and associations, is available to women victims of violence, beneficiaries, multifunction centre workers, pregnant women, health professionals, migrant women, female prisoners, persons with disability and the elderly.

20. Cases of violence in all regions that are reported or discussed in the social media level are addressed immediately, whether by providing accommodation in emergency cases or offering other protection measures in coordination with the police, the Royal Gendarmerie, public prosecutors and local authorities.

⁸ <http://stoplaviolence.sante.gov.ma>.

⁹ No. 20 *sin/ra’ nun ayn* (30 April 2020). During that period, prosecutors registered 892 complaints of various types of violence against women.

¹⁰ plaintes@pmp.ma.

¹¹ According to the 2019 national study on violence against women and men, in the 12 months preceding the study some 22.8 per cent of women and their families, the greater proportion of whom lived in urban areas, had borne the direct and indirect costs of violence. The total cost was estimated to be 2.58 billion Moroccan dirhams, an average of 957 dirhams per victim.

21. The “Takafful” programme for professionals who support women victims of violence is aimed at promoting a better understanding of the relevant normative and legal frameworks and sharing professional techniques related to support, follow-up and social assistance.

22. With regard to health-care measures in response to the effects of the epidemic, circulars have been issued in which the authorities urge that the level of services should be maintained. A ministerial decision was adopted regarding the establishment of a special committee to monitor the operationalization of health programmes and services. Links and videos on the continuity of services and the risk of spousal violence have been published, along with recommendations on strengthening precautionary measures for women during pregnancy and childbirth.

23. See replies 6, 14 and 20 for information women and girls’ participation in political and public life.

24. To mitigate the economic and social impacts of the pandemic:

- Formal sector employees who lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic were given 2,000 dirhams per month.¹² In the period from 15 to 19 April, the programme served some 716,000 beneficiaries and 132,000 employers. By June, the programme was serving 894,000 beneficiaries and 125,000 employers and its budget was 2 billion dirhams.
- Workers in the informal sector (41 per cent of active workers) received support ranging from 800 dirhams to 1,200 dirhams per month, depending on the size of their families. Those workers were identified because they are beneficiaries of the medical assistance programme. Moreover, the nearly 3.7 million most vulnerable families who do not benefit from this programme have received similar assistance. Women make up more than 20 per cent of the number of beneficiaries under each category.
- Act 20.25 stipulated exceptional measures for employers enrolled in the National Social Security Fund and their declared employees who were affected by the outbreak of the pandemic;
- Labour inspectors have carried out campaigns to raise corporate awareness of and respect for preventive measures. Some 6,761 institutions benefited from this effort in the period from 13 March to 14 April 2020;
- Regional committees were established to monitor corporate compliance with safety and preventive measures taken to combat the epidemic;
- Guidelines on managing working conditions during the pandemic have been developed;
- The “ALLO 2233” interactive platform was developed in order to provide guidance on the relationship between workers and employers, address disputes and facilitate communication with social partners;
- Joint labour-industry regulations were developed to determine whether manufacturing facilities complied with preventive measures. The joint committees visited 51,194 establishments in the period from 15 April to 31 December 2020;
- A workplace health protocol was adopted by labour and industry in order to ensure the safety of workers;

¹² Act 20.25 stipulated exceptional measures for employers enrolled in the National Social Security Fund and their declared employees who were affected by the outbreak of the pandemic.

- A notice on workplace safety measures was posted on the labour sector’s website. That information was also presented in three television videos.¹³

25. At the international level, Morocco participated in the Secretary-General’s call for peace at home (April 2020), and it, along with 10 other countries, was invited by United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to officially celebrate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

26. The National Programme for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls (“Maghrib al-Tamkin”) was adapted to the pandemic through the stipulation of measures to reduce the economic repercussions of the pandemic for women. In that connection, partnerships with provincial and regional councils have been concluded with a budget of 124 million dirhams to support women entrepreneurs and women’s cooperatives, promote the economic empowerment of women and girls in difficult circumstances and women artisans, and support income-generating activities, training and integration into the labour market, and women who engaged in subsistence smuggling. In addition, Morocco was one of 31 countries that participated in the United States-led initiative “Call to Action on Women’s Economic Empowerment”.

27. Distance learning was introduced for all children. Some 5,330 lessons were broadcast on television and 6,000 digital resources were made available on the TelmidTICE digital platform. In addition, some 725,000 virtual sessions were held (16 March 2020) and 1 million support booklets were distributed to rural children. Baccalaureate examinations were administered in person. More than 120,000 distance training classes were produced for vocational training and vocational career paths, without distinction between male and female students.

28. The following measures have been taken to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on rural women and girls:

- Awareness-raising committees comprising representatives of various interests have been established;
- Awareness-raising visits to women’s cooperatives were carried out and protective equipment was distributed to their units;
- Courses for rural women were organized and a manual on preventive measures was distributed.

29. With regard to transportation management, data on workers was collected and female workers were provided with appropriate transportation.

30. The High Commission for Planning has prepared a series of field research documents and studies in order to determine the economic, social and psychological impact of the epidemic on the lives of families. In that connection, it conducted field research regarding the impact of HIV on the economic, social and psychological situation of families. The first phase of research was carried out from 15 to 24 June 2020 and the second phase was completed between 5 and 24 June 2020. Other field research focused on entrepreneurship, including research concerning the impact of COVID-19 on entrepreneurial activity that was conducted in the period 1 to 3 April 2020. Another round of research (July 2020) also focused on the epidemic’s impact on entrepreneurial activity. It has also issued memorandums and reports containing gender-disaggregated data to highlight the impact that COVID-19 has had on women, including the exacerbation of gender disparities in employment, domestic work and access to health and education.¹⁴

¹³ In French, Arabic and English.

¹⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic at the national level: status and scenarios.

31. Morocco launched a campaign to provide vaccinations free of charge in accordance with a defined strategy under which the vaccine is rolled out gradually by age and professional groups.

National machinery for the advancement of women

Reply 5

32. Parliament ratified an act regulating the Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority.¹⁵ That act sets out the Authority's powers, composition, regulations and rules of procedure. The conformity of the act's provisions to article 164 of the Constitution was determined by the Constitutional Court.¹⁶

33. In 2016, the relevant sectoral authorities evaluated the Government's plan and concluded that:

- The requirements of the plan are in line with national and international contexts and consonant with national laws;
- The plan would stimulate national dynamics;
- The plan would promote cross-cutting integration of equality;
- The plan would operationalize programmes and other plans, particularly with regard to the production of statistics and supporting institutional capacities.

34. The evaluation revealed the following challenges:

- Targeting and follow-up in the Government plan is based on impact and results-based planning;
- Identification of strategic priorities;
- Adoption of a detailed plan regarding gender-based disparities;
- Combating stereotypes.

35. Some 75 per cent of the plan's objective have been completely achieved, while 86 per cent are more than 70 per cent complete and another 22 per cent are less than 70 per cent complete.

36. A second Government plan on equality for the period 2017–2021 was adopted. It is based on integration, inclusion and accountability and includes strong evaluation and follow-up systems that include efficiency and impact indicators. The plan comprises four thematic concepts and three cross-cutting concepts: economic empowerment, women's rights in the context of family relations, women's participation in decision-making, combating discrimination and stereotypes, integrating gender into all government policies and programmes, and a regional roll-out plan.

37. The plan includes a governance, follow-up and evaluation system. The most important elements of that system are:

- Reduce gender disparity in labour market participation by 5 per cent by the end of 2021;
- Reduce gender pay inequality by 2 per cent by the end of 2021;
- Increase by 10 per cent the number of women available for suitable work;

¹⁵ Act No. 79.14, published in *Official Gazette* No. 6612 of 12 October 2017.

¹⁶ Decision 17/40 (September 2017).

- Reduce the illiteracy rate among women in rural areas by 5 per cent;
- Increase the proportion of women entrepreneurs by 5 per cent from the current proportion of 10 per cent.

38. In the context of the final evaluation of the plan, the annual outcome reports¹⁷ showed positive results, and the relevant sectoral authorities issued their first statistical bulletin in 2020.¹⁸ A number of measures were planned in 2021 to implement sectoral workplans with a view to developing effective project procedures.

39. The Plan of Action on Democracy and Human Rights addresses equality from a cross-cutting perspective. In addition, the Plan includes a component on legal and institutional protection of women's rights that comprises 24 measures (Nos. 379 to 401): 17 legislative and institutional measures and four measures related to raising awareness, communication and strengthening capacity.

40. With regard to operationalization, an implementation plan was drafted that will serve as a contractual framework and procedural document for the Plan of Action. The implementation plan was drafted with the participation of all actors and stakeholders, both at the central and regional levels, with a view to integrating the Plan of Action's principles and mechanisms into regional public policies by strengthening the capacity of local actors, creating momentum at the regional level and strengthening roles.

41. The legislative and institutional measures envisioned call for strengthened protection for women in national legislation and criminal policy, and accelerated passage of the law on combating violence against women. Monitoring and follow-up mechanisms will be strengthened, in order to protect women, and regional groups will have a greater role in providing a safe environment for children and women. Legal safeguards will be strengthened by criminalizing sexual harassment, and efforts will be made to combat discrimination in the media.

42. With regard to economic matters, the Plan of Action calls for incorporating a gender-based approach into economic programmes that support enterprise creation. With regard to social matters, the Plan of Action calls for incorporating a gender-based approach into policies and budgets, developing follow-up and evaluation mechanisms, strengthening programmes to eradicate poverty and marginalization among and ending the social exclusion of women, and pressing ahead with the operationalization of the Family Solidarity Fund and the simplification of its regulations.

43. Communication and awareness-raising measures call for the documentation and dissemination of jurisprudence and best practices relating to the application of the Family Code, expanding the network of multidisciplinary spaces, increasing the number of jobs for women and combating stereotypes in the media and schools.

44. With regard to strengthening capacity, the Plan of Action calls for ongoing training and continuing education programmes for judges and court officers.

45. In order to promote discussion at the community level of outstanding issues, the Plan of Action envisages a partnership programme with civil society organizations with regard to following:

- Underage marriage;

¹⁷ http://81.192.52.121/sites/default/files/BILAN%202017-2018%20du%20plan%20ICRAM2_%20FR.pdf.

¹⁸ https://social.gov.ma/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%A9_2020-VF8_9_2020-1-1.pdf.

- Marriage of a mother who has custody of her children;
- Redrafting the section of the law concerning the division of property after divorce;
- Custody of children;
- Protection of the husband or wife by the Office Public Prosecutor when returning to the matrimonial home.

46. In order to disseminate the Plan of Action at the regional level, meetings were held with regional actors in order to enable them to incorporate strategic human rights planning into regional policies.

47. The following measures have been taken with regard to the gender-sensitive budgeting:

- The draft finance bill for 2020 includes provisions for a fourth pilot phase of the gender-sensitive and performance-based budgeting initiative. A further seven ministries were added in this phase;
- In 2019, the economic sector completed a study on redrafting the results-based budget report from a gender perspective;
- Some 15 ministries were monitored through sectoral analysis studies on gender.

Temporary special measures

Rely 6

48. To accelerate achieving equality, the operating procedures of the support fund to promote representation of women were reviewed. The measures related to implementation of the charter on administrative decentralization have been effected, and 99 projects were approved for developing the capacities of elected women who are members of 11 parties, 25 national associations and 63 and local associations. For further information, please see the replies to the questions concerning employment and education.

49. In preparation for the upcoming elections, the Cabinet endorsed four bills concerning the organization of elections, the most important of which concerns a legislative mechanism for representation of women in the House of Representatives. Under that bill, national electoral districts are replaced by regional districts, given the importance that is attached in the Constitution to regions in respect of organization at the territorial level. With regard to the election of members of the territorial councils, one of the aims of the bill is to fine-tune the regulations for electing the prefecture and provincial councils, and to put in place a mechanism to ensure the participation of women by allocating one third of seats in each council to women. These new laws are expected to increase women's representation and political participation above current levels.

Discriminatory stereotypes and harmful practices

Reply 7

50. In addition to information provided in our reply to the third question, it should be noted that the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication issued several

decisions¹⁹ penalizing 11 public contractors and 25 private contractors for lack of oversight and failure to comply with measures relating to advertising, political pluralism and gender equality.²⁰

51. Act 83.13, which supplements Act 77.03 concerning audiovisual communications, prohibits dissemination of messages that contain stereotypes of or promote direct or indirect discrimination against women, and audiovisual media operators are urged to help combat stereotypes and promote a culture of equality. In addition, the Act requires operators to ensure equal participation in political, economic, social and cultural programmes.

52. Law 88.13 concerning journalism and publishing prohibits the publication of any advertisement in the printed or electronic media that promotes discrimination against women.

53. Articles 2, 6 and 9 of the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication Regulatory Act (No. 11.15) provide that the High Authority is responsible for maintaining an audiovisual environment in which pluralism and human dignity are respected, and all forms of violence, discrimination and stereotypes are opposed.

54. The regulations for public audiovisual media operators provide that they must create programmes that promote women's rights and support the cohesion and stability of the family. In addition, they must ensure that women participate in talk programmes, and that there is broad and balanced participation of women's association in bulletins and dialogue and interactive programmes.

55. Under the charter of the National Radio and Television Corporation (SNRT), the Corporation must achieve gender parity at the organizational level and in its programming, and its internal regulations must include punitive measures for any discriminatory conduct. In addition, SNRT must organize awareness-raising campaigns for its employees. The "parity and diversity" charter of its Channel 2 calls for promoting a fair representation of women on screen and in the Corporation, and also for raising awareness through the channel's programmes.

56. A guide on combating gender stereotypes in the media has been developed to educate media workers on how to make a gender-based approach a normal and enduring aspect of their work.

57. According to data on pluralism compiled by the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication, appearances by female public figures in news bulletins and magazines during the fourth quarter of 2020 made up 19.38 per cent of such programming compared to 16 per cent during the first quarter of 2020, while appearances by female communal figures stood at 51 per cent.

58. With regard to developing the capacity of media workers, the concept of gender equality is now part of the study programme of the Higher Institute of Information and Communication. The Moroccan News Agency organized a course on women leaders for a group of 40 female executives (February 2018), a workshop on media portrayal of violence against women and a course to promote leadership in the media, in which half the participants were women.²¹

¹⁹ Act 83.13, which supplements Act 77.03 concerning audiovisual communication; Act 88.13 concerning journalism and publishing; and the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication Regulatory Act (No. 11.15).

²⁰ Decisions 17/1 of January 2017 and 17.06 of February 2017 (concerning the *Samir al-Layal* programme), and decision 14.19 of February 2019 (concerning *In the Dock*).

²¹ Participants included the National Observatory for the Image of Women in the Media, the National Observatory for Violence against Women and several journalists and media professionals (July 2017).

59. Studies have been completed on the role of public television in Morocco in achieving equality between the sexes, the image of women in the Moroccan media during the municipal and regional election campaigns (2016), gender and information (2017), gender and advertising (2018) and developing an approach to monitoring television programming in order to combat stereotypes and promote equality. Those studies revealed an increase in the duration of women's appearances in all programmes. Women dominated service-related (81 per cent) and family-oriented programmes, while men dominated information (82 per cent) and public affairs (77 per cent) programmes.

60. With regard to support and awareness-raising efforts:

- The National Observatory for the Image of Women in the Media developed a conceptual guide to the image of women in the media (2017);
- A Guide on combating discriminatory gender-based stereotypes and clichés in the media was developed (2018);
- Concepts of gender equality are explained in the *Maghrib al-Tamkin* (A Morocco of Empowerment) textbooks;
- A symposium on the role of audiovisual media in achieving gender equality was held in Channels 1 and 2 (2017);
- A communication campaign on decision-making on social networks was organized with in collaboration with a commercial brand.

61. At the institutional level:

- SNRT established an equality and awareness committee in order to bolster the parity and diversity charter and ensure that evaluation procedures and mechanisms are utilized;
- The number of female journalists holding a professional card was 678, compared to 1,962 male journalists. (2018);
- The number of women working for SNRT stood at 710, or 36 per cent of all staff, of whom 22 per cent held positions of responsibility, 9 per cent were members of governing bodies and 40 per cent were station heads (2017);
- In 2017, the number of women working for Channel 2 was 289 (compared to 666 men), of whom 21 per cent held positions of responsibility, 47 per cent presented programmes or newscasts and 36 per cent contributed to programmes;
- In 2019, women in were in charge 42 out of 314 online newspapers.

62. With regard to religion, the teaching materials of the anti-illiteracy programme offered at mosques were reviewed from a gender perspective. The review included the curriculum of the level two mosque programme entitled "Vocational and Technological Training", and the curriculum phase two, level one television and Internet programme. Women comprise more than 91 per cent of the programme's beneficiaries. Some 147 textbooks were improved, and the religious education curriculum and books amended.

63. Since 2011, teaching days and outreach meetings have been organized as part of the effort to combat practices that are harmful to women. An average of 282 activities have been held per year. Distance learning has been used to raise the awareness of the men and girls who benefit from the mosque literacy programme in order to ensure their participation the fight against violence against women. Programmes have been developed for establish religious lesson and lectures in

various mosques throughout the country²² aimed at raising awareness of the threats posed by and repercussions of violence against women,²³ and women's units have been organized in local councils.²⁴

64. With regard to programmes in the media, a group of programmes are presented on Channel 1, National Radio and the Mohamed VI Channel for the Holy Quran in coordination with SNRT. The focus of those programmes is protecting the family from deviance and resolving the causes of family conflict. In addition, there are media programmes direct towards women listeners.

Reply 8

65. With regard to measures for countering harmful practices related to child marriage, the Office of the Public Prosecutor issued a circular in which it urges the courts to ensure that applications lodged with judges are consistent with the intention of lawmakers to make marriage before the age of 18 subject to judicial approval, and asks them not to hesitate to challenge marriage applications that are not in the best interests of the minor. In addition, judges are asked to conduct investigative sessions in a manner that is suitable for minors, in order to make them aware of the harm caused by early marriage and encourage them to make use of social assistance. Hearings on granting a minor permission to marry must be attended and there should be no hesitation to submit an application for social background investigation by social assistance workers, in order to verify the grounds for requesting permission and to ensure that those residing abroad and who wish to obtain such permission are sure that the State of residence allows persons under the age of majority to conclude marriage contracts. The courts are required to provide data on such applications the Office of the Public Prosecutor every three months.²⁵

66. To reduce underage marriage, social programmes have been developed to promote girls' education in rural areas, including an array of measures to support female students: the second chance, "Milyun Mihfazah" and "Taysir" programmes, the medical assistance system, providing support to vulnerable widows who have custody of their orphaned children, the family cohesion fund, the family mediation promotion programme, the parental education programme and the family counselling programme.

67. Please see reply 23 for information on polygamy.

Gender-based violence

Reply 9

68. With regard to data on persons being prosecuted for felonies and misdemeanours committed against women disaggregated by relationship between the perpetrator and the victim by type of kinship, in 2019 the Office of the Public Prosecutor recorded cases of murder, battery resulting in death, rape, abduction and expulsion from the matrimonial home. The majority of assaults, approximately 56.11 per cent, were committed by spouses, and 37.3 per cent, or more than one third, were committed by

²² Friday sermon preachers have been instructed to part of their sermons to topics related to the role and responsibilities of women and men in the family, and how Islam cherishes and honours women. An average of 1,225 sermons are annually in some 24,500 mosques in urban and rural areas.

²³ Approximately 3,241 female and male religious counsellors are covered by the programme.

²⁴ There are 82 units.

²⁵ No. 20 of 29 March 2018.

third parties.²⁶ The incidence of other forms of violence perpetrated by fathers, mothers or employers is insignificant.²⁷

69. The number of cases of violence recorded declined from 25,208 in 2019 to 23,127 in 2020, and the number of victims declined from 26,109 in 2019 to 23,465 in 2020 (by age and type of violence).²⁸

70. One year after the implementation of Act 103.13, the Office of the Public Prosecutor prosecuted 360 persons on charges of expulsion from the matrimonial home and 165 persons on charges of refusal to return an expelled wife. In addition, it recorded 29 cases of sexual harassment in the workplace, 129 cases of sexual harassment in public spaces, 56 cases of electronic sexual harassment and 3 cases of misappropriating a wife's property. In January 2019, the court of first instance in Oujda ruled that the defendant in a misdemeanour marital violence case should be placed in a psychiatric institution.

71. Article 486 of the Criminal Code of Morocco defines rape as an act by which a man has sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent. The offence is punishable by a term of 5 to 10 years in prison. However, the penalty is 10 to 20 years imprisonment if the victim is under 18 years of age, an invalid, disabled, weak or pregnant. Under article 487, the penalty is heightened if the perpetrator is related to the victim, has authority over her, is a guardian, in her employ or the employ one of the aforementioned persons, or a religious official or dignitary, or if the person was abetted by one or several persons in the commission of the offence.

72. With regard to the criminalization of marital rape, the definition of violence set out in Act 103.13 applies to the crime of rape, regardless of whether persons involved are bound by marriage, and is considered to be a form of violence against women. In addition, the definition that is set out in article 486 is not limited by the nature of the relationship between the man and the women, that is to say whether it occurs within the confines in marriage or outside it.

73. The penalty for violating the privacy of an individual can be as much as 3 years in prison, regardless of the sex of the perpetrator and the victim and of the means used such as telephones, audiovisual recording equipment or computer systems. The penalty rises to five years in prison and a fine of 5,000 to 50,000 dirhams if the assault is committed by the husband, ex-spouse, fiancé or one of his ascendants or descendants, a person who has jurisdiction or authority over or is responsible for protecting the victim, or against the woman because of her sex, or against minors.

74. The responsible sectoral authorities organized seminars on cyberviolence and online sexual harassment on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

75. The administration of the Royal Gendarmerie has:

- Updated its human rights modules in line with international standards and integrated them into the training process;
- Developed the capacities of members of non-deployed units through internal sessions on Act 103.13;

²⁶ Annex II: Data on persons being prosecuted for felonies and misdemeanours committed against women disaggregated by relationship between the perpetrator and the victim by type of kinship (2019), Office of the Public Prosecutor.

²⁷ Report of the Office of the Public Prosecutor on implementation of the criminal policy (2018).

²⁸ Annex III: Statistical data on combating violence against women and girls (2019–2020), Office of the Public Prosecutor.

- Developed a guide on good practices for caring for women victims of violence (2014) and updated it in 2020;
- Developed a code of moral conduct for staff.

76. In the period from 2012 to 2017, the General Directorate for National Security (DGSN) organized 42 workshops for 1,055 staff members on a legal approach to human rights, intervention techniques, the role of forensics in cases of violence, listening techniques and developing a specialized information system for the domain. In 2019, it organized an event for 160 participants on intersectoral coordination and caring for women victims of violence, with a view to developing a common understanding of Act 103.13. In addition, DGSN organized training of trainers courses on international standards of care and andragogy, and it conducted awareness-raising campaigns for staff.

77. The authorities responsible for the labour sector organized 18 workshops on strengthening the capacity of the inspection system to monitor the fundamental rights of workers, particularly female workers (2018), as well as training courses on International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions Nos. 100 and 111 for 32 new inspectors and 30 trainees (2019).²⁹

78. In that connection, the Higher Judicial Institute has put in place a programme on equality to increase the capacity of trainees. In addition, the Institute, in partnership with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, developed a guide on the status of the international human rights instruments that are in effect and launched a cooperation programme with the European Union that covers six units.

79. The Office of the Public Prosecutor organized a symposium on criminal protection for women in the light of Act 103.13, a workshop on strengthening protection and prevention in the light of the Combating Violence Act, a training course on strengthening the role of judges in the Office of the Public Prosecutor with a view to providing effective protection for women, and a study meeting on underage marriage in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).³⁰

80. The implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls has helped give effect to the relevant laws by ensuring that they are actually implemented, as well as by establishing an appropriate and effective framework for combating violence against women, ensuring that victims of violence receive protection and care, reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence and promoting social protection for women.

81. A report on accomplishments and challenges with regard to combating violence against women was prepared as part of the effort to implement the Government programme for the period 2017–2021, including, in particular, the measure to launch a national policy to combat violence against women. Accordingly, the authorities responsible for realizing equality have developed the 2030 National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls, a theme of which is caring for women victims of violence. It is currently the subject of consultation and coordination with other sectors and civil society.

²⁹ Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

³⁰ In partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the National Human Rights Council.

Reply 10

82. Legal protection against domestic violence is addressed in the following articles³¹ of the Criminal Code:³²

- Article 88.1: In the event of a conviction for harassment, assault, sexual exploitation, abuse or violence against women or minors, regardless of the nature of the act or its perpetrator, the court may prohibit the convicted person from contacting the victim, approaching the place where she is located or communicating with her. The convicted person may be forced to undergo appropriate psychiatric treatment.
- Article 88.3: The court may prohibit the person being prosecuted from contacting the victim until the court rules in the case.
- Article 323.1: Violation of the prohibition on contacting the victim or refusing to undergo appropriate psychiatric treatment is punishable.
- Article 323.2: Violation of the protective measures set out in the Code of Criminal Procedure is punishable by imprisonment.
- Article 429.1: The penalty established in articles 425, 426, 427 and 429 of the Code shall be doubled if the offender is a spouse who has committed the offence against his or her spouse, or is an ex-spouse, a fiancé, an ascendant, a descendant, a brother, a guarantor, a guardian or a person who has jurisdiction or authority over or is responsible for protecting the victim, as well as in the event of a repeat offence, or if the victim is a minor, is a person with disability or known to be mentally disabled.

83. Please see paragraph 236 of the present report for information on the measures taken to ensure that an enabling environment is created to encourage victims to report incidents. Under article 6 of Act 103.13, when an act of violence or sexual assault is committed against a woman or minor, the court can hold a closed hearing at the victim's request. Article 8 of that Act provides that, in cases of violence against women, the following protective measures shall be taken immediately:

- The dependent minor and his/her guardian shall be returned to his/her court-designated residence;
- The offender shall be warned against committing an attack, in the event of a threat of violence, and he shall undertake not to commit an attack;
- The offender shall be notified that that he is prohibited from disposing of the couple's joint assets;
- The victim shall be referred to a hospital for treatment;
- An order shall be issued to place female victims in shelters or social welfare institutions, should the victim need and desire such placement.

84. See reply 7 for information on gender bias, stereotypes, patriarchal attitudes and a culture of victim-blaming.

Reply 11

85. In implementation of the commitments of Morocco pursuant to the 2020 Marrakesh declaration on combating violence against women, 65 multifunction centres have been established in order to provide shelter for women in difficult circumstances, offer them accommodation, legal guidance and temporary housing,

³¹ Annex IV, the articles added pursuant to article 5 of Act 103.13.

³² Article 5 of Act 103.13.

and provide psychological, health and social support. In order to provide services more effectively, a map of these multifunction centres, including ones located rural areas, was developed. The implementing regulations of the Social Care Institutions Act, including the specifications of multifunction centres that provide care services, have been drafted.

86. Further to the information regarding the provisions of care for women provided in replies 3 and 4, it should be noted that the authorities responsible for women's affairs have established 40 multifunction centres at the regional and local level to provide care for women victims of violence. Construction of 85 such centres had been completed by the end of 2021, and 86 million dirhams have been allocated for that purpose since 2015.

87. With a view to implementing the provisions of Act 103.13 on care arrangements, the implementing decree of that Act stipulates the creation of the following:³³

- The National Commission for the Care of Women Victims of Violence is responsible for ensuring coordination among stakeholder, establishing mechanisms for the development of the care system, strengthening cooperation with among relevant actors and reporting;
- Regional and local committees that provide care to women victims of violence;
- Central and non-centralized care units in the courts, the units responsible for justice, health, youth and national security, as well as the Royal Gendarmerie.

88. See replies 17 and 20 for information on State budget funding for support services, legal support and medical and social assistance.

Trafficking and exploitation of persons

Reply 12

89. Morocco has ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and other relevant international conventions. Although the relevant Moroccan law (2016) includes a specific definition of trafficking in persons and provisions stipulating penalties for all forms trafficking, it also criminalizes all the universally recognized forms of trafficking that are set out in the relevant protocol to the Convention.

90. In order to address the crime of trafficking in persons in accordance with the international approach thereto, the draft revised Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure contain a special section on the criminalization of such trafficking that incorporates a definition of the crime that is consistent with the protocol to the Convention. Trafficking in persons is also addressed in articles 48 and 52 of Act 02.03 concerning the entry of aliens into and their residence in Morocco, and illegal immigration.

91. In order to enhance victims' access to judicial protection, Morocco has prepared an action plan that includes the following measures:

- The creation of units in the courts consisting of judges and female and male social workers to provide social services to victims;
- The issuance of periodic circulars to the courts urging them to devote due attention to cases involving offences against women and to ensuring that the law is enforced and its procedures simplified;

³³ No. 856.18.2-2019/*jim ra'* 6774 (May 2019).

- Communicating with associations and ensuring that they are members of the coordination committees responsible for providing care to women and children at both the regional and local levels;
- Developing a practical guide on the standard criteria for providing care to women that is aimed at:
 - Standardizing intervention mechanisms and standards of care within the courts-level sponsorship;
 - Ensuring that staff are professionalized and specialized;
 - Effectiveness in delivering justice services;
 - Preparation of leaflets on the standard criteria for providing care to women and children;
 - Preparing a study on trafficking in persons in Morocco in collaboration with UN-Women.

92. With regard to victim protection measures, the following tables shows the change in the utilization of such measures in the period 2018–2019.

Victim protection measures (2018)

<i>Other forms of assistance</i>	<i>Suspect is prohibited from approaching the victim</i>	<i>Legal aid</i>	<i>Referral to a shelter</i>	<i>Guidance</i>	<i>Hearing the victim within the unit</i>	<i>Type of measure taken to protect the victim</i>
17	5	85	3	8	18	Number of beneficiaries

Victim protection measures (2019)

<i>Reception and hearing the victim within the unit</i>		<i>Legal aid</i>		<i>Referral to a shelter</i>		<i>Referral for medical treatment</i>		<i>The suspect is prohibited from approaching the victim</i>		<i>Authorization for a foreigner to remain in national territory</i>		<i>Exemption from judicial fees</i>		<i>Hand over to the family (children)</i>	
<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>	<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>	<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>	<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>	<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>	<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>	<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>	<i>Underage</i>	<i>Legal adult</i>
51	65	12	16	9	6	15	20	5	3	0	0	7	16		15

93. In that connection, an implementing decree³⁴ was issued for article 7 of Act 27.14 concerning the establishment of National Committee for Preventing Human Trafficking and Coordinating Anti-Trafficking Measures, which is the official body responsible for ensuring coordination and communication among the various parties concerned, promoting public consultation on programmed activities and developing objectives to reduce and prevent trafficking in persons and to protect its victims.

94. Article 448.1 of the Criminal Code, in which the offence of human trafficking is defined, provides that exploitation also includes forced labour, servitude, begging, slavery or slavery-like practices.

95. Article 23 of Act 19.12 sets out the conditions of employment and for the use of female and male domestic workers. That article sets out several penalties, including for violations related to the minimum working age and forced labour. Meanwhile, articles 24 and 25 of the Act criminalize any breach of the terms of employment of

³⁴ Decree 2.17.740. July 2018.

domestic workers, including immigrants pursuant to section IV of the Labour Code (see reply 17).

96. Article 3 of Act 19.12 specifies the duration of work, weekly rest, annual holidays and days off. Article 13 of the Act sets the duration of domestic work as 48 hours spread out over weekdays, while article 14 establishes the duration of the weekly rest period. In addition, the Act reaffirms the maternity rights of domestic workers.

97. In keeping with the requirements of the Domestic Workers Act (No. 19.12) and the procedures related to its implementation as set out in Decree 2.17.36–356, and in order to avoid the illegal exploitation of persons in the 16–18 age group, circular 49 was issued on 6 December 2018 urging public prosecutors to:

- Familiarize themselves with the Act, in order to ensure uniform implementation of its provisions;
- Receive complaints concerning domestic workers and reports of irregularities prepared by labour inspectors;
- Appoint one or more deputy prosecutor to receive complaints from domestic workers;
- Open channels of communication with law enforcement agencies, in particular labour inspectorates, and the Ministry of Labour by establishing a central follow-up committee and creating regional and local committees to enhance protection, especially for women and minors.

98. In order to combat trafficking in persons, familiarization with the provisions of Act 27.14 has been incorporated into the training programmes of judicial police officers of the Royal Gendarmerie.³⁵ Thematic courses for regional units were organized by competent judges and workshops for other partners were organized in coordination with the National Committee for Preventing Human Trafficking and Coordinating Anti-Trafficking Measures.³⁶

99. General Directorate for National Security (DGSN) organized special training courses for 442 staff members on identifying and assisting victims. The courses were held in Agadir (2019) and Tangier (2020). In addition, 25 persons participated in two workshops that were organized in coordination with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). A network of Crown Prosecutors responsible for trafficking in persons was established at the appeals court level to track cases of human trafficking and follow up on providing shelter and health care to victims (article 4 of the Act). In that connection, control of the country's borders has been strengthened through the addition of human, material and technological resources, in particular facial recognition tools, the installation of high-tech border cameras and equipment for detecting fraudulent documents, and the mobilization of land and maritime border patrol teams.³⁷

100. In order to protect victims of trafficking in persons, the Office of the Public Prosecutor set up a telephone number that female victims can call to secure physical protection for themselves and their families, and obtain the medical and social support that they require. After obtaining the written consent of the victim, the competent authorities monitor her telephones in order to ensure her protection. In addition, they

³⁵ Lessons on protection of civilians (Italy, 2020), a workshop on international and national protection of refugees and asylum seekers (2020), and a course on the system for referring, transferring and caring for vulnerable persons and victims of displacement and trafficking networks (2020).

³⁶ Established on 21 May 2018.

³⁷ Some 122 networks were dismantled (2018).

conceal the victim's identity in the case documents, so as to prevent others from knowing her true identity. Suspects are prevented from communicating with or contacting the victim, who can obtain compensation for the harm caused by the offender (articles 9, 10 and 106 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).

101. A total of 28 such cases were registered in 2018, 74 in 2019 and 245 in 2020. During that period, 585 persons, of whom 144 are women and 84 foreigners, were prosecuted for trafficking in persons, while the number of victims was 719, of whom 283 were sexually exploited, 35 exploited in forced labour and 58 were exploited in begging. Since Act 14.27 entered into force, a total of 137 national wanted-person notices have been issued for suspects and 443 persons were placed under surveillance.³⁸ Sex tourism is addressed in the Code of Criminal Procedure, in particular articles 707 and 708 concerning acts that are considered felonies or misdemeanours under Moroccan law that are committed outside of Morocco by a Moroccan, which provides such act can be prosecuted and adjudicated in Morocco.

102. According to the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the number of victims of such crimes was 423 in 2019, an increase of 51 per cent in comparison to the 280 victims recorded in 2018. The victims comprised 289 males and 134 females, of whom 315 were adults and 108 were minors.³⁹

103. The number of cases increased significantly, from 80 in 2018 to 151 in 2019 (an increase of 88.5 per cent), and the number of persons prosecuted increased from 231 in 2018 to 307 in 2019.

Number of trafficking in persons cases and individuals prosecuted 2019

Number of individuals prosecuted	Number of cases	Nationality		Age		Sex	
		Foreigner	Moroccan	Legal adult	Underage	Female	Male
46	261	279	28	56	251	307	151

Number of trafficking in persons cases and individuals prosecuted 2018

Trafficking in persons	Number of cases	Number of individuals prosecuted	
		Females	Males
Legal adult	55	41	130
Underage	25	27	33
Total	80	68	163
		231	

104. A symposium on prosecuting trafficking in persons offences and a round table on trafficking in persons, migrant smuggling and criteria for distinguishing between the two were organized as part of the effort to train law enforcement personnel in the application of the Countering Trafficking in Persons Act. In addition, the Office of the Public Prosecutor, in collaboration with UN-Women, launched an outreach campaign that included such elements as an awareness-raising video clip, a

³⁸ Statement of the Minister of Justice on the occasion of World Day against Trafficking in Persons (July 2020).

³⁹ Annex V: Trends in the number of victims of trafficking in persons in 2019 by type of exploitation and trends in the number of trafficking cases recorded by security agencies since the implementation of Act 27.14.

documentary featuring real-life stories told by victims and an introduction to the mechanisms for caring for victims, particularly women and children, and the services provided by judicial units. In addition, training courses and discussions were organized in partnership with the American Bar Association (July 2019) and UNODC (October 2019).

Reply 13

105. Under the Criminal Code, anyone who is an accessory to prostitution can be punished, and the Code sets out various penalties therefor, depending on the perpetrator. No one is exempt under the law, including intermediaries or others involved in the promotion of prostitution. Any person who, whether directly or through another, owns, operates, directs, manages, finances or participates in the financing of a business or institution that is customarily used for prostitution can be sentenced to a prison term of 4 to 10 years and fined an amount ranging from 5,000 dirhams to 2 million dirhams. That punishment also applies to any person who owns, operates, directs, manages, finances or participates in the financing of any establishment open to the public or is customarily frequented by the public and who accepts the habitual presence of a person or group of persons engaged in or seeking customers for prostitution in such establishment or its appurtenances, ignores such practices or encourages sex tourism, or who makes premises or places not used by the public available to or at the disposal of one or several persons knowing that they will be used for prostitution. In addition, the law provides that the judgment shall order the withdrawal of the licence of which the convicted person is the beneficiary. It may also order the temporary or permanent closure of the premises. Any person who incites, encourages or facilitates the exploitation of children under the age of 18 in pornography through the portrayal, by whatever means, of a sexual act, whether in the practice, simulation or viewing thereof, shall be sentenced to a prison term of one to five years and fined an amount ranging from 10,000 dirhams to 1 million dirhams. An extramarital sexual relationship between a man and woman is an offence that is punishable under article 490 and 491 of the Criminal Code. In addition to the provisions of those article, several acts related to prostitution are criminalized.⁴⁰

106. The programmes offered by the responsible sectoral authorities include a range of health services for this group of women (see reply 18).

107. With regard to addressing the root causes of the exploitation of women in prostitution and their stigmatization, please see our replies concerning raising the awareness and economic empowerment of vulnerable women.

Participation in political and public life

Reply 14

108. The State has adopted several measures to achieve parity, as demonstrated by the following:⁴¹

- In 2019, women made 20.5 per cent of the 395 deputies seated in the House of Representatives, compared to 17 per cent in 2009, and they accounted for 11.66 per cent of the 120-member House of Councillors in 2015, compared to 11 per cent in 2009;

⁴⁰ Articles 497, 498, 501, 501.1, 502 and 503 of the Criminal Code.

⁴¹ Annex V: https://social.gov.ma/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%A9_2020-VF8_9_2020-1-1.pdf.

- In 2009, the number of women elected to communal councils increased from 3,424 (12.34 per cent) to 6,673 (21 per cent). In 2105, some 255 women were elected to regional councils (38 per cent of membership), while another 57 were elected to prefecture and regional councils;
- There are 1,053 female judges, accounting for 24.67 per cent of the total of 4,269 judges;
- There are 179 female employees in the Office of the Public Prosecutor, representing 45.78 per cent of the 391 judges and other staff members that make up its workforce;
- In 2017, women comprised 25 per cent the 20 members of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- Women comprise 8 per cent of the 12-member Constitutional Court;
- In 2018, women comprised 25.07 per cent of ambassadors, of which there are 75, compared to 12 per cent in 2009. Likewise, in 2018, they accounted for 35.46 per cent of consuls, of which there are 52, compared to 5.77 per cent in 2009;⁴²
- Women made up 36 per cent of the membership of the governing boards of public institutions (2017).

109. Following are mandate and goals of the Civil Service Gender-Based Approach Observatory:

Goals

- Educate decision-makers regarding the importance of promoting the status of women in the civil service;
- Raise strategic awareness and warn of the obstacles to achieving parity;
- Produce indicators regarding the status of women in the civil service, positions of responsibility and senior positions;
- Contribute to the development of public policies to promote the status of women;
- Help protect women's constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Mandate

- Collect, analyse and disseminate data on a gender-based approach;
- Monitor public policies and programmes that are relevant to the gender-based approach;
- Formulate proposals for the development of economic and social policies, with a view to integrating the gender-based approach;
- Conduct research on the gender-based approach;
- Provide support and advice to female employees by offering equality information;
- Prepare and publish periodic reports on the gender-based approach in the civil service.

⁴² Report on results-based gender-oriented budgeting.

Achievements

- A gender disaggregated database has been created;
- Indicators relating to women's participation in the civil service and their holding of positions of responsibility and senior positions have been developed;
- Thematic reports have been prepared;
- An electronic document repository has been developed.

110. The inter-ministerial consultation network on gender equality in the civil service has developed:

- Preventive and corrective mechanisms to integrate the principle of equality into programmes for reforming human resources management;
- Institutional measures to ensure balance in the representation of men and women at all levels and in all sectors of the civil service;
- A training programme on justice and equality;
- A system for collecting and tracking good practices;
- A strategy for communication among the various actors involved in human resources management.

111. The proportion of positions of responsibility in the public administration held by women has increased. Women now comprise 40 per cent of all human resources. Their representation increased from 16.21 per cent in 2012 to 22.5 per cent in 2016, while the proportion of senior positions held by women\ increased from 10.38 per cent in 2012 to 15.28 per cent in 2016.⁴³

112. To promote women's participation in political and public life, a ministerial publication was issued in 2019 on the establishment of nurseries in public buildings. Accordingly, the relevant ministry has developed requirements for government sectors at the central and regional levels, and specified criteria for their successful and continued operation.⁴⁴

113. Women have been able to receive basic training at the Royal Institute for Regional Administration since 2006, just like male officials who are graduates of the Royal Institute. The ability to hold positions of authority in the regional administration and secure promotion to positions of greater responsibility, as well as mobility and performance evaluation, are based on objective criteria that apply to all regardless of sex, an approach that is fully in keeping with respect for the principles of equality and transparency.

Positions of responsibility in regional administration

<i>Position</i>	<i>Number</i>
Governor	1
Head of department and head municipality	16
Employee	4
Chief	166
Clerk	1
Deputy chief	26
Female trainees at the Royal Institute of Regional Administration	25

⁴³ Report of the Ministry of Management and Civil Service Reform (2018).

⁴⁴ The publication can be found at <https://www.mmsp.gov.ma>.

The number of women in the Royal Gendarmerie has increased significantly

<i>Royal Gendarmerie staff</i>	<i>Female non-commissioned officers</i>	<i>Female officers</i>	<i>Total</i>
	2 035	219	2 254

Nationality

Reply 15

114. A bill amending and supplementing article 10 of the Nationality Act was introduced and signed in December 2017.

115. Article 45 of the Nationality Act, on exceptional requirements, and which was amended and supplemented by article 1 of Act 62.6, provides that any person from a country the population of which consists of a group whose language is Arabic or religion is Islam and who belongs to that group is entitled, under the present Act, to declare within year of the date of publication of the present Act that he/she chooses to take Moroccan nationality if he/she meets the following conditions:

- His/her place of residence is in Morocco on the date of publication of the present Act;
- Proves that he/she has been customarily residing in Morocco for at least 15 years, has been filling a civil service post in the Moroccan administration for at least 10 years or has been married to a Moroccan woman and been residing in Morocco for at least one year, provided that such marriage has not been dissolved;
- Moroccan nationality acquired by the person making such declaration pursuant to the provisions of the present article shall be extended automatically to his unmarried minor children, and also to his wife if she does not hold the aforementioned nationality.

116. Article 19.3 of the Nationality Act (1958), which has remained unchanged since it was amended in 2007, regulates the status of Moroccan women married to foreigners. Pursuant to that article, a Moroccan woman who wishes to acquire the nationality of her foreign husbands is free to retain her original nationality, subject to the following conditions:

- She must conclude a marriage contract with a foreigner, provided that the laws of the husband's country allow her to hold her husband's nationality;
- She must file an application for renunciation of Moroccan citizenship with the Minister of Justice prior to concluding the marriage contract;
- A government decree authorizing her to renounce her Moroccan citizenship must be issued published in the *Official Gazette*.

117. Stateless persons who are present in Morocco and are recognized as such by the Office of Refugees and Stateless persons are classified as foreigners, and they are subject to the regulations and measures that are applicable to foreigners. Such classification is in accordance with article 1 of Act 2.3 concerning the entry into and the residence of foreigners in Morocco and illegal immigration.

Education

Reply 16

118. In order safeguard the right to education for all, especially in rural areas and for vulnerable groups:

- An action plan has been put in place to make primary education universal. The proportion of girls enrolled in primary education increased from 44 per cent in 2017 to 68.4 per cent in 2019, compared with enrolment rate of 75.9 per cent for all children, while the proportion in rural areas increased from 25.4 per cent to 54.9 per cent;
- In the periods from 2016 to 2017 and from 2019 to 2020, the number of women benefiting from social support programmes increased from:
 - 1,866,146 beneficiaries to 4,081,706 beneficiaries and from 2,084,640 beneficiaries to 4,358,306 beneficiaries, respectively (“Milyawn Mihfazah” programme);
 - 329,197 beneficiaries to 701,589 beneficiaries and from 1,037,300 beneficiaries to 2,207,000 beneficiaries, respectively (“Taysir” programme);
 - 594,032 beneficiaries to 1,124,260 beneficiaries and from 681,339 beneficiaries to 1,334,560 beneficiaries, respectively (boarding and school meals);
 - 63,425 beneficiaries to 147,357 beneficiaries and from 164,886 beneficiaries to 164,886 beneficiaries, respectively (school transport);
 - 179 schools, of which 110 are in rural areas, and 15 community schools were built (2019–2020);
 - Schools in rural areas have connected to the water and electricity networks and equipped with sanitation facilities and heating equipment.

119. A national action plan on inclusive education has been developed in order to ensure that children with disabilities can be educated. Some 5,432 children, of whom 40 per cent are female, have been enrolled in the “Second Chance School” programme.

120. Girls’ enrolment in science, technology, technical and informatics has increased:

<i>Specialization</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legal, economic and social studies	2017–2018	49.24%	50.7%	41 909
	2016–2017	49.65%	50.34%	36 761
Technical sciences	2017–2018	53.24%	46.75%	5 480
	2016–2017	52.88%	47.11%	4 771
Medicine	2017–2018	63.08%	36.91%	1 842
	2016–2017	63.82%	36.17%	1 880
Engineering	2017–2018	44.49%	55.50%	3 385
	2016–2017	44.89%	55.10%	3 760
Business and administration	2017–2018	62.21%	37.78%	2 766
	2016–2017	63.78%	36.21%	2 692
Technology	2017–2018	51.66%	48.33%	5 874
	2016–2017	48.94%	51.06%	5 798

121. Following are some data from 2017 on the proportion of women degree-holders over the age of 15:

Primary education	43.9%
Secondary education	49.3%
Colleges (except schools of medicine)	46.1%
Superior schools and institutes (including medical school)	32.0%
Technicians and mid-level managers	39.2%
Senior technicians	44.0%
Professional qualification	24.8%
Professional specialization	30.9%
No degree	57.0%
Vocational training graduates (2018)	53.4%
Female graduates of technical vocational training programmes (2018)	60.20%
Female students residing on-campus and in halls of residence (2018–2019)	53.32%

122. In 2019–2020, girls dominated the admissions to higher education institutions, schools of excellence and higher institutes. In fact, the proportion at some institutes was as high 90 per cent. Girls constituted 55 to 65 per cent of admissions to schools of pharmacy and medicine at the national level ranged, 90 per cent of admissions to the National Institute of Urban Planning and Development, 89 per cent of admissions to Higher Institute of Commerce and Business Administration, 89 per cent of admissions to the Higher Institute of Information and Communication, 83 per cent of admissions to the Higher Institute of Audiovisual and Cinematographic Professions, 76 per cent of admissions to national schools of architecture, 74 per cent of admissions to the Royal Institute of Water and Forestry, 71 per cent of admissions to the Higher School of Textile and Clothing Industries, 71 per cent of admissions to the Mining Institute, 65 per cent of admissions to the schools of pharmacy in Rabat and Casablanca, and 64 per cent of admissions to the National School of Agriculture in Meknes.

123. Some 8,248 females are enrolled in the traditional education and mosque literacy programmes. Scholarships are available are offered for all stages of education and for female students in remote areas are provided housing. The number of beneficiaries between the ages of 16 and 49 has been increased, while the success rate is greater than 86 per cent and the return rate is more than 90 per cent.

124. In 2016–2017, some 172,941 mosque literacy programme participants passed the certification tests. That figure represents 89.73 per cent of the programme's 297,868 beneficiaries, with women accounting for 95.8 per cent of successful candidates and 52.5 per cent of successful candidates from rural areas.

125. Following a review of the primary education curriculum, the authorities issued textbooks that counter stereotypes, support gender equality and promote the values of coexistence and acceptance of difference, while adhering to the pedagogical framework for reform of primary education.

Employment

Reply 17

126. According to data from 2019, working women are mostly young, with 36.2 per cent of them under the age of 35. They are also poorly trained: 6 out of 10 working

women do not hold a degree (61 per cent), compared with 53.8 per cent of men. That percentage varies by location of residence. The percentage in rural areas is 89.8 per cent, compared to 33.2 per cent in urban areas.

127. At the national level, women are a significant component of the workforce of the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector, which employs 46.9 per cent of all working women. This is followed by the services sector (38.5 per cent) and the manufacturing and traditional industries sector (14 per cent). The distribution of jobs by economic sector varies by location of residence (see reply 21).

128. The distribution of women workers by major occupational groups clearly shows that 37.7 per cent are labourers and manual workers in agriculture, forestry and fishing, while 13.2 per cent are non-agricultural manual workers and porters or do simple jobs, 11.2 per cent are office workers, 10.8 per cent are artisans and trained craft professionals, and 9 per cent are small farmers or engaged in fishing, forestry and hunting.

129. The distribution of working women by profession varies based on location of residence. Women in rural areas are employed as family assistants (70 per cent) or engaged in independent work (19.7 per cent). In urban areas, more than 8 out of 10 (81.2 per cent) of working women are office workers and 12.2 per cent are engaged in independent work.

130. According to national employment data from 2020, the proportion of women in the labour market was 19.9 per cent, a decline of 1.6 per cent, while the proportion of men was 70.4 per cent (0.6 per cent compared to 2019).

131. Unemployment remains higher among women, with the rate in 2020 rising by 2.7 per cent, from 13.5 per cent to 16.2 per cent, compared to an increase of 2.9 per cent for men, from 7.8 per cent to 10.7 per cent. The disparity is more marked especially urban areas, where the unemployment rate for women was 24.7 per cent, compared to 13.3 per cent for men.

132. Labour inspectors monitor compliance with laws related to the protection of women's rights, including occupational segregation, equal pay, social protection, promotion and maternity protection, raise employers' awareness of how equality promotes social tranquillity and raises productivity. In circular 16.13, issued in 2013, labour inspectors are urged, when conducting inspections, to focus on compliance with legal requirements relating to women's labour rights. Inspectors carried out 4,886 visits in 2020, during which they counted 87,584 women. Of that number, some 3,493 were in positions of responsibility and 1,605 served as labour representatives.

133. Since 2016, the authorities responsible for the labour sector have allocated 1 million dirhams annually to support associations that protect women's labour rights. In 2019, the sectoral authorities, in partnership with eight associations, organized awareness-raising campaigns that reached 1,601 women. At the mid-point stage of those campaigns, some 411 of those women had received capacity-strengthening training and another 483 had improved their working conditions. In addition, some 134 companies employing 1,656 women had benefited from awareness-raising programmes on professional equality. In 2020, seven partnership agreements were signed with associations for implementation in 2021.

134. Domestic workers of both sexes have benefited from various legislative, regulatory and institutional developments. Act 12.19, which entered into force in October 2018, requires the employer and employee to conclude a written employment contract that conforms to the model contract and to file a copy thereof with the Labour Inspectorate. In addition, the Act prohibits natural persons from serving as intermediaries in relation to the employment of domestic workers.

135. In order to ensure better protection for this group of female workers, the Office of the Public Prosecutor and the responsible sectoral authorities work with one another to monitor employer-employee disputes. Their efforts in that regard led to the development of a practical guide, and the parties have signed a memorandum of understanding to improve the overall application of social laws.

136. As at November 2020, some 2,915 employment contracts, of which 172 involved foreign workers, had been concluded. As at July 2020, the Social Security Fund had issued 1,518 authorizations. Morocco is currently striving to harmonize its laws with the provisions of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189). A study on the possibility of ratifying the Convention was completed in 2020.

137. Measures have been taken to reduce unemployment and enable women to join the formal labour sector:⁴⁵

- The aim of the “Idmaj” (Integration) programme, which offer regular contracts as well as training and internships, is to encourage women entrepreneurs to hire degree holders for 24 months, so that they can gain professional experience. To that end, some 108,800 internships were offered in 2019, of which 47 per cent were filled by women, and 15,268 persons, 97 per cent of whom are women, have been able to gain international employment experience;
- In 2019, a total of 9,508 persons, of whom 35 per cent are women, benefited from the “Tahfiz” programme to promote employment in newly established enterprises, associations and cooperatives;
- The aim of the “Ta’hil” programme is to improve the employability of degree holders by supporting their professional abilities. Some 36,806 persons, 52 per cent of who are women, have benefited from that programme.

138. Under the “Al-Muqawil al-Dhati” microenterprise programme, some 4,806 entrepreneurs received support in 2019 and 2,066 projects were given financial support, resulting in the creation of 3,656 jobs. The proportion of women who received supported grew to 33 per cent in 2019, compared to 30 per cent in 2018. In addition, the programme reduced income tax from 1 per cent to 0.5 per cent and opened access to public contracts.

139. With regard to the economic empowerment of women, the second five-year phase of the “Min Ajlik” women’s entrepreneurship programme was executed in the period from 2017 to 2021, with a view to enabling women and quantitatively developing their entrepreneurship skills and employability. This programme was aimed at women entrepreneurs, regardless of whether they held a degree, who were looking to enter the world of entrepreneurship and become active in the informal sector, female heads of entrepreneurial enterprises seeking to develop themselves and women were involved in social and solidarity activities (cooperatives).

140. From the start of the second phase to the end of 2019, some 13,500 women were given an introduction to the programme and 1,650 women benefited from its liaison services. In 2018, newly registered women comprised 44 per cent of the 205,923 persons that the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills matched with 86 agencies. Those women received information and guidance, and participated in interviews and job search workshops.

141. Of the 84,466 beneficiaries who took part in placement interviews. Of that number, some 34,650, or 41 per cent, were women. Some 57,524 person, of whom 29,700 were women, benefited from job search workshops in 2018.

⁴⁵ Annex VI: Programmes to reduced unemployment and integrate women into the formal labour sector.

142. Women comprise 42 per cent of the 1,964 persons employed in the traditional education sector and 21.1 per cent its 7,150 teachers, as well as 25.11 of Qur'an memorization teachers at the 1,526 Qur'anic schools. In 2008 and 2009, women comprised 71 per cent of the 4,012-person mosque literacy programme workforce, and in 2016 and 2017, some 88.58 per cent of the 7,470 mosque literacy course instructors were women.

143. With regard to social protection, the Government has developed taken several legal measures designed to reduce economic and social vulnerability and improve living conditions, including:

- Act 99.15 concerning the creation of the retirement system for professionals, self-employed persons and freelance workers;
- Act 98.15 concerning the compulsory basic health insurance scheme for professionals, self-employed persons and freelance workers;
- Decree 2.18.686 establishing the conditions for the applicability of the social security system to domestic workers;
- Decree 02.19.769 concerning the application of Act 98.15 and Act 99.15 concerning notaries public;
- Decree 2.19.1023 *mim* supplementing Decree 2.19.719 concerning the application of Act 98.15 and Act 99.15 in relation to midwives and physiotherapists;
- Decree No. 2.20.659 concerning the compulsory health insurance scheme and the pension system for professionals, self-employed persons and freelance workers engaged in private work and relating to tour guides;
- Decree 2.20.658 on the compulsory health insurance scheme and the pension system for professionals, self-employed persons and freelance workers engaged in private work.

144. Medical assistance programs have been established. Some 53 per cent of the 12.78 million beneficiaries registered in 2018 were women, and more than 5.24 million families have benefited from these programmes, which had a budget of 6.3 billion dirhams and provided services on more than 20 million occasions. The number of beneficiaries in 2019 was 14.5 million persons.

145. In the period from 2015 to 2019, women comprised more than 36 per cent of the beneficiaries of programmes for persons with disability. Those programmes helped them to acquire special equipment and assistive devices and improve their conditions at school, and promoted professional integration and income-generating activities. Some 77 guidance and assistance centres have been established that have received more than 248,000 women nationals, and 28 social centres have been adapted to receive persons with disability.

146. In 2018/19, female students comprised 54.97 per cent of the 66,575 beneficiaries, and girls made up 46 per cent of the 4,463,000 persons who benefited in 2019 and 2020 from the "Milyun Mihfazah" programme, which cost 1.47 billion dirhams. Meanwhile, the number of university grant recipients grew from 517,334 in 2017/18 (50 per cent of whom were girls) to 881,374 in 2018/19 (52 per cent of whom were girls).

147. With regard to social security systems for pension insurance, in 2017, women comprised 41 per cent of 2,042 persons who received disability pensions, 17 per cent of the 62,421 persons who received old-age pensions and 97 per cent of the 160,257 persons who received survivor benefits.

Health

Reply 18

148. In keeping with the commitment of Morocco to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2025 Health Plan has been developed. That plan includes the following programmes:

- Risk-free maternity programme;
- Rural health programme;
- The “Ri‘ayah” programme, which ensures the continued availability of health-care services for residents of areas affected by cold and snowfall;
- The Moroccan national plan to reduce maternal mortality;
- The national programme for immunization and to provide medications and reduce their cost;
- The provision of health services for migrant women.

149. To reduce maternal mortality:

- The pregnancy and childbirth monitoring programme has been improved by the following:
 - A model integrated prenatal care programme that focuses on women and is in line with World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations was piloted in Tangier and Assilah;
 - A package of basic services for mothers and newborns has been developed and a training plan for professionals was put in place;
 - A protocol for managing postpartum bleeding and gestational diabetes was put in place at all care facilities.

In that connection:

- The maternal mortality rate has declined to 72.6 deaths per 100,000 live births;
 - Women’s life expectancy is 77.8 years, compared to 74.5 for men;
 - The proportion of mothers benefiting from health institution services increased from 72.7 per cent in 2011 to 86.1 per cent in 2018;
 - The proportion of mothers receiving care during pregnancy from qualified providers increased from 77.1 per cent in 2011 to 88.5 per cent in 2018;
 - The proportion of medically assisted births increased from 73.6 per cent in 2011 to 86.6 per cent in 2018;
 - The proportion of women using family planning methods increased from 67.2 per cent in 2011 to 70.8 per cent in 2018.
- Regional centres of excellence for ensuring maternal and child health, and monitoring and assessing maternal and neonatal care and maternal and child mortality have been established. Such monitoring is accomplished by the following:
 - A monitoring system has been put in place and a plan has been developed to improve the quality of care for mothers and newborns in hospitals;

- Several information and tracking systems have been put in place, such as the information system for tracking and evaluating caesarean sections, the system for monitoring maternal mortality and clinical examination of and response to maternal mortality incidents, which includes clinical examinations of neonatal deaths in order to improve the availability and use of information in decision-making. Providing training for those who work in this field.

150. In order to improve the ability of women and girls to have access to sexual and reproductive health services, in particular in rural and remote areas, the following measures have been taken:

- Women have the right to choose the form of contraception;
- A variety of modern high-quality contraceptive methods, including subcutaneous implants and emergency contraceptive pills, have been added to the national family planning programme;
- An educational and information package has been delivered through traditional and digital communication channels;
- A full package of sexual and reproductive health services has been incorporated into the strategies of the mobile health plan (mobile medical units and specialized medical caravans) for rural and remote areas;
- Treatment infertile couples is now part of the package of sexual and reproductive health services offered, and the national plan for medically assisted reproduction has been put in place;
- Launch of the self-care initiative following the adoption of WHO recommendations on sexual and reproductive health;
- The National Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy for 2021–2030 was developed through a participatory and individual-centred approach, while taking into account gender;
- The rural health development plan has been implemented, with a view to strengthening health-care services, including those related to sexual and reproductive health;
- Rural women's ability to have access to breast and cervical cancer early detection services has been improved.

151. Early breast cancer detection services are available nationwide and early cervical cancer detection services are currently being launched in 58 provinces across 11 regions. For early diagnosis of breast cancer, there are 17 mobile mammography units operating at the national level. In addition to the annual national campaign for early detection of breast and cervical cancer, smaller-scale campaigns are organized at the local level throughout the year. Of the 1,515,588 women between the ages 40 and 69 who underwent a mammography in 2019, some 600,000, or 40 per cent, were from rural areas. Of the 341,476 women between the ages of 30 and 49 years who participated in the early cervical cancer detection programme, some 107,000, or 31 per cent, were from rural areas.

152. With regard to sex education and measures taken to ensure that girls avail themselves of health services, the sectoral authorities responsible for health, national education and Islamic affairs have developed a national action plan for school health and youth health for the period 2019–2022. In that connection, youth health spaces have been established, didactic support tools and a website have been developed, and a method for parent education that is founded on youth health has been put in place

on the basis of the 10 competencies established by WHO. In addition, a thematic guide on sexual and reproductive health has been developed, relevant learning exercises have been added at the fifth and sixth grade levels, and primary school-aged children are being taught how to be aware of and protect their bodies.

153. There is no penalty for abortion if the procedure is required to safeguard the mother's health and it is performed openly by a doctor or surgeon with the husband's permission. Such permission is not required if the doctor believes that the mother's life is in danger. However, he must inform the chief doctor of the prefecture or province of the procedure. If the husband is absent or refuses or is unable for some reason to give his consent, the doctor or surgeon may perform the surgery or administer a treatment that can result in an abortion only after obtaining a written certificate from the chief doctor of the prefecture or province stating that the mother's health can only be safeguarded by administering such treatment. In order to raise awareness of the dangers of clandestine abortions, training courses have been organized for the managers of pregnancy and childbirth programmes.

Reply 19

154. Please see reply 4 for information regarding health insurance for women and girls, particularly in the context of the pandemic.

155. In order to ensure that women and girls with disability have access to health-care services, the responsible sectoral authorities have adapted hospitals and mental health institutions to suit patient needs, including with regard to building standards, human resources and medical care. One third of capacity has been set aside for women, spaces suitable for private life have been created and mental health has been integrated into reproductive health programmes. Addiction treatment centres have special sections for women who use psychotropic substances.

156. With regard to rehabilitation programmes, institutions responsible for the care of persons with disabilities have been instructed to:

- Ensure continued availability of services by complying with preventive measures and social distancing rules at health-care centres, hospitals, integrated provincial rehabilitation centres, orthopaedic centres (CIARR), integrated provincial rehabilitation centres (CIRP) and hospital rehabilitation units;
- Strengthen preventive measures in order to ensure that persons with disabilities, who are more vulnerable to being infected with viruses, are able to access centres, and to facilitate access to information;
- Women represent 52 per cent of Medical Assistance Plan (Ramed) card beneficiaries and 51 per cent of basic compulsory health insurance plan beneficiaries (see reply 22).

Economic empowerment and social benefits

Reply 20

157. The Government has launched the "Maghrib al-Tamkin" programme, the national integrated economic empowerment programme for women and girls by 2030. The purpose of the programme, which is based on the strategic vision outlined in the ICRAM 2 programme, is to enable women, particularly those who are in rural areas, to have access to economic opportunities. The programme contains three strategic themes: access to economic opportunities, education and training, and a suitable and sustainable environment for women's economic empowerment. It also contains three

strategic goals, which are to be met by 2030, that are consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals:

- Raise the employment rate of women, which stood at 19 per cent in 2020, to 30 per cent, so that it is at least half of the employment rate of men;
- Double the percentage of female vocational training school graduates, which stands at 4 per cent, to equal the percentage of male graduates, which stands at 8 per cent;
- Promote an appropriate and sustainable environment for women's economic empowerment.

158. In order to provide economic support for women, approval was given for programmes to develop partnerships with various actors, in particular civil society, and enhance synergies with them, so as to provide women entrepreneurs and leaders of cooperatives and associations with the necessary tools for marketing and staffing, and facilitate their access to loans and property by creating networks to develop income-generating projects, enhance women's professional and leadership skills, and increasing women's knowledge capacities.

159. In order to implement the outputs of the "Maghrib al-Tamkin" programme, some 141 million dirhams, of which 51 million came from the responsible sectoral authorities (2020), were allocated to launch the programme at the regional level in cooperation with regional and provincial councils. Efforts have been focused on the following:

<i>Qualification and empowerment programme for vulnerable women</i>	<i>Region</i>
Operationalizing the support fund for vulnerable women who were formerly engaged in subsistence smuggling	Oriental/Nador Province
Support income-generating programmes for women with disability	Oriental/Jerada Province
Qualification and economic empowerment of women and support for artisanal cooperatives	Fèz/Meknès
Training and integration into the labour market for women and girls	Casablanca/Settat
Supporting women entrepreneurs and women's cooperatives	Rabat/Salé/Kénitra
Qualification and economic empowerment of vulnerable women and supporting women's professional cooperatives	Marrakesh/Safi
Qualification and economic empowerment of women and support for artisanal cooperatives	Guelmim/Oued Noun
Qualification and empowerment of vulnerable women	Tangier/Tétouan/Al-Hoceïma
Economic empowerment programme for 500 women and girls who come from fragile settings	Dakhla/Oued Ed-Dahab

160. In 2015, the relevant sectoral authorities instituted an excellence award for Moroccan women that is aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment and advancing women's entrepreneurship. A total of 17 initiatives have been honoured over the reward's five editions. Since 2016, the labour sector authorities have presented a professional equality award and certificates of excellence or best practice in equality to businesses whose eligibility criteria are based on the principle of equality.

161. The relevant sectoral authorities, in partnership with the Association of Women Entrepreneurs in Morocco (AFEM), launched the first phase of the “Accelerators and Incubators for Women’s Entrepreneurship” programme at the headquarters of the organization Maroc Pionnière, which provides knowledge support to any Moroccan who develops an idea for a business and ongoing follow-up aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills. In that connection, a partnership was launched to execute in three regions a project to develop women’s entrepreneurship in urban, semi-urban and rural settings through accelerators and incubators. The programme, which cost nearly 9.4 million dirhams, is aimed at women entrepreneurs, with special priority given to vulnerable women. In 2020, the relevant sectoral authorities launched a partnership programme for associations. The 12.3 million-dirham programme has supported 156 associations that work in the field of economic empowerment.

162. The 1.9 billion-dirham “Intilaqah” programme for individual contractors and small enterprises supported 9,443 beneficiaries in the period from February to November 2020, with women accounting for 14 per cent of all beneficiaries. In addition, the “Daman” and “Tamwil” financial products were launched at preferential rates and terms (2 per cent), as well as the “launch support for rural investors” programme, at an interest rate of 1.75 per cent, and the “starting micro- and small enterprises” programme, which carries no interest, does not require collateral and offers a deferred payment term of five years.

163. The Social and Solidarity Economy Programme supports female graduates of training centres in order to facilitate their integration into working life by utilizing solidarity-based approaches (cooperatives, economic assistance groups, solidarity trade, etc). To that end:

- A total of 271 cooperatives have been established across all delegations, of which 48 were established in 2019. Women comprise 77.95 per cent of the membership of those cooperatives;
- Some 770 exhibitions were held at the provincial and regional levels, 191 of which were organized 2019, and the National Mutual Aid organization, along with 739 associations and cooperatives, participated in the organization of 103 exhibitions at the national, regional and local levels;
- In 2019, some 117 solidarity trade spaces were created, in addition to 41 other spaces.

164. For information regarding women’s ownership of land, please see reply 21.

Rural women

Reply 21

165. As part of the effort to enhance social protection for women, including rural women, a law and decree concerning the rules and regulations for accessing the Family Solidarity Fund were developed in 2018. As a result, the pool of beneficiaries was expanded to include not only children who are entitled to maintenance following the divorce of the parents but also indigent wives, children entitled to maintenance during an existing marriage (once the indigent status of the mother has been established) and children entitled to maintenance following the death of their mother. In addition, the procedures for receiving financial assistance from the Fund were simplified and the amount of the assistance paid out was increased from 1,050 dirhams per month to 1,400 dirhams per month.

166. The Green Morocco Plan has enabled women to have access to all programmes by following a gender-based approach to the preparation and drafting of solidarity

farming projects. Following are some of the most important developments in that regard:

- Rural women have been integrated into projects aimed at improving living conditions in rural areas. Those projects are based on a participatory and gender-based approach, and socioeconomic analysis;
- Rural women have been integrated into solidarity farming projects in order to enhance their productive capacities in various agricultural production chains, and partnerships with local, national and international agricultural actors have been developed;
- A guide of priorities for solidarity farming projects was adopted. This guide includes standards related to gender, with a view to prioritizing projects for the advancement of women and youth;
- A report was prepared on the gap in women's representation in the argan industry as part of the project on the economic empowerment of women in the argan sector;
- A programme was launched to qualify and support producers of local products. Priority has been given to women's groups, in order to help them respond better to market demands and production, marketing, legal and regulatory requirements. In 2020, a total of 159 trade groups (cooperatives or economic interest groups) were targeted by that programme, including 88 women's cooperatives (55 per cent of the total). These beneficiary groups comprise 5,432 members, of whom 3,487, or 64 per cent, are women.

167. With regard to marketing at the national level, in 2020, some 70 productive groups, including 164 cooperatives (42 per cent of which were women's cooperatives) and approximately 6,000 small farmers have been supported in large and medium-sized markets. At the international level, some 50 production groups, including 118 cooperatives, and more than 3,600 small farmers, of whom 2,400 (66 per cent) were women, have participated in international exhibitions.

168. In order to keep pace with the digital transformation and provide market access, 18 online stores, including 8 (44.5 per cent) operated by women's groups, have been established.

169. In order to revitalize local product production units, 27 of them, of which 17 (63 per cent) are operated by women's cooperatives, have been provided with equipment. These beneficiary cooperatives have 414 members, of whom 232, or 56 per cent, are women. Some 127 production units have been provided with technical equipment. A total of 63 women's cooperatives, or 50 per cent of all units, have benefited. Some 5,292 members, of whom 3,359 (63 per cent) were women, benefited from the equipping of the units. A total of 131 local product trade groups were provided with wrapping, packing and mailing supplies. The 68 women's cooperatives that have benefited from such assistance comprise 52 per cent of all beneficiaries. The beneficiary groups' members numbered 2,748, of whom 965 (35 per cent) were women.

170. Efforts have been made to increase the representation of rural women in decision-making positions. Accordingly, the representation of rural women in the offices of trade organizations responsible for solidarity farming projects increased from 9 per cent to 12.33 per cent. That includes, for example, the Social and Gender-Based Approach Committee of the Interprofessional Federation of the Argan Industry (FIFARGANE), which is dedicated to improving and raising awareness of women's working conditions in order to enable them to have access to decision-making positions.

171. With regard to health insurance for argan industry workers, the agricultural cooperative and FIFARGANE have concluded a cooperation agreement to provide health insurance for 2,000 women who work in the argan industry.

172. Green Generation 2020–2030, the new agricultural strategy, has reinforced the gains made under the Green Morocco Plan by putting human beings, especially women, at the forefront. The strategy promotes a gender-based approach in relation to the development and formulation of solidarity projects that empower women through:

- Diversification and transitioning to more profitable production systems;
- Sustainable intensification of production systems;
- Promoting agricultural products and ensuring market access;
- Integrating and empowering rural women by improving employment opportunities.

173. This strategy consists of three elements:

- The creation of agricultural service cooperatives and making them suited for girls and women;
- Supporting income-generating activities for rural women with regard to the small-scale production, processing, development and promotion of certain products (e.g., medicinal and aromatic plants);
- Developing para-agricultural activities in areas with limited agricultural potential.

174. Morocco has made extraordinary efforts over the past 10 years to enable women to have access to collective land and make use of their property. Circulars issued in 2009–2010 and 2012 have made it possible to reduce, somewhat, the injustice they have suffered by enabling them to obtain compensation for property that was rented or sold and to benefit from their share in the event of inheritance. In addition, some women have been able to represent traditional collectives as deputies. The true foundation of the rights of traditional collectives was laid at the beginning of 2020, when the traditional collective system was reformed comprehensively and three laws concerning such collectives were adopted. One of those laws was Act 62.17 on the administrative guardianship and management of the property of traditional collectives, which enshrines equality between the sexes with respect to rights and duties in the context of traditional collectives. That requirement is clearly reflected in articles 6 and 16 of the Act, whereby collective members have the right to benefit from its assets.

175. Decree No. 2.19.973 (January 2020), concerning the application of Act 62.17, clearly defines the rights of traditional collectives in its articles 1, 16, 17, 19 and 20:

- Registers of rights holders must be developed according to the same criteria;
- The same rights and opportunities to secure a share of any assets must be guaranteed;
- In the event of the death of a beneficiary, his/her share goes to his/her sons, daughters and spouse;
- A piece of agricultural land can be allocated as property to be utilized for the benefit of a man or a woman.

176. With regard to decentralization, pursuant to Act 62.17 and its implementing decree, ministerial circulars were sent to the prefectures with a view to implementing that reform, with an emphasis on ensuring that women are involved in the process.

The authorities are following up on this matter in cooperation with the traditional collectives and women's organizations.

177. The aims of improving the conditions of rural women and empowering them economically are in line with the goals and strategy of the National Human Development Initiative. The programmes of phase three of the Initiative are as follows:

- Women are one of groups targeted by the programme to support vulnerable persons, with a view to improving their living conditions, monitoring their situation and providing them with institutional support and vocational training;
- The aims of the programme are to improve young people's income and economic integration are as follows:
 - Employability: support the efforts of young people, regardless of sex, to secure stable employment;
 - Entrepreneurship: provide young people (women and men) with the financial resources they need realize their projects;
 - Social and solidarity economy: provide support to cooperatives of which women account for at least 30 per cent of management. In the *Equality Bulletin* (issue No. 1 of 2020), it was reported that, in 2019, women comprised 16.6 per cent of the membership of 27,262 active cooperatives, and that they comprised 35 per cent of the 776,563 members of those cooperatives.
 - Constraints on human development are being addressed by supporting the human capital of future generations. To that end, have been directed at three elements:
 - Strengthening the maternal and child health-care system and improving child nutrition;
 - Ensuring that preschool is part of the life-building process of every individual, particularly girls;
 - Helping children and adolescents, especially girls, avoid dropping out of school by improving the school environment.

178. For information on rural women's access to the labour market, please see reply 21.

179. According to the results of the 2019 national employment research survey, 27.1 per cent of women in rural areas participated in the labour market, compared to 18.5 per cent of women in urban areas, and the employment rate of women in rural areas (26.3 per cent) was higher than in urban areas (14.5 per cent). The majority of women's jobs in rural areas (90.7 per cent) fall under agriculture, forestry and fishing, while in urban areas women work mainly in the service sector (71 per cent).

180. The training and qualification programme of the National Mutual Aid organization draws in girls who have no schooling or have stopped studying, as well as women from poor backgrounds. There were 1,510 centres in 2019, and female beneficiaries at education and training centres numbered 119,669, or 84.97 per cent of all beneficiaries.

181. The proportion of rural girls who have benefited from social programmes in education is as follows:

- 62 per cent have benefited from the "Milyun Mihfazah" programme;
- 82 per cent have benefited from the "Taysir" programme;

- 69 per cent have benefited from access to halls of residence;
- 93 per cent have benefited from the school meal programme;
- 83 per cent have benefited transportation services.

Disadvantaged groups of women

Reply 22

182. A–B: The relevant sectoral authorities continue to operationalize the programmes of the Social Cohesion Fund and to enable widows and women with disability to obtain defined benefits.

- As of January 2021, some 108,937 widows who have custody of their orphaned children have received direct support, while the number of orphaned children stood at 851,000. From date of launch to June 2020, a total of 35,272 divorced and abandoned women have benefited from the Social Cohesion Fund, which has paid out 368.31 million dirhams to them;
- In 2018, some 53 per cent of the 12.78 million beneficiaries registered in the medical assistance programme were women, and more than 5.24 million families have benefited from these programmes, which had a budget of 6.3 billion dirhams and provided services on more than 20 million occasions. The number of beneficiaries in 2019 was 14.5 million persons.
- Vulnerable girls comprised 46 per cent of girls registered in the “Milyun Mihfazah” programme. In the period 2019–2020, the programme expended 1.47 billion dirhams on 4,463,000 registered beneficiaries.
- In 2018/19, female students comprised 54.97 per cent of 66,575 beneficiaries;
The number of university scholarship recipients increased from 517,334 (of whom 50 per cent were females) in 2017/18 season to 881,374 in 2018/19 (of whom 52 per cent were females).

183. With regard to supporting women with disability, women comprised 85 per cent of the beneficiaries of 3,152 relevant activities. In the period from 2015 to 2019, women comprised more than 36 per cent of the beneficiaries of programmes for persons with disability. Those programmes helped them to acquire special equipment and assistive devices and improve their conditions at school, and promoted professional integration and income-generating activities. Some 77 guidance and assistance centres have been established that have received more than 248,000 women nationals, and 28 social centres have been adapted to receive persons with disability. In 2019, the Social Cohesion Fund contributed 4,768,202 to finance income-generating projects for 109 women entrepreneurs. That sum was allocated as follows:

<i>Fiscal year</i>	<i>Type of disability</i>				<i>Cost of project</i>
	<i>Motor</i>	<i>Sensory</i>	<i>Cognitive</i>	<i>Multiple</i>	
2019	66	20	19	4	4 768 202

Women business owners classified by business type and setting (urban/rural)

<i>Fiscal year</i>	<i>Number of women business owners</i>	<i>Area</i>		<i>Type of activity</i>				<i>Cost of project</i>
		<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Commercial</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Agricultural</i>	<i>Trade</i>	
2019	109	93	16	24	39	2	44	4 768 202

184. The relevant sectoral authorities have developed an integrated public policy to improve the situation of older persons. That policy, which was ratified by the Cabinet in December 2020, includes a range of measures that are designed to facilitate their ability to access health-care, social, economic, cultural and environmental services. The aim of those measures is to ensure that the elderly age safely and in a manner that ensures their independence and dignity and right to self-realization.

185. With regard to social security systems for pension insurance, in 2017, women comprised 41 per cent of 2,042 persons who received disability pensions, 17 per cent of the 62,421 persons who received old-age pensions and 97 per cent of the 160,257 persons who received survivor benefits.

186. The relevant sectoral authorities have completed a study on integrating a gender-based approach into the integrated public policy for promoting the rights of persons with disability, and they have established the National Centre for Monitoring, Studies and Documentation on Disability. With regard to improving school conditions, between 2015 and 2019, some 44,224 schoolgirls (36 per cent) benefited from employment programmes, and the relevant sectoral authorities promoted professional integration and income-generating activities. Some 1,730 projects (37 per cent) were supported during that period.

187. For information on health care, please see reply 19.

188. The relevant sectoral authorities have supported 41 projects submitted by the implementing associations with a view to ensuring that women with disability have access to inclusive education, employment, health care and information concerning family planning and the right to contract marriage. Activities have been organized in order to combat stereotypes and promote the Convention and the provisions of Framework Act 97.13 concerning the protection of this group of persons.

189. Morocco counters the stigmatization of and provides support to single mothers through social protection and child support schemes, paternity recognition procedures and enforcement of alimony and maintenance obligations of ex-husbands and fathers of their children. For further information, please see reply 23.

190. An inclusive national project has been launched to reform the social protection system and ensure its soundness, and also to reform the social welfare system (Act 65.15 concerning social welfare institutions, Act 45.18 concerning the regulation of the profession of social work, and rehabilitation of the infrastructure of social welfare institutions).

Marriage and family relations**Reply 23**

191. In addition to the information provided in reply 8, it should be noted that, on 16 January 2013, the Justice and Human Rights Committee of the House of Councillors approved an amended version of article 20 of the Family Code. The amended article provides that the family judge responsible for marriages may authorize the marriage of a boy and girl who have not attained the age of capacity

specified in article 19, provided that the person receiving such authorization is not less than 16 years of age, by issuing a reasoned decision in which he/she sets out the interest served and the justifications for the authorization, after hearing the minor's parents or legal representative and obligatorily seeking expert opinion from a doctor and a social worker. In all cases, the judge must take into account the age gap between the parties to the marriage. The decision to take up a request to authorize a minor to marry is not subject to appeal. On 16 March 2017, the relevant ministry issued circular 30, in which it calls upon social workers to play their role with regard to authorizing the marriage of persons under the age of capacity.

192. Polygamy is subject to many restrictive conditions, such as obtaining permission of the court, which it grants only if it finds that there is exceptional and objective justification. In addition, it is the right of the woman to stipulate in the marriage contract that her husband may not marry another woman. Should the woman not have stipulated such and does not accept her husband's decision to marry another woman, the judiciary automatically initiates proceedings for divorce on grounds of discord (articles 40 and 41 of the Family Code). Such efforts have significantly reduced the incidence of polygamous marriage. Contracts for polygamous marriage have made up only 0.34 per cent of all marriage contracts concluded since 2004.

193. Please see reply 8 for information on measures taken to ensure effective enforcement of the minimum age of marriage.

194. With regard to how the courts take into consideration the non-financial contributions made by women to the family economy, article 49 of the Family Code provides that each of the spouses bears his/her financial obligations independent of the other. However, in the context of managing funds earned during marriage, they may reach an agreement on how such fund should be invested and distributed. Such an agreement is guaranteed by means a separate document that is not linked to the marriage contract. At the time of marriage, the two notaries notify the parties of the aforementioned provisions. If there is no agreement in place, the general rules of evidence apply, taking into account the work of each spouse, his/her efforts and his/her share of the burden in developing the family's assets. The courts, when applying that article, are guided by judgements that are based on the custom in Morocco that the wife is entitled to part of the wealth gained during the marriage. The courts have consistently ruled that the wife is entitled to this right, and the Court of Cassation has upheld the guidance of the courts in several of its decisions.