



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

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

**Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports submitted by
Morocco under article 18 of the Convention, due in 2014***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. The Kingdom of Morocco hereby submits its combined fifth and sixth periodic reports under article 18, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to which Morocco acceded in June 1993, and in compliance with paragraph 53 of the Concluding Observations.

2. This report summarizes measures taken by the Kingdom of Morocco between 2008 and 2018 in implementation of the Convention and consistent with paragraph 9 of the Concluding Observations. It provides responses to the recommendations and concerns expressed by the Committee when it reviewed the third and fourth periodic reports of Morocco in 2008.

3. In fulfilment of its international obligation to submit national reports to the United Nations human rights system, the Kingdom of Morocco has tried to avoid delays by adopting a participatory approach that involved all concerned parties from Government sectors, national institutions and civil society.

4. Pursuant to the Committee's recommendations, this report addresses key issues related to public policies, legislative reforms and Government programmes in the areas of justice, health, education, employment, political participation, the conditions of immigrants and refugees, integrating a gender approach, and combating violence against women.

5. In accordance with paragraph 49 of the Concluding Observations, Morocco is continuing to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through its programmes for inclusive development, shared prosperity, decent work, social protection, combating violence, inclusive decision-making and environmental protection.¹ Morocco is working to realize the Sustainable Development Goals.

6. With regard to paragraph 13 of the Concluding Observations, we note that the preamble to the 2011 Constitution states that international conventions duly ratified by Morocco, within the framework of the provisions of the Constitution, the laws of the Kingdom, and its national identity, shall, upon their publication, take precedence over national legislation, and that efforts shall be made to harmonize national legislation with measures required by such ratification.²

7. It should be noted that the the ongoing advance of human rights by the Kingdom of Morocco was furthered with the adoption of the 2011 Constitution, which affirms the prohibition and combating of all forms of discrimination on the basis of sex, colour, creed, culture, social or regional affiliation, language, disability or any other personal condition,³ and the equal enjoyment by men and women of the civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights provided for in the Constitution, as well as in international conventions and instruments ratified by Morocco in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the foundational principles and laws of the Kingdom.⁴

8. With regard to paragraph 15 of the Concluding Observations, the Kingdom has taken action to complete its accession to the Convention by ratifying the Optional Protocol⁵ and withdrawing its reservations⁶ to subparagraphs 1 and 2 of paragraph (b)

¹ National Report on Beijing + 25.

² Preamble of the 2011 Constitution (Annex 1).

³ Preamble to the Constitution (Annex 1).

⁴ Article 19 of the Constitution (Annex 1).

⁵ Official Gazette No. 6387 (Annex 2).

⁶ Documents withdrawing those reservations were deposited on 8 April 2011 (Annex 3).

and paragraph 2 of article 9 of the Convention regarding the nationality law and article 16 of the Convention.⁷

Part I

Article 1

9. With regard to paragraph 11 of the Concluding Observations, the Kingdom of Morocco has promoted the principle of gender equality and the elimination of gender-based discrimination through its 2011 Constitution and the creation of a Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority.⁸

10. National legislation contains several legal provisions regarding equality and the combating of any gender discrimination in the enjoyment of basic rights and freedoms. That includes the Employment Code, laws on public freedoms, enshrinement of the right to work and participate in economic life, and access to health and education services.⁹ In the political sphere, Morocco has adopted an approach of positive discrimination in favour of women in legislative and local elections.¹⁰

11. In line with the preamble and article 19 of the Constitution, and in conformity with article 1 of the Convention, the Criminal Code¹¹, article 431-1, defines discrimination as any differentiation among natural persons on the basis of national or social origin, colour, sex, family status, health status, disability, political opinion, trade union affiliation, or actual or presumed affiliation or non-affiliation with a race, nation, lineage or specific religion. Discrimination also includes any differentiation among among legal persons on the basis of their members' origin, gender, family status, health status, disability, political opinions, trade union activities, or their actual or presumed affiliation or non-affiliation with a race, nation, lineage or specific religion.

Article 2

12. The Kingdom of Morocco is working to develop measures to combat discrimination in legal provisions and to establish legal protections for women. Paragraph 2 of article 475 of the Criminal Code has been amended to allow the criminal prosecution of anyone who rapes a minor girl and prohibit him from marrying her. It increases protections in the case of children who are victims of sexual assault as a result of having been lured or abducted. The penalty for abducting or luring minors has been increased. The prison sentence for luring or abducting for the purposes of sexual relations, even if consensual, is now 10 years. If the act results in sexual assault, it is 20 years. In the case of luring or kidnapping resulting in rape, the sentence is 30 years. In addition, certain provisions relating to women's honour have been removed from the Criminal Code.¹²

13. The Kingdom of Morocco has continued to accede to relevant international and regional conventions¹³. Its Parliament has approved a number of international and

⁷ The lifting of these reservations came into effect on 8 April 2011, and their withdrawal was published in the Official Gazette of the Kingdom No. 5974 (September 2011) (Annex 3).

⁸ Preamble to the Constitution and articles 6, 14, 19, 15, 31, 32, 115, 154 and 164 (Annex 1).

⁹ Preamble and articles 9, 12, 36, 40, 152, 153, 154, 156, 159, 162, 172, 179, 183 346, 361, 472, 484 and 486 (Annex 4).

¹⁰ See article 4 of the report.

¹¹ Article 431 above has been amended by Act No. 103-13, article 2 (Annex 5).

¹² Articles 494, 495, and 496 of the Criminal Code amended by Dahir No. 71-13-1 (July 2013) implementing Act 92-13 (Annex 6).

¹³ See the Common Core Document (Annex 26).

regional agreements, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and several Council of Europe conventions, including the Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights (Strasbourg 1996)¹⁴, the Convention on Contact concerning Children (Strasbourg 2003)¹⁵, and the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote 2007).¹⁶ It has also ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 183 on Maternity Protection.

14. The Kingdom of Morocco adopted Act No. 103-13 on combating violence against women in March 2018. It contains a precise definition of violence in all its manifestations and forms. Article 1 defines violence as any material or moral act or the omission thereof on the basis of gender discrimination that results in physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm to a woman. Chapter 2 contains punitive provisions, chapter 3 contains procedural provisions, and chapter 4 provides for mechanisms to provide care for women victims of violence. Members of the National Commission for the Care of Women Victims of Violence have been appointed¹⁷. Their tasks include national communication and coordination between government-sector interventions and the central departments dealing with violence against women and monitoring the work of regional and local committees.¹⁸

15. In order to promote and protect the civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights of women, a range of constitutional institutions have been established, including the Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority.¹⁹ Act 79-14 provides for the composition, powers and functions of that body. Its job is to monitor all forms of discrimination against women, receive and follow up complaints, offer its views and make recommendations for harmonizing national legislation with the provisions of international conventions.

16. The High Authority for Audiovisual Communication, as part of its task of overseeing the struggle against discrimination against women, is committed to monitoring, drawing attention to and receiving complaints about gender stereotypes disseminated by audiovisual communications²⁰. It published a study on the development of methods for monitoring television programmes to combat gender stereotypes and promote equality. One of the major results was a doubling of the number of women and the duration of their appearances on all programmes. In programming as a whole, women dominated services programmes at 81 per cent and had a presence in the private (family) sphere, whereas men dominated news programming at 82 per cent and the public sphere at 77 per cent.

¹⁴ Act No. 25-14-1 (March 2014) implementing Act 146-12 approving the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights, signed in Strasbourg in January 1996 and Act No. 11-14-1 (March 2014) implementing Act 144-12 approving Labour Organization Convention No. 132 on Holidays with Pay (revised) adopted in Geneva in June 1970.

¹⁵ Act No. 86-14-1 (May 2014) implementing Act No. 147-12 approving the Council of Europe Convention on Contact concerning Children signed in Strasbourg in May 2003.

¹⁶ Act No. 87-14-1 (May 2014) implementing Act No. 148-12 approving the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, signed in Lanzarote in October 2007.

¹⁷ The establishment of this Commission will help to institutionalize coordination mechanisms among the actors combating violence against women, ensure communication and coordination among various interventions to counter violence against women, and contribute to the development of mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of care units at the national level, as well as other relevant authorities involved in strengthening partnerships, cooperation, submitting proposals and preparing reports.

¹⁸ Act 103-13, articles 11 and 12 of (see Annex 5).

¹⁹ In implementation of Law 79-14 on the Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority (Annex 26).

²⁰ Gender stereotypes in advertisements (Appendix 7).

17. The Office of the Ombudsman provides equitable legal protection for all users of Government facilities²¹. It draws the administration's attention to cases where it has failed to comply with the principles of equality and equal opportunity, and provides free legal assistance²² to widows, divorcees, orphans or persons with disabilities to protest any unfair treatment. Between 2013 and 2015, the Office received some 4,220 complaints, of which 3,431 involved men (81 per cent), and 789 involved women (19 per cent). In 2016, there were 8,281 complaints. The Office did not discover any particular pattern of gender-based grievances, with the exception of issues related to inherited land. Broken down by gender, there were 434 complaints from physical persons involving women in 2016, or 24.5 per cent, compared to 1338 complaints involving men, or 75.5 per cent.

18. The National Human Rights Council ensures equality and combats discrimination through its annual reports and opinions on draft laws or particular issues. It conducted a study of international experiences in institutionalizing anti-discrimination. In 2015, it published a thematic report on "Equality and Human Rights in Morocco: Safeguarding and Implementing the Goals and Objectives of the Constitution". In 2016, it issued an opinion on Act No. 103-13 on combating violence against women; it had previously created a commission on gender.

19. The Economic, Social and Environmental Council drafted a report on "Achieving Equality between Women and Men, the Responsibility of All: Normative and Institutional Perceptions and Recommendations" (2012), a study on "Promoting Equality between Women and Men in Economic, Social, Cultural and Political Life: Facts and Recommendations" (2014), and a report on "Equality between Women and Men, the Social Aspect: Outcomes and Recommendations" (2016). It also presented its views on what to do about the continuing marriage of girls in Morocco (2019).

Article 3

20. Since 2008, the Government has been developing programmes aimed at combating discrimination and violence against women, notably its multi-sectoral programme for the fight against gender-based violence through the empowerment of women and girls. In 2012, Morocco adopted a national policy on gender equality called the Government Plan for Equality 2012-2016 ("Initiative Concertée pour le Renforcement des Acquis des Marocaines - ICRAM"), following a participatory approach that included various actors.²³

21. The plan identified 24 objectives and 156 procedures, with qualitative and quantitative indicators, in the following eight areas:

- Institutionalizing and disseminating the principles of parity and equality;
- Combating all forms of discrimination and violence against women;
- Rehabilitating the education and training system;
- Promoting fair and equal access to health services;
- Developing basic infrastructure to improve the living conditions of women and girls;
- Enabling social and economic empowerment for women;
- Enabling fair and equal access to administrative and political decision-making positions;
- Realizing equal opportunities for both sexes in the labour market.

²¹ Article 44 of Act No. 14-16 concerning the Office of the Ombudsman (Annex 8).

²² Article 14 of Act 14-16 concerning the Office of the Ombudsman (Annex 8).

²³ Approved by the Cabinet in June 2013.

22. The plan created a framework for synergies between various programmes to promote equality and the mainstreaming of gender into public policies and programmes nationally, regionally and locally. The plan was reinforced²⁴ by follow-up and governance mechanisms, including a ministerial committee chaired by the Prime Minister and a joint interministerial technical committee to monitor implementation.²⁵ The Government prepared midterm and final reports to assess results. The reports confirmed that 75 per cent of the procedural measures (117 out of 156) had been implemented at 100 per cent completion rates, while 86 per cent of all measures had been implemented at 70 per cent completion rates.

23. The Government launched the second version of the plan for the 2017-2021 period after a series of consultations with Government sectors, associations, trade unions, professional associations, national institutions and international partners.

24. The ICRAM 2 plan has four thematic focuses:

- Increasing women's employment opportunities and economic empowerment;
- Women's rights in family relations;
- Women's participation in decision-making;
- Protecting women and promoting their rights.

It has three cross-cutting themes: disseminating the principles of equality and combating discrimination and gender stereotypes, mainstreaming gender into all government policies and programmes, and implementing the plan on the ground. It has a component supporting follow-up, leadership and support for implementation.

25. With a view to implementing the ICRAM 2 plan at the local government level²⁶ and implementing the regional plan for equality, a partnership agreement was signed in October 2018 between the relevant sector and the Rabat-Salé-Kenitra region. The plan consists of two parts: technical support to carry out identification of gender disparities at the regional level, and the mainstreaming of gender into the region's development programme. The regional plan was formulated with support in the amount of 6 million dirhams.

26. The National Action Plan for Democracy and Human Rights (2017)²⁷ contains measures concerning the legal and institutional protection of women relating to the

²⁴ Created by Decree 495-13-2 of July 2013 and assigned the following tasks:

- Encourage various government authorities to take measures necessary to implement the Government Plan for Equality;
- Conduct interministerial coordination and monitoring activities to promote women's rights;
- Oversee implementation of the principles and programmes of the Government Plan for Equality by the relevant sectors;
- Propose legislative and regulatory measures to implement the provisions of the plan having to do with instilling the principles of equality and parity in accordance with article 19 of the Constitution;
- Support consultation with private sector organizations and civil society associations, and promote outreach to them regarding directives to further women's rights and equality.

²⁵ It was assigned the following tasks:

- Collect and make available all the necessary data and statistics to help the Ministerial Committee monitor implementation of the Government Plan for Equality;
- Draft resolutions and recommendations for submission to the Ministerial Committee;
- Supply the draft periodic reports prepared by the relevant ministries with accurate information on outcomes and achievements of the plan based on specific indicators and present them to the Ministerial Committee for approval.

²⁶ Goal 1.7: Mainstreaming gender at the local government level, and Goal 2.7: Promote the integration of gender into local and regional development plans and collective action programmes, and promote local government initiatives related to the ICRAM 2 plan (Annex 28).

²⁷ National Action Plan on Democracy and Human Rights (Annex 29).

following: implementing the provisions of the Constitution; ensuring compatibility with international standards; promoting a culture of equality; prohibiting discrimination and violence against women; and empowering women economically and socially. In its legislative and institutional aspects, the plan focuses on strengthening the protection of women against violence in penal policy. It provides for the mainstreaming of gender into economic programmes to support entrepreneurship and budgeting, and continued implementation of the Family Solidarity Fund. With regard to outreach and awareness, the Plan provides for the dissemination and documentation of jurisprudence, and the sharing of best practices. With regard to strengthening capacities, it provides for continuous training for judges and judicial assistants. The Plan has a section on equality, institutionalizing parity, equality of opportunity between the sexes, access to employment, combating all forms of discrimination, improving access to services, sound management of solidarity mechanisms and optimal use of natural resources.

27. United Nations agencies, bilateral cooperation, the European Union and international non-governmental organizations have supported various policies aimed at women. The European Union has allocated 45 million euros to implement several components of the 2012-2016 ICRAM Government Plan for Equality, and 2 million euros to support associations working for the advancement of women's rights. The partnership was based on four main themes: combating stereotypes, combating violence, promoting political participation and enhancing access to legal protection. A second funding agreement was signed in 2018 for funding in the amount of 35 million euros for the ICRAM 2 plan.

28. In order to strengthen the role of associations in promoting equality and combating violence, the relevant ministry provides support for funding projects of women's associations and legal counselling centres to promote women's rights and improve their social and economic situations (women breadwinners, women victims of violence, women with disabilities and elderly women). That ministry is providing three years of financial support for projects to create or develop listening centres. It supported some 264 listening centres between 2012 and 2018 in the total amount of over 80 million dirhams.

29. Gender-specific administrative structures and focal points have been created in a range of sectors to track the process of gender integration and coordination among various actors. That includes a joint intersectoral consultation network for gender mainstreaming, an observatory for the gender approach in public employment, a gender training and development authority and a training unit for gender mainstreaming and the institutionalization of gender equality in the Higher Institute of Information and Communication. There are focal points at various central or regional authorities, and official units to receive women victims of violence at several government facilities.²⁸ That is in addition to facilities at certain institutions and academies involved in training and developing a gender approach and institutionalizing gender equality.²⁹ For example, the justice sector offered a training programme in gender and the concept of equal rights for men and women to 1,186 judicial attachés between 2011 and 2018.

30. In 2013, in keeping with the policy of institutionalizing gender-responsive budgeting, a Centre of Excellence for Gender-Responsive Budgeting was created. It has concluded partnerships and cooperation agreements with a range of donor bodies and institutions. The policy was enhanced by Act 130-13 regulating the 2015 Finance Act, which stressed institutionalization of results-based planning, attention to the

²⁸ The ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, National Security Directorate and Royal Gendarmerie.

²⁹ The ministry of Communication and the Higher Institute of Information and Communication.

gender approach in setting targets and indicators in ministerial sector programmes, and requiring the financial act to be accompanied by a report on the results-based gender-oriented budgeting. In July 2017, the Prime Minister issued a circular launching the pilot phases of provisions of the regulatory act of the finance act relating to integration of the gender approach into the planning process for budget programming in each ministerial sector.

31. In 2018, a second pilot phase involving 23 ministerial sectors was launched. The results showed the responsiveness of the concerned ministries. There were some 196 indicators and 63 gender-related targets, or 33 per cent of indicators and 25 per cent of targets. In May 2018, the Prime Minister issued a circular launching the third pilot phase of gender-responsive budgeting, which involved five additional ministries, with 166 indicators and 94 gender-sensitive targets, or 19 per cent of indicators and 22 per cent of overall targets.

In 2014, the Excellence Prize for Moroccan Women was established. It comes with a discretionary grant in recognition of women's development achievements. It highlights outstanding women role models and their contributions to economic, social and political development. The Prize includes innovation, development and social action. From 2015 to 2018, four rounds were organized and 14 winners were honoured for projects in several areas.

32. With a view to implementing articles 14, 15 and 139 of the Constitution³⁰ on the right to submit legislative proposals and petitions to the national and local authorities, Morocco has prepared laws aimed at enshrining and regulating the exercise of the right of associations to submit petitions and proposals to the public authorities³¹. That has opened the way for women's associations to take part in the development of the legal system (through legislative proposals) and to promote women's rights (through petitions)³².

Article 4

33. With regard to paragraph 25 of the Concluding Observations, Morocco has made efforts to increase the political representation of women both national and locally, in accordance with international standards. To that end, it has introduced new legal provisions into the Electoral Code, regulatory acts relating to the House of Representatives and the Chamber of Councillors, and the Political Parties Act. Regulatory Act 28-11 (2011) of the Chamber of Councillors introduced a mechanism to increase the representation of women by stipulating that party lists should not include two consecutive names of the same sex.

34. Regulatory Act 59-11 on the election of members of local government councils put in place two mechanisms to increase women's representation. The first concerned the regional councils. At the level of each prefecture or province, it created constituencies to promote women's representation, with at least one third of the seats allocated to them. The second mechanism concerned community councils. It created an additional electoral constituency, consisting of at least two seats, earmarked for

³⁰ Article 14: the right to submit legislative proposals. Article 15: the right to submit petitions to the public authorities. Article 139: The regional councils and other local governing authorities shall establish dialogue and consultation mechanisms to facilitate the contributions of women citizens, men citizens and associations to the drafting and follow-up of development programmes.

³¹ Regulatory Act 44-14: Conditions for exercising the right to submit petitions to the public authorities (Official Gazette No. 6492, August 2016). Regulatory Act 64.-14: Conditions for exercising the right to submit legislative proposals.

³² The law distinguishes between petitions to the national authorities (Regulatory Act 14.44) and petitions to the local authorities (Article 139 of the Constitution).

women. The Government has also put in place incentives for political parties to give high positions to women on the various regular nominating lists, and in constituencies whose representatives are elected by individual ballot.

35. Regulatory Act 34-15 (2015)³³ on the election of members of local government councils introduced a new nominations system that involves putting forward a single list of candidates consisting of two parts: the first contains the names of men and women candidates, and the second contains only women candidates.

36. The 2015 regulatory acts on local governments³⁴ provide for the mainstreaming of gender into the drafting of development activities and programmes, and the creation of local government advisory bodies to address issues relating to equality, equal opportunity and the gender approach.

37. Under Law 78-00, in the form of community compacts, the gender approach was integrated into community development plans.³⁵ To accelerate implementation of these measures, a strategic planning manual has been developed on facilitating the inclusion of women on local planning committees and the creation of equality and equal opportunity commissions.

38. Regulatory Act 29-11 urges political parties to try to have women account for a third of their national and regional steering bodies, with a view to eventually achieving an equal balance.

39. A support fund was established to encourage women's representation by funding programmes and activities approved by political parties and civil society at the national and local levels, with a financial envelope of 10 million dirhams per year.

40. A programme for supporting women's capacities at the local level has been established, with a view to training, qualification and the adoption of special programmes to support women leaders and regional forums for women elected officials. Between 2013 and 2015, some 16 forums were held for some 4,600 elected women officials. A plan was put in place to support networking among elected women officials at the local, regional and African levels. Between 2012 and 2014, two networks were created for local elected women officials, six networks at the prefecture and region level, and one network for elected women officials in Africa.

41. Morocco has entered into partnerships with the Council of Europe, including the "Partnership for an equal tomorrow" in September 2012³⁶. In 2015, in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the relevant ministry launched a programme entitled "Towards inclusive and open governments: Promoting women's participation in Parliament and elected councils" to promote the integration of women into public life and decision- and policy-making.

42. To support the capacities of elected women officials and women candidates in the area of gender mainstreaming and local and national affairs, two training courses were held on the theme of "Strengthening the capacities of women candidates for parliamentary elections" in September 2016 (78 participants). A public consultation was held for 40 civil society and parliamentary organizations. Advisory sessions were organized for women parliamentarians and women heads of local governments and

³³ Amendment and supplement to regulatory law 11-59.

³⁴ Regulatory Act 111-14 on *jihah* regions (July 2015). Regulatory Act 112-14 on *iqlim* regions (July 2015). Regulatory Act 113-14 on local governments (July 2015).

³⁵ The equal opportunity commissions are advisory commissions for local governments that include local associations and propose civil society activities to local government heads. Their task is to express their opinion on issues related to equality, equal opportunity and gender mainstreaming.

³⁶ On the sidelines of the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly, under the sponsorship of the World Bank and UN-Women.

regions on the theme “Parliament and local communities in the service of women and men”. Two reports on the themes of “Assessing women’s political participation: The situation in of Morocco” and “Assessing women’s participation in political life in Parliament and elected councils in Morocco” were presented at the regional dialogue conference in July 2018.

Article 5

43. To promote the image and role of women and enhance their participation in the media landscape, the communications sector has adopted a “Medium-term programme for the institutionalization of gender equality” for the 2006-2010 period³⁷. It revolves around three areas: strengthening the institutional capacities of the relevant sectors and partner institutions to take gender equality into consideration in policies, programmes and practices; strengthening the capacities of key actors; and supporting gender equality and empowering women’s access to decision-making positions.

44. In 2012, specifications were set for public broadcasters’ efforts to improve the image of women in public media. Annual reports prepared by the public audiovisual communication companies monitor the extent to which the requirements for improving that image are fulfilled.

45. In 2013, the National Radio and Television Company drafted a code of ethics that committed it to adhering to a gender approach in its programmes and promoting such an approach in its professional practices. In 2017, it drafted a parity charter that affirmed respect for the principles of equality provided for in the Constitution and the need for equal representation at the organizational level and in the programmes it broadcasts. In 2014, Channel 2 drafted an internal charter with the aim of creating and implementing all available mechanisms and means to promote a better image for women.

46. Act No. 83-13 (2015) was adopted to augment Act No. 77-03 (2005) on audiovisual communication³⁸, with the aim of promoting a culture of gender equality, contributing to the fight against gender-based discrimination and preventing advertising that perpetuates stereotypes of women. It urges audiovisual communications operators to combat gender discrimination and promote a culture of gender equality in the media.

47. Act No. 88-13 on journalism and publishing prohibits any advertising in the printed or electronic media that offends or disparages women, contains a message that perpetuates the idea of women’s inferiority, or promotes any discrimination against them.

48. A “Guide to combating stereotypes based on gender discrimination in the media in Morocco” has been completed. Gender stereotypes in the media are monitored and alternatives to existing media practices have been put forward. Men and women media workers have been instructed to automatically and permanently mainstream gender into their daily practices.

49. These measures have had a positive impact on the presence of women in audiovisual media. During the fourth quarter of 2018, the percentage of appearances by female public figures was 17.35 per cent on Channel 1 and 20.30 per cent on Channel 2, compared to 13.37 per cent on Channel 1 and 13.70 per cent on Channel 2 during the same period in 2017.³⁹ In news programming, women accounted for 20 per

³⁷ With the support of the Gender Equality Support Fund of the Canadian Agency for International Development.

³⁸ Act No. 83-13, supplementing Act No. 77-03 on audiovisual communication (Annex 9).

³⁹ Statistics from the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication.

cent as a topic and source of news, compared to 80 per cent for men. In producing news items, women accounted for 46 per cent as opposed to 64 per cent for men. The percentage of women news presenters was 70 per cent, as opposed to 30 per cent. The percentage of women in the written press was 22 per cent, and 34 per cent in radio.⁴⁰

50. In 2014, the National Observatory for the Image of Women in the Media⁴¹ was created with a three-part mission⁴² of monitoring and following up the image of women in various written, audio, visual and digital media and fighting stereotypes; raising awareness; and spreading a culture of equality and promotion of women's rights.

51. With regard to paragraph 19 of the Concluding Observations, the Government has sought to change social and cultural patterns and combat stereotypes in educational institutions and religious academies. Material on family education has been inserted into secondary school curricula and the citizenship unit in primary and secondary school curricula. A unit on equality has been added to the secondary-school curriculum. Pamphlets and guides have been prepared to promote the values of equality in school curricula and academic life. In 2014, some 147 schoolbooks on various areas were purged of all content and pictures antithetical to the values of equality and tolerance. In 2016, a comprehensive review was done of Islamic educational curricula, and new books have been purged of anything tending towards discrimination on the basis of gender, colour, religion, language, disability or ethnic affiliation. A review was carried out of traditional educational materials and illiteracy eradication programmes in mosques, which were reinforced with material on promoting women's rights.

The Ministry of Religious Endowments and Islamic Affairs has developed a training programme for imams and both male and female spiritual guides which the Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights described as a best experience and practice that constituted a first step towards ensuring equal opportunities for women to guide and explain religious subjects to others.⁴³ It also creates a social and cultural space for women to share their experiences and enhance their participation in cultural life. The number of female spiritual guides saw a notable increase to 916 in 2018, up 45 per cent.

52. The public service sector programme revolves around four themes: integrating the principle of gender equality into practices and policies; reducing gender differences in human resources management; supporting and strengthening capacities and increasing women's participation and representation in decision-making positions; and ensuring a balance between family and professional life.

Article 6

53. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco provides guarantees to prevent the exploitation of women, and national laws and legislation guarantee women and girls protection from exploitation at work or through prostitution and begging.

54. The Criminal Code criminalizes many forms of exploitation, in particular the exploitation of women and girls through prostitution (articles 497 to 504). The provisions of the Criminal Code were strengthened by the enactment of Act No. 27-14 on anti-trafficking, which criminalized all exploitation of persons in pornography, sex

⁴⁰ Projet mondial de monitoring des médias GMMP 2015, qui fait l'information, rapport national, 2017.

⁴¹ By decision of the Minister of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development 2852.14 (7 August 2014).

⁴² A three-pronged national mechanism that brings together representatives of government sectors, civil society, professional bodies and university study and research centres.

⁴³ Paragraphs 65 of the report of the Independent Expert (A/HRC/20/26/Add.6).

tourism or forced labour, or any other form of exploitation (articles 1-448). Penalties are stiffened if the crime was perpetrated against a minor through the use of torture or a criminal gang. In order to support the rights of victims of human trafficking and facilitate their access to judicial protection, women and children's care units created by the courts take in victims and send them to care units at medical facilities for treatment and documentation of medical evidence. Where needed, they are provided with escorts and put in touch with counselling centres or shelters.

55. With regard to paragraph 21 of the Concluding Observations, there is a draft criminal act before Parliament containing a set of requirements aimed at strengthening legal protections for children and women, particularly with regard to sexual assaults against minors:

- It increases the penalty for luring a minor of less than 18 years of age without violence, and eliminates impunity (article 475 of the Criminal Code).
- It increases the penalty for sexual assault against minors.
- It criminalizes incitement of a minor to prostitution.
- It increases the penalty for sexual exploitation of minors.
- It completely eliminates mitigating circumstances for sexual assaults and crimes of sexual exploitation against minors.

56. The Office of the Public Prosecutor issued Circular No. 48(a) (December 2018) concerning developments related to the criminal protections for private life. New provisions were introduced to articles 447-1 and 447-2 of Act 103-13 creating new criminal offences relating to violations of privacy. Penalties are increased if the victim is a woman whose privacy was violated because of her gender, in accordance with article 347-3.

57. The Employment Code has enshrined the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of sex in employment, wages, promotion and all other labour-related benefits. The employment of children under 15 is penalized. The Government has strengthened those penal provisions with parallel measures. The projected annual budget allocation for financing civil society projects to combat child labour, including girl children working as domestics, was raised to 2 million dirhams starting in 2016. A budget of 1 million dirhams has been allocated to organizations working in that area. Good governance has been strengthened with regard to partnership mechanisms through the compilation of an official manual⁴⁴ of measures and projects to combat child employment, in accordance with paragraph 21 of the Concluding Observations.

58. In 2014, based on the results of the assessment of the national plan for childhood, "A Morocco Worthy of its Children", a ministerial committee was established and charged with monitoring national policies and plans to improve the condition of children and protect them. An integrated public policy on child protection for the 2015-2025 period was drafted. It aims to ensure effective and sustainable protection for all children in Morocco against all forms of violence, assault, exploitation and neglect. It has the five following strategic objectives: strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the legal framework for the protection of children; creating local child protection agencies; putting in place standards for institutions and practices; promoting protective social standards; and developing a system for information, monitoring and assessment. In March 2016, the competent ministry established an implementation programme for that policy for the 2015-2020 period. It includes 25 objectives and 115 measures, accompanied by follow-up and assessment indicators.

⁴⁴ In collaboration with the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

59. National awareness campaigns have been conducted to mobilize all actors to protect children from all forms of violence and exploitation in the family, care facilities, the school environment, at work and online.⁴⁵

60. With regard to paragraphs 23 and 45 of the Concluding Observations, Morocco adopted a national strategy to combat human trafficking in 2007 and has taken legal and practical measures to punish perpetrators and protect victims. In 2011, it ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Morocco hosted the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children (2013).

61. In 2013, Morocco drafted a new National Migration and Asylum Policy that has translated into practical measures in the context of an integration strategy involving 11 programmes and 83 processes aimed at facilitating the access of migrants and refugees to their basic rights. A draft immigration act⁴⁶ and draft asylum act⁴⁷ have been prepared. An anti-human-trafficking act was adopted, as was an act setting conditions for the employment of female and male domestic workers, which has had a major impact on the fight against the exploitation of foreign women.

62. Act No. 27-14 concerning human trafficking⁴⁸ has been adopted. It contains expanded definitions of the terms human trafficking, exploitation and victim, consistent with the internationally adopted approach (the Palermo Protocol). It contains provisions for penalizing offenders and protecting victims through the provision of health care, psychological and social support, shelters and legal assistance to facilitate their reintegration into social life. All forms of sexual exploitation have been criminalized. The principle of not prosecuting victims and punishing offenders is followed. Penalties are increased for crimes perpetrated against children, persons with disabilities and pregnant women. Witnesses and persons who report crimes are not punished. A national advisory committee has been created to coordinate measures to combat and prevent human trafficking. A decree was issued concerning its composition⁴⁹ and its membership was appointed in July 2019.

63. In order to protect women and children from such crimes, the following measures have been taken:

- In December 2016, a survey of cases where the requirements of Law 27-14 were not enforced was conducted through a questionnaire sent by the justice sector to the presiding judges of the courts of appeals and courts of first instance.
- The J/TIP programme for strengthening the capacities of civil society to identify and assist victims of human trafficking in Morocco and to define the relevant legal and conceptual framework was implemented. In 2017 and 2018, a training programme was implemented in seven cities, benefiting 150 associations. The Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO-ACT) was implemented to enhance the capacities of national institutions and sectors in that area.
- A programme of cooperation with UN-Women was established to support the Office of the Public Prosecutor in protecting the rights of victims of human

⁴⁵ A national campaign was conducted from 20 November 2014 to 25 May 2015 with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

⁴⁶ Act No. 95-14 is in the process of being ratified by the Office of the Secretary-General of the Government.

⁴⁷ Act No. 26-14 is in the process of being ratified by the Office of the Secretary-General of the Government.

⁴⁸ Act 27-14 on combating human trafficking (annex 10).

⁴⁹ Decree No.740-17-2 (July 2018), Official Gazette No. 6692 (July 2018).

trafficking by enhancing access to judicial services, developing coordination and follow-up mechanisms and strengthening the capacities of their staff.

- A network of prosecuting judges has been created and charged with prosecuting human trafficking cases in the appeals courts.
- The capacities of Government actors, public institutions and non-governmental organizations to combat human trafficking have been strengthened. Mechanisms have been established to implement the law, and there has been discussion of the creation and implementation of a national mechanism to identify victims, especially women and children, and send them to protection and rehabilitation centres.
- An act was enacted approving the accession of the Kingdom of Morocco to International Labour Organization Convention 143 on Immigration in Arbitrary Situations and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Treatment of Migrant Workers.⁵⁰
- The Kingdom ratified Convention 97 on Migrant Workers (revised) 1949.⁵¹

64. The Kingdom of Morocco implemented an extraordinary settlement of migrants in irregular administrative situations in two phases, with special attention was paid to women and children. Logistical and human capabilities were harnessed by opening 83 offices in all the prefectures and regions. Some 3,000 staff were trained to implement the process. An advanced information system was used and awareness campaigns were conducted with the participation of civil society.

65. In June 2014, the National Human Rights Council established a national appeals commission to settle rejected settlement requests. A recommendation from that Commission was adopted regarding the settlement of the status of all migrant women and their children who do not meet the required conditions. Some 100 per cent of all applications, more than 10,000 women and children of 116 nationalities were accepted.

Table 1

Provisional outcome of migrant applications and number of migrant women's applications accepted

	<i>Number of applications recorded</i>	<i>Number of nationalities</i>	<i>Number of applications accepted</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Number of applications of women and children accepted</i>
January-December 2014	27 649	116	23 096	83.53	10 201 women 814 children
November 2016-January 2017	28 400	113	23 000	80	–

66. Regarding the status of asylum seekers, some 803 asylum seekers who were registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Rabat were granted status, including 227 women and 210 children.

67. Implementation of the measures contained in the National Migration and Asylum Strategy (11 programmes and 81 procedures) has allowed for the integration of migrant and refugee women into the education system, vocational training, health services and access to housing, legal and humanitarian assistance, and employment.

68. With regard to managing waves of immigrants in search of employment, there were 6,405 work contracts for foreign wage workers in 2018. Some 28.6 per cent of

⁵⁰ Act No. 0116, Official Gazette No. 6493 (August 2016).

⁵¹ Act No. 8713, Official Gazette No. 6277 (July 2014).

those were for women (1834), and 2,974 were first-time contracts (first period of residence), including 13.6 per cent. Some 3,194 were renewed contracts, including 846 for women (13.7 per cent). Some 237 contracts were for foreign artists, of which 60.8 per cent were for women.

69. The Government is acting to support associations that assist vulnerable migrant groups⁵², such as the Moroccan Red Crescent, as well as other programmes, in cooperation with a number of international organizations to ensure that migrant and refugee women have access to their economic and social rights. That includes the programmes of the regional councils⁵³, and other programmes to facilitate access to health services within the framework of sectoral and institutional partnerships.

70. In order to combat the exploitation of women and girls, the security agencies are making major efforts to combat illegal migration networks.

Table 2
Number of illegal networks dismantled

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of networks	55	44	42	47	47	38	41	45

Table 3
Number of organizers seized

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Organizers and participants	400	239	246	167	132	254	305

Table 4
Number of women victims of sexual assault and rape in cases of procuring and prostitution

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total number of women victims	1 086	1 245	1 286	1 161	1 022	1 093	1 114

(Source: General Directorate of National Security)

71. To combat human trafficking, the Chief of the Office of the Public Prosecutor has done the following:

- A diagnostic study was done of the human trafficking situation in Morocco. Its recommendations included preventive mechanisms in line with international instruments; preventive and precautionary measures against human trafficking; and partnerships at the national and international levels.
- Circular No. 32 *sin ra'nun alif* (July 2018) on legal provisions for the protection of victims of human trafficking was issued to legal officials at prosecutors' offices.
- A letter (March 2018) was sent to all appeals courts regarding the appointment of two deputy royal prosecutors exclusively for human trafficking cases and providing prosecutors with the necessary training on human trafficking.

⁵² A group of associations oversees projects related to training women and teaching them professions so they can enter the job market or launch their own enterprises.

⁵³ Two integrated projects, supported by the German Agency for International Cooperation, aimed at strengthening the capacity of 10 partner local collectives to complete pilot integration projects.

Table 5
Number of cases

	Number of cases	Number prosecuted	
		Males	Females
Human trafficking involving adults	55	130	41
Human trafficking involving adults	25	33	27
Total	80	163	68
		231	

(Source: Office of the Public Prosecutor)

72. Awareness campaigns were organized for judges and the judicial staff of the woman and child care units in the courts on the gravity of the crime of human trafficking, the standardization of a conceptual framework, intervention mechanisms and criteria for identifying and protecting victims. A training programme was developed for judges in training in cooperation with UNHCR. There are programmes to strengthen the capacities of labour inspectors to protect the basic rights of wage earners, prevent underage employment, and combat forced labour, human trafficking and exploitation of labour in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Part II

Article 7

73. The Constitution provides that both men and women shall enjoy all rights and freedoms on an equal footing, and guarantees every citizen – male and female – the right to vote, to stand for election, and to enjoy civil and political rights. In order to ensure equal access to political life, the law contains provisions that promote equal opportunities for both sexes to assume elected posts⁵⁴ and to improve the representation of women in local government councils.⁵⁵

74. With regard to paragraph 25 of the Concluding Observations, the Kingdom of Morocco has worked to strengthen the political representation of women at the national and local levels. It has introduced new legal provisions into regulatory acts relating to parliamentary and local government elections, and the political parties.

75. Regulatory Act No. 27-11 of 2011 concerning the House of Representatives created a national electoral constituency of 90 seats, 60 for women and 30 for young people. That increased the representation of women from 10 per cent (34 representatives) in 2007 to 17 per cent (67 deputies) in 2011.

76. During the 2016 legislative elections, in accordance with Regulatory Act 20-16, nominations were opened up by adding a second section to nomination lists for the national electoral district. It included 30 seats set aside exclusively for young people, including young women, which helped to achieve an encouraging level of female representation of around 21 per cent (81 deputies).⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Article 30 of the 2011 Constitution (Annex 1).

⁵⁵ Article 146 of the 2011 Constitution (Annex 1).

⁵⁶ Official Gazette No. 6490 (August 2016) (Annex 11).

77. Regulatory Act 28-11 relating to the House of Councillors⁵⁷ introduced the principle of alternation between genders on the nomination lists submitted to the constituencies represented in that House in cases where elections take place on the basis of lists. That enabled women to obtain 14 seats out of 120 in the 2015 elections, or 11.67 per cent, compared with 6 women out of 270, or 2.2 per cent, in the previous composition of that House.

78. Regulatory Act No. 59-11 concerning the election of members of local government councils⁵⁸ put in place two mechanisms to increase women's representation. The first concerns the regional councils. It allocates at least one third of the seats in each region or district to women. The second relates to local government councils. In 2015 new provisions were introduced under Regulatory Act No. 34-15⁵⁹, which set aside a minimum of four seats on local government and district councils. That allocation can increase depending on the total number of seats.

79. Regulatory measures have been taken to provide financial incentives to political parties to add seats for their female candidates in legislative, local and regional elections by creating districts or seats besides those allocated exclusively for women nominees.

80. In 2013 and 2014, amendments were made to the organizational framework of the women's representation support fund to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency in the fund's operation. In June 2017, following the 2016 legislative elections, the new members of the committee charged with administering the support fund were installed in accordance with regulatory provisions in force. Since its inception, the fund has contributed to the financing of 354 projects across the Kingdom in the amount of 53 million dirhams, drafting six project applications.

81. Women's participation in political life has seen significant improvement since the adoption of proportional lists for national and other elections with quotas for women following the agreement reached by the political parties during the 2002 elections. That allowed for the elections of 35 women to the House of Representatives in 2007 and 67 in 2011, or 17 per cent. The proportion of women elected to the House of Representatives in the October 2016 legislative elections increased to 20.5 per cent, or 81 women. In addition, their roles within legislative institutions have become more prominent. They chair panels and committees and serve as members of the bureau of the House.

82. In the 2009 local government elections, some 20,326 women ran for local government councillor and 3,424 of them won. That was 27 times as many local councillors as in the 2003 elections. Some 12 local governments are headed by women, 17 per cent in urban settings and 83 per cent in village settings. Some 71 per cent have a secondary or higher level of education.⁶⁰

83. In the 2015 local and regional elections, women accounted for 21.94 per cent of all nominations for local government elections and 38.64 per cent for regional elections.

⁵⁷ Official Gazette 5997 (November 2011) (Annex 12).

⁵⁸ Official Gazette No. 5997 bis (November 2011) (Annex 12).

⁵⁹ Official Gazette No. 6380 (July 2015) (Annex 13).

⁶⁰ One third of them were under 35 years old. The proportion of councillors with secondary or higher education was 54 per cent in 2007.

The various legal mechanisms to provide incentives for women's access to political life have achieved the following results:

- With regard to the 2015 election for members of the local government and the districts:
 - Some 6,669 women were elected, nearly twice as many women as were elected in the 2009 local government elections.
 - Some 2,388 elected women were elected to positions in the steering bodies of the local government and district councils. There were 1,693 women elected vice-chair, almost 10 times the number of women elected to that post in 2009.
- With regard to the election of members of regional councils:
 - In 2015, at least one third of the seats in each constituency were allocated to women, which allowed for a women's representation rate of 37.61 per cent. Some 255 women were elected to regional councils, 250 of them in seats reserved exclusively for women thanks to the women's representation promotion mechanism. That was 98 per cent of the total seats won by women.
 - Some 37 women were elected to positions on regional council steering bodies.
- With regard to the 2015 election for members of the prefecture and regional councils:
 - Some 57 women were elected to prefecture and regional councils in the 2015 elections, nearly double the number of women elected in 2009.
 - Some 17 women were elected to positions in prefecture and regional council steering bodies.
- With regard to the election of members of the House of Councillors:
 - In the 2015 elections, some 14 women were elected out of 120 councillors, or 11.67 per cent, compared to only 6 of the 270 members in the previous House of Councillors.
- Women are the heads of 2 out of the 12 regions.

84. In response to paragraph 25 of the Concluding Observations, several acts have been adopted to improve women's access to public offices and posts:

- Regulatory Act No. 12-02 concerning senior posts (2012)⁶¹.
- Article 22 of Act 50-05 (May 2011) concerning the enshrinement of the principles of equality, transparency and the right of access to public functions in the circulation of job postings⁶².
- The decree on the conditions and modalities regulating recruitment for public office within the framework of equal opportunities and greater transparency⁶³.

⁶¹ Article 4 of the Regulatory Act No. 12-02 on appointment to senior posts (Annex 14).

⁶² Act No. 50-05 on the basic statute for public posts (Annex 15).

⁶³ Annex 15.

- Article 46 of Act No. 50-5 granting women public employees a pregnancy leave of 14 weeks instead of 12.
- Article 9 of Decree No. 681-11-2 of November 2011 on the appointment of heads of public authorities and departments states that at least one woman must be included on the organizing committee.
- Decree No. 770-15-2 (2016) defining the conditions and modalities of employment under contracts in public administrations.
- A decision was issued creating an observatory for gender mainstreaming in public posts and its website.⁶⁴
- A circular was issued in August 2018 extending post-childbirth leave to 18 months following the end of pregnancy leave.⁶⁵
- Model specifications have been drafted for childcare facilities near workplaces.⁶⁶
- A circular was issued in September 2019 on the establishment of childcare facilities in public facilities.

85. In the context of institutionalizing gender mainstreaming:

- An inter-ministerial consultation network was established in 2010 to study the issue of gender in public service.
- A reference guide on gender mainstreaming in human resources management has been adopted.
- A national administrative reform plan has been adopted for the 2018-2021 period. It includes twenty-four projects for structural, organizational, management, digital and synthetic transformations. An action plan for the implementation of a strategy to institutionalize gender equality in public service is the focus of the plan's management transformation component.

86. The Public Administration Modernization Fund programme created in 2005 added a new component in 2018 on supporting gender diversity in public service, with a view to promoting gender equality in public administrations and providing financial assistance and technical support for that purpose.

Table 6
Percentage of women's access to public administration

<i>Percentage of women</i>	<i>Year</i>				
	<i>2012</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Total	38.6	39.3	39	39.7	39.8
Positions of responsibility					
(Head of department or authority)	16.21	19.71	21.84	22.5	23.27
Senior positions					
(General Secretary, General Director, Director)	10.38	10.11	13.04	15.28	16.59

87. At the the General Directorate of National Security, the employment of women increased significantly between 2008 and 2017, reaching a total of 3037 uniformed, civilian personnel and ministerial personnel. In 2018, some 328 women were

⁶⁴ Decision creating the observatory for gender mainstreaming in public posts (Annex 16).

⁶⁵ Circular of August 2018 post-childbirth leave (Annex 17).

⁶⁶ Circular of September 2019 on the establishment childcare facilities in public facilities (Annex 18).

recruited. Some 57 positions were filled at the central level and 81 positions were filled at non-centralized agencies. At the central level, the percentages are as follows: 8 per cent are division heads, 33 per cent are heads of authorities, 33 per cent are heads of branches and 26 per cent are heads of administrative units.

88. In 2006, previously all-male cohorts at the Academy of Local Government Administration were opened up to women. The experiment resulted in women enrolling in the Academy's training programmes. The first women administrator was appointed in 2014. There are now 157 women in positions of authority who exercise leadership roles in local government and the central administration. Some 14 women who are not graduates of the Institute also exercise various functions.

Table 7
Number of women exercising government functions

<i>Function</i>	<i>Number</i>
Head of province (<i>wilayah</i>)	01
Head of prefecture (<i>`amalah</i>)	04
Head of circle (<i>da'irah</i>)	01
Leader, university campus director	02
Leader, deputy chief of internal affairs	01
Head of administrative subdivision	95
Head of <i>qiyadah</i>	01
Head of prefecture or region subdivision	54
Deputy head	09
Total	171

89. At the level of the judiciary, Regulatory Law 100-13 of the Supreme Judicial Council provides that women judges must be represented among the 10 elected members in proportion to their presence within the judicial corps. In 2018, out of 1,046 judges, including royal prosecutors, 168 were women. That was an increase of 16.06 per cent from 2018.

90. The employment of women in the justice sector is on an upward trend, increasing to 49 per cent in 2017. Some 24 per cent of judges are women. In 2018, the proportion of female graduates was 28.75 per cent.

91. In May 2018, the justice sector announced a competition for women's access to the judicial corps for the first time. Some 279 women were successful, or 37 per cent of all those who succeeded.

92. In 2015, the number of women scholars in the Supreme Council for Religious Learning⁶⁷ increased from 3 to 10, and to 4 out of 10 members of local religious learning councils, for a total of 328, up from 98. The Supreme Council for Religious Learning allocated all preaching and religious guide positions for the year 2015 to

⁶⁷ In continued implementation of Dahir No. 300-03-1 of April 2004 concerning the reorganization of the religious learning councils, in which the King stated that given the fact that Moroccan women, because of their religious training, are playing active roles in all fields, and carrying out all the responsibilities for which they are qualified, and since religious learning addresses social and religious issues that affect both female and male citizens, he decided that women scholars should be included on those councils both for the sake of parity and because they are sure to make a positive contribution.

women preachers in order to raise the percentage. There had been 51, but there were 771 women spiritual guides in 2018.⁶⁸

93. The contribution of women to written and electronic media has seen a qualitative advance. There are 27 women publishers or editors-in-chief of paper newspapers, while 42 women are responsible for electronic newspaper departments. There are 6 women owners of press corporations. With regard to the foreign press, 21 out of 90 newspapers and magazines were run by women in 2014. The number of female journalists in possession of professional press cards has also gone up, from 609 in 2012 to 693 in 2017. That is out of 2,451 journalists.

94. Despite these relative improvements, challenges remain, and the Kingdom is counting on overcoming them through legislative reforms and incentive and awareness programmes.

Article 8

95. With regard to paragraph 25 of the Concluding Observations, the number of women serving in diplomatic and consular missions saw a significant increase between 2011 and 2017. The proportion of women serving as ambassadors abroad jumped from 13.33 per cent in 2011 to 21.96 per cent in 2017. The proportion of female consuls jumped from 2.70 per cent in 2011 to 17.39 per cent in 2017.

96. With regard to women's presence in international organizations and representing the Kingdom at the international level, a number of women experts have been elected or appointed to senior positions in international human rights treaty bodies. That includes the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Committee against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Board of Directors of the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. There were 54 Moroccan women in various international organizations and 280 female staff at diplomatic mission, or 24 per cent, and 335 female staff at consular offices, or 37 per cent, in 2018.

Article 9

With regard to paragraph 41 of the Concluding Observations, in April 2006, Morocco withdrew its reservation with respect to article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention. It has enacted legislation providing for gender equality in the granting of Moroccan citizenship to the child from a foreign father, regardless of place of birth, by amending the Citizenship Act in April 2007. As of 31 November 2018, some 33,593 persons had obtained Moroccan citizenship papers through the mother.

97. A draft law has been introduced to amend and augment Article 10 of Dahir No. 250-58-1 enacting the Citizenship Act to allow Moroccan women married to foreign men to transmit Moroccan citizenship through marriage, as is the case for foreign women married to Moroccan men.

Part II

Article 10

98. With regard to paragraph 27 of the Concluding Observations, and as part of its efforts to reform the education system, Morocco has adopted several programmes and plans based the provisions of the National Charter for Education and Training.

⁶⁸ There were 559 female spiritual guides practicing in urban communities, 166 female guides practicing in rural communities, and 46 female guides in both urban and rural communities.

Schooling for girls is one of the priorities of the 2009-2012 Accelerated Education and Training Programme, the 2008-2012 Medium-Term Strategic Action Plan for the Institution of Gender Equality, the 2013-2016 Medium-Term Action Plan and the 2015/2033 Strategic Vision for Reform.

99. A range of measures have been taken to improve girls' schooling indicators. Education is compulsory through age 15. Availability of primary education has been expanded through the establishment of community schools⁶⁹, of which there were 124 during the 2017-2018 period, compared to 96 during the 2014-2015 period.

100. In 2017-2018, some 1,114,353 pupils at all levels of primary public education used school cafeterias. Of those, 48.5 per cent were girls. There were 111,321 students living in dormitories, of whom 49 per cent were girls. Nationally, there were 136,764 scholarship beneficiaries at all levels of public primary education, of whom 47.5 per cent were girls, 80,551 in rural areas, of whom 47 per cent were girls. In 2017-2018, some 153,180 children used school transportation, of whom 46 per cent were girls.

101. Starting in the 2009-2010 academic year, more than 4 million students annually have benefited from the "Million Schoolbags" initiative, of whom on average, around 45.5 per cent were girls. In 2016-2017, some 859,975 students, of whom 45 per cent were girls, benefited from the Taysir cash transfer programme, compared to 87,795 in 2008-2009. Such measures were reflected in the overall improvement of indicators for girls' schooling.⁷⁰

102. In 2017-2018, there were 699,265 children enrolled in primary education, of whom 44 per cent were girls. The rate of enrolment nationally was 49.8 per cent, of whom 45.5 were girls. The rural enrolment rate was 36.6 per cent, of whom 28 per cent were girls.

103. The proportion of girls studying at all levels of primary education has seen a significant increase. It was 99.1 per cent in 2017. The total number of girls enrolled at all levels of public and private basic education rose from 2,458,374 in 2008-2009 to 2,841,758 in 2017-2018, an increase of 16 per cent.

104. The total number of girls enrolled at all levels of public and private primary education was 3,351,436, an increase of 36 per cent. That improvement in girls' access to school is reflected in the primary public education gender parity indicator, which moved from 0.84 in 2001-2000 to 0.95 in 2017-2018, a 10 percentage point jump. In rural areas, the index jumped from 0.76 in 2000-2001 to 0.94 in 2017-2018.

105. With regard to preparatory education, 86.7 per cent of girls aged 12-14 were enrolled in 2017-2018, compared to 80.1 per cent in 2008-2009. In rural areas, the figure was 72 per cent in 2017-2018, compared to 42.7 per cent in 2008-2009. The gender parity index in public secondary secondary education moved from 0.75 to 0.90, registering an estimated 21 per cent increase. In rural areas, that indicator rose from 0.42 in 2000-2001 to 0.77 in 2017-2018, up 35 per cent.

106. With regard to secondary education, the proportion of females aged 15-17 enrolled saw a significant increase from 2014-15 to 2017-2018, from 63.4 per cent to 63.6 per cent. In 2014-2015, there was a 51 per cent female completion rate in all three levels of education as a whole (primary, preparatory and secondary), compared to 42 per cent in 2008-2009. The public secondary education gender parity index rose from 0.92 in 2014-15 to 1.07 in 2017-2018 at the national level, up by 15 percentage

⁶⁹ Schools in rural areas that accept students from isolated areas and provide students with accommodation, transportation and sports and cultural activities.

⁷⁰ The Taysir programme is aimed at reducing school dropouts, especially for girls, by providing cash assistance conditional on the enrolment of children in remote areas. It was launched in 2006.

points. In rural areas, that index moved from 0.68 in 2014-15 to 0.91 in 2017-2018, up 23 percentage points.

107. Despite this significant progress, some constraints persist. The rate of enrolment in primary education is inadequate, and dropouts persist, despite a decrease from 4.3 per cent in 2007-2008 to 1.7 per cent in 2016-2017. In secondary schooling, that rate dropped from 11.5 per cent in 2007-2008 to 8 per cent in 2017-2018.

108. The 2015-2030 strategic vision for reform of the education system⁷¹ was developed within a binding contractual framework, through Framework Act No. 51-17⁷². A road map was drafted for the 2014-2020 period to combat illiteracy among women.

109. Mosques have been involved in a broad literacy programme. The number of beneficiaries from the 2007-2008 school year to the 2018-2019 school year was 2,959,501, of whom 2,533,208 were women, or 85.60 per cent.

110. With regard to paragraph 33 of the Concluding Observations, schooling for rural girls has been supported through community schools and social welfare institutions (the Dar al-Talibah female student dormitories) that provide nutrition and shelter, support classes, summer camps and cultural and sports activities. In 2017-2018, there were 31,078 female beneficiaries, 51 per cent of the total number of beneficiaries. A pilot project was developed to upgrade support for education in the student dormitories by providing educational, psychological and social support services to combat school dropouts and promote girls' personal and social development.

111. As part of implementation of Act No. 14-05⁷³, the National Agency for Cooperation among Associations authorized the opening and administration of 75 institutions: 49 boy and girl students' homes (66 per cent), 5 girls' homes and student dormitories (7 per cent) and 4 centres for women in difficult situations (6 per cent).

112. With regard to higher education, the number of students rose from 541,375 (21 per cent) in 2012 to 893,336 (35 per cent) in 2018. There was greater access of girls to academies and universities, especially those with limited enrolment.⁷⁴

113. The higher education and scientific research sector has developed a strategic plan and a sector action plan (2017-2021) aimed at improving access and study in higher education to achieve parity, equal opportunity and sustainable learning, and to upgrade quality to improve higher education outcomes.

114. With regard to improving social services for students, the number of grant beneficiaries increased from 285,153 in 2014-2015 (48.9 per cent female) to 381,833 during in 2017-2018 (50.17 per cent female). The national percentage for coverage of applications for higher education grants was 86 per cent. Four new university campuses were built during the 2015-2018 period, bringing the number of campuses to 23 to date. The residential capacity of campuses and dormitories increased from 49,135 beds in 2014-2015 (29,930 for female students) to 54,263 beds in 2017-2018 (32,249 for female students), an average annual increase of 3.4 per cent. A compulsory basic student insurance scheme has been established. It has improved its governance and raised the number of beneficiaries. As of the end of 2018, there were 57,153 beneficiaries enrolled in the health coverage system.

115. With regard to the development of inclusive education mechanisms for people with disabilities or special situations, the following has been done:

⁷¹ The strategic vision for reform included 23 items relating to girls, including improving quality education, parity and advancement.

⁷² Framework Act No. 51-17 on the education, training and scientific research system (Annex 30).

⁷³ Act No. 14-05 on the conditions for opening social welfare institutions (Annex 31).

⁷⁴ Annex 19.

- It has been declared compulsory for the specifications for proposed new construction of new institutions to include access arrangements, and to equip 40 per cent of existing university facilities with access arrangements.
- Eight public universities have been equipped with means and mechanisms to facilitate the use of braille. That was done in partnership with the European Union (the Tempus Programme).
- The number of accredited courses in inclusive education at public universities increased from 7 to 14 during the 2015-2018 period.
- The participatory dimension is emphasized in order to keep up with students with disabilities or in special situations.

116. The enrolment rate in post-baccalaureate higher education increased from 28.8 per cent (27.5 per cent for females) in 2014-2015 to 37.7 per cent in 2018 (37.2 per cent for females, an increase of 9 points. The number of new students in higher education as a whole rose from 221,768 in 2014-2015 (of which 47.5 per cent were female) to 261,575 in 2018 (51.7 female), an average annual increase of 4.2 per cent. The total number of students in higher education at all levels rose from 745,843 (48.1 per cent female) in 2014-2015 to 938,370 (49.9 per cent female in 2018), an average annual increase of 5.9 per cent.

117. Women and girls benefit without discrimination from professional training offered by the public and private sectors, where women accounted for 33 per cent of trainees in 2016-2017. The proportion of female trainees in vocational training increased to 50 per cent during that year compared to 17 per cent in 2005-2006.⁷⁵

118. The youth and sports sector was running some 387 women's institutions as of 2018, spread across the national territory in rural and urban areas.

119. Partnerships have been established with business to take in female graduates. The sector supports income-generating women's cooperatives and manufacturing and services businesses. An "accompanying cooperatives" programme was launched in 2013. The relevant sector supervises 121 income-generating projects and cooperatives with 45 women representatives in 77 woman-run enterprises (55 urban and 22 rural).

120. With regard to equality in education, the relevant sector has set up several programmes for young children, including the following:

- Nursery schools, of which there are 138 in urban areas and 46 in rural areas, serving 2,841 beneficiaries;
- Kindergartens, including fixed and branch activities, which have served 61,676 children, of whom 31,353 were girls spread between rural and urban areas;
- Integrated classrooms, which serve children with disabilities. This experiment covered 27 regional directorates during the 2018-2019 academic year. There were 45 institutions integrating 79 children, including 28 girls.

121. With regard to programmes directed at young people, 3,149,887 males and 1,926,890 females benefited from youth-oriented activities, with 4,406,516 males and 2,965,002 females benefiting from branch activities.

122. The women's sports programme offers a range of activities aimed at promoting women's sports, especially in rural areas. It has created associations in various cities, organized athletic activities for women and elective classes on the importance of

⁷⁵ There are 1,937 vocational training institutes, including 558 public-sector institutions and 1,379 private institutions.

athletics, and organized training sessions for women business owners. There were four female presidents and four women vice-presidents of sports leagues.

123. The relevant sector has worked within the framework of tourism programmes and strategies to integrate girls into hotel and tourism training institutions and develop appropriate educational programmes. There were 143 female students at the higher levels, 642 at the basic levels and 223 in apprenticeship training.

124. With regard to agricultural vocational training, girls accounted for 27.1 per cent of the total number of graduates (589 of 2,174) during the 2017-2018 academic year. With regard to apprenticeship, some 542 rural girls benefited out of a total of 2,519, or 21.5 per cent. With regard to higher education, women graduates accounted for 105 out of a total of 440 graduates, or 23.8 per cent.

Article 11

125. Article 31 of the Constitution provides that the State, public institutions and local governments shall mobilize all available means to facilitate the enjoyment by all citizens on an equal footing of the right to employment and support from the public authorities in searching for work or in self-employment; the right to social protection, health coverage, and solidarity and support from the State; and the right to vocational training and access to physical and technical education....⁷⁶

126. Reforms at the legislative and institutional levels have enabled the adoption of provisions aimed at eliminating discrimination against women in employment and occupation. For the first time, the Labour Code has enshrined the principle of non-discrimination⁷⁷ on the basis of sex in relation to employment, wages, promotion, and all other privileges. Several international labour conventions have also been ratified, including International Labour Organization Convention 100 concerning equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value, and International Labour Organization Convention 111 on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation (paragraph 29 of the Concluding Observations).

127. In the area of protective measures for working women, the Labour Code provides for the following:

- It prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in work. It affirms the right of women to join unions and take part in their management (article 9). In case of violation of this provision, article 12 provides for a fine of between 15,000 and 30,000 dirhams.
- It prohibits discrimination in wages for work of equal value (article 346), sexual harassment and the employment of women in dangerous occupations (article 181).
- It provides for the protection of women during night work (article 172).
- It provides for the right of pregnant women to suspend their employment contracts and extends leave to 22 weeks in case of illness due to pregnancy or childbirth (article 154) and allows pregnant women to leave work without notice (article 158). It gives working mothers the right to breastfeeding breaks of half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the afternoon (article 161).

128. Law 19-12 concerning conditions of labour and employment for female and male domestic workers (August 2016) contains numerous provisions to guarantee protection to that class of worker. It defines domestic work and related jobs, and specifies the class of workers covered by the law, the age of employment which jobs

⁷⁶ Article 31 of the Constitution (Annex 1).

⁷⁷ Articles 5,9,15,40, 153, 154, 158, 161 and 179 of the Labour Code (Annex 4).

are legally prohibited for minors. It address the formulation of provisions of employment contracts for female and male domestic workers and the rights of female and male domestic workers, including the weekly days off, vacation, wages and compensation⁷⁸. Labour inspectors are charged with oversight authority. Penalties and offences are provided for in articles 23-25, which specify the persons who employ domestic workers who are subject to penalties in the event of non-compliance with the employment conditions provided for in article 3 of the Act.

129. With regard to social security, since April 2015, it has been possible for domestics to obtain job loss compensation, which was approved in 2014. Since the system came into force through the end of 2017, some 31,905 persons have benefited from compensation. Nearly 20 per cent of them were women during the 2015-2017 period.

130. The Government has taken the following measures:

- Wage earners in the agriculture and lumber industries and affiliated businesses benefit from family compensation⁷⁹.
- The minimum retirement pension paid out by the National Social Security Fund was raised from 600 to 1,000 dirhams per month starting in July 2011⁸⁰.
- Widows and orphans may continue to benefit from basic health coverage from the National Social Security Fund, regardless of the pension of the deceased insuree⁸¹.
- Starting with the 2015-2016 school year, basic health coverage was extended to students in higher education.
- Legislative and regulatory provisions have been completed relating to the general framework for creating compulsory health and retirement insurance systems for independent professionals, labourers and non-wage workers who practice certain activities.
- Daily maternity compensation is provided for 14 weeks.

131. Under the Government's 2017-2021 Plan for Equality, the labour sector has implemented measures against all forms of discrimination and violence against women. It has promoted equal gender opportunities in the labour market by sending a ministerial circular to all regional directorates of employment and professional integration to focus, during visits by labour inspectors, on compliance with legislative and regulatory provisions on women's right to work. It has worked to create a database in that regard and use it to benefit working women. It drafts periodic assessment reports to monitor compliance with legal provisions on equality and combating discrimination in the workplace.

Table 8
Number of inspection visits

<i>Number</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Total annual inspection visits to monitor women's working conditions	12 833	17 661	16 762	19 526	19 526
Total number of wage-earners covered under inspection visits	297 886	837 230	803 933	702 302	460 801

⁷⁸ A study day was held on article 31 of the Constitution.

⁷⁹ Decree No. 357-08-2 of July 2008.

⁸⁰ Decree No. 432-11-2 of June 2011.

⁸¹ Decree No. 464-11-2 of September 2011 (Annex 20).

<i>Number</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Number of women working at the companies inspected	189 611	339 137	317 411	242 597	186 083
Women in positions of responsibility working at the companies inspected	7 511	12 498	17 397	24 177	15 907
Number of women worker representatives at the companies inspected	620	3 855	3 890	4 571	3 782
Number of women trade union officials at the companies inspected	111	559	125	2 494	226
Observations concerning wages	3 732	1 627	10 039	57 452	6 060
Observations concerning employment	811	173	1 208	1 132	1 846
Observations concerning promotion	222	1 369	99	632	153
Observations concerning night shifts	54	171	225	3877	0
Observations concerning maternity	37	174	321	1364	1 262
Total observations concerning women's working conditions	4 856	3 514	11 892	64 457	9 321

The table shows the number of inspection visits carried out annually to implement the priorities of the national labour inspection plan. The data and indicators from those visits vary according to the size of the institutions visited, the productive sectors concerned, the percentage of women and employer compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements for women's employment.

132. A series of awareness measures have been taken in the textile and clothing companies, which hire the most women, under the "Fibre Citoyenne" code adopted by the Moroccan textile and clothing industry association. That code is based on respect for human rights and combating all forms of gender-based discrimination.

133. Although national labour legislation does not discriminate between women and men, statistics and studies have shown that there are marked gender disparities in access to the labour market. That significantly affects social coverage.⁸²

Table 9
Unemployment rate

<i>2018 unemployment rates (in percentages)</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>National</i>
Women	2.5	24.3	14
Men	3.9	11.4	8.4
Total	3.5	14.2	9.8
<i>2018 activity rates (in percentages)</i>			
Women	29.7	18.1	22.2
Men	77.9	66.9	70.9
Total	53.9	41.8	46.2

⁸² Disparities are linked to the labour market, which produces disparities in social coverage for women.

Table 10
Social coverage

<i>Coverage for active working population 15 years and older (2018)</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
Health coverage	53.6	43.3
Retirement scheme coverage	20.7	19.1

Source: High Commission for Planning, national employment research 2018

134. The national plan for advancing employment through 2021 was drafted and approved by the Government in 2018. It focuses on the following measures:

- A comprehensive and integrated approach that includes economic, financial and institutional dimensions;
- Launch of the “It’s possible” programme, with an implementation charter signed in April 2018 by the relevant sectors, the General Federation of Moroccan Enterprises and the regional councils association;
- Putting employment at the heart of public policies while taking into account the local dimension in implementation;
- Expanding the groups targeted by the employment policy:
 - Unemployed women;
 - Young graduates;
 - Young people who left school early;
 - Workers in micro-businesses and the informal sector;
 - Rural inhabitants and rural women;
 - Persons with disabilities;
 - Migrants with regular status.

135. The scheme includes a package of practical and operational actions, including 20 priority actions for the 2018-2019 period and other measures to be implemented at the local level.

136. With regard to employment recovery measures supervised by the Ministry, there were 102,773 beneficiaries of the “integration” programme, 50 per cent of them women. The goal is to develop companies’ human resources by improving staffing and encouraging the employment of young graduates seeking employment to integrate them into working life.

137. The “qualification” programme aims to improve the employability of graduates by helping them to acquire professional qualifications for specific available positions. There were 27,125 job applicants, 60 per cent of them women, in training contracted for employment. The “incentive” programme encourages hiring by newly established enterprises or associations. There were several improvements in the 2018 finance act. The number of job seekers benefiting from available benefits rose to 10 wage earners instead of 5. The benefit period was extended to the end of December 2020, and cooperatives were included among beneficiary businesses, which benefited 6,180 people, 38 per cent of them women.

138. Through its network of 86 local agencies, the public authority for employment mediation services provides services to job seekers, including information, guidance, placement interviews and job search workshops. Women benefit from the various

information services regarding hiring vacancies, and information campaigns conducted via email and sms.

139. In 2018, some 205,923 new job seekers registered in the database of the National Agency for Promotion of Employment and Skills. Women accounted for 44 per cent. In 2018, some 34,650 women had placement interviews, or 41 per cent of 84,466 beneficiaries. Women accounted for more than half of all participants in job search workshops, that is 29,700 out of 57,524 participants.

140. During the 2014-2015 period, the “My situation” programme was implemented to improve the prospects for women entering and flourishing in a professional milieu. The goal was to make companies more socially responsible, get them to increase gender equality, and improve women’s access to collective infrastructure. The project’s activities were followed up in 2015-2017 with the following:

- Some 400 women were counted and set up to raise their chances of obtaining employment.
- A gender equality audit was conducted for 10 businesses.

141. In order to promote a culture of professional equality within companies, the relevant sector has held three rounds of professional equality awards (2016, 2017 and 2018) for national and international enterprises located within national territory that demonstrated compliance with criteria relating to the principle of gender equality and equal opportunity in businesses, hiring, working conditions and continuing training, as well as inclusion of women on their representative bodies. The process encompassed some 110 contractors: 34 contractors in 2016, 33 in 2017 and 43 in 2018.

142. A financial package has been allocated in the labour sector budget to support the projects of associations working in the field of promoting women’s right to work. Specifications have been set for the nomination and appointment of an interministerial committee to select nominated projects. The process is based on the associations’ applications and presentations and the reference guide to the criteria adopted in the strategy of the relevant sector. It includes activities aimed at raising awareness about the situation of women for the benefit of both companies and wage earners, empowering women in the workplace and improving their working conditions. Three association projects were selected out of 9 nominees in 2017, and 4 were selected out of 44 in 2018.

143. The Government’s Plan for Equality, both ICRAM I and ICRAM 2, devotes a special section to women’s economic empowerment. ICRAM 1 adopted programmes to encourage the development of partnerships with different actors and enhance synergies to empower women entrepreneurs and cooperative and association leaders with the necessary tools for marketing and staffing and facilitate their access to loans and property. The ICRAM 2 plan aimed to support women’s economic independence and empowerment by promoting their participation in the labour market, ensuring equal access to professional advancement, strengthening women’s economic situations in rural areas, and supporting women’s companies.

144. Preparations have been made for a strategic study on women’s economic empowerment to lay the groundwork for the development of a national integrated economic empowerment programme for women by 2030, in implementation of commitments contained in the 2017-2021 Government programme on strengthening women’s economic inclusion in development and in realization of the economic empowerment elements of the Government Plan for Equality.

145. In order to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, Framework Act No. 97-13 was enacted. It includes a section on employment and professional integration. In

2016, two new decrees were issued that will empower that category to enter public service by strengthening the system of quotas, which now exceed 7 per cent across the board, and institutionalizing the new regulatory conditions by creating a national committee to process of conducting these new organizational positions is institutionalized by establishing a standing national committee to track job postings for persons with disabilities.

Article 12

146. With regard to paragraph 31 of the Concluding Observations, Morocco has made significant progress in improving the health of its population, and reproductive health in particular. That improvement has been reflected in life expectancy at birth, maternal mortality and child mortality indicators:

Table 11

Life expectancy at birth between 2014 and 2050

	2014	2020	2030	2050
Men	74.0	74.9	76.3	78.6
Women	77.3	78.3	79.8	82.3
Total	75.6	76.6	78.0	80.4

Source: High Commission for Planning, family demographic projections 2014-2050

Trajectories of the most important maternal and child health indicators

- The average life expectancy at birth increased from 47 years in 1962 to 74.8 years in 2010.
- The maternal mortality rate decreased from 112 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010 to 72.6 deaths in 2017, a 35 per cent drop (39 per cent in urban areas and 25 per cent in rural areas).
- The child mortality rate decreased from 63 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1992 to 28.8 deaths in 2011.

147. Since 2008, the Kingdom has seen a series of legislative reforms that have improved women's access to health services. Article 31 of the 2011 Constitution affirms in the principle of equal access to health services.⁸³ Framework Act No. 34-09 of 2011 concerning the health system and the provision of treatment (article 2) affirms the principle of equal access to health treatment and services, parity in the availability of health resources on the ground, the adoption of a gender approach in the field of health services, and opposition to all forms of discrimination (Article 7). Implementing Decree No. 562-14-2 (July 2015) regulating the provision of treatment, the health map and regional plans has contributed to the democratization of access to health facilities through the optimal distribution of health resources.

148. The basic health coverage system in Morocco consists of two independent systems: the compulsory illness insurance system (Assurance Maladie Obligatoire - AMO) and the medical assistance system (Régime d'Assistance Médicale Regime d'Assistance Médicale aux Economiquement Démunis – RAMED). Thanks to these two systems, Morocco has been able to achieve actual health coverage of 62 per cent.

⁸³ Article 31 of the Constitution (Annex 1).

Of that, 34 per cent is through AMO and 28 per cent is through RAMED. The goal is to generalize coverage to 90 per cent of the population by 2021.

149. Article 5 of the Law 65-00 concerning the compulsory illness insurance system provides that such insurance must cover not only the person subject to the insurance requirement, but also household members. Articles 35 and 36 of Act 65-00 provide that women not themselves enrolled for benefits can continue to carry the insurance for two years after the death of the husband, or one year after divorce.

150. The medical assistance system was extended to needy persons in 2012. It has helped to expand access to treatment. The RAMED card is granted to men and women in conditions of vulnerability or poverty without discrimination, allowing them to benefit from most services available at public hospital facilities. Some 12 million beneficiaries of the medical assistance system from its inception until 2018, compared to 10.3 million in 2016, of whom 7.4 million had valid cards, a coverage rate of more than 142 per cent. That breaks down as follows:

- 91 per cent are classified as poverty stricken and 9 per cent are classified as vulnerable.
- 53 per cent of beneficiaries are women and 47 per cent are men.
- 51 per cent live in rural areas and 41 per cent live in urban areas.

151. The social protection system has been expanded as follows:

- The student health coverage system, under Act No. 116-12 concerning the compulsory basic illness insurance system for students in 2016.
- The compulsory basic illness insurance system for independents (2017)⁸⁴ guarantees coverage of expenses for medical treatments in line with the package of treatments guaranteed for private sector wage earners. A pension system for these groups was introduced in December 2017 (Act No. 99-15 establishing retirement pensions) for persons reaching the age of 65 or a maximum of 75. That is addition to the pensions of deceased persons that have reverted to their family members.
- With regard to health coverage for migrant women, the sector that deals with Moroccans living abroad, immigration affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Health have signed a general framework agreement for partnership and cooperation to facilitate the access of migrants and refugees residing in Morocco to health services.
- With regard to paragraph 33 of the Concluding Observation, which concerns health care services in rural areas, the national plan for the advancement of health in rural areas has enabled improved access for rural women to health services. That has been particularly helpful with regard to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity. Both primary health care and hospital care have been enhanced. In 2017, there were 2,865 primary health institutions, including 2,034 in rural areas, with 3,308 doctors and 9,799 nurses. There were also 158 facilities providing hospital health services in 2017. Five hospitals and two dialysis centres were put into operation in 2018. An integrated emergency medical treatment network has also been created in accordance with the health map, both fixed and mobile.

152. For fixed units, treatment of pre-hospital medical emergencies has been improved through the following:

⁸⁴ Act No. 98-15.

- 96 emergency units have been set up near health centres.
- 48 emergency medical facilities have been set up in hospital centres.
- 11 emergency medical assistance services have been set up in accordance with the new regional divisions.
- A free nationwide 141 number has been created for emergency medical calls.
- 4 helicopters have been enlisted for emergency medical transport.
- A mobile field hospital has been acquired to serve populations in isolated areas suffering from severe climatic conditions. It is staffed by a multidisciplinary team of doctors, nurses, technicians, paramedics and maintenance and support technicians.
- A reproductive medicine assistance system has been set up for remote areas (a reproductive emergency system).
- 5 academies have been created for the training of medical transport and emergency technicians.
- Training curricula have been created for nurses specializing in emergency and intensive care in seven higher academies of nursing and health technology.
- An emergency medicine training unit has been added to the family health and community health curricula of the National School of Public Health.

153. Mobile units provide a range of preventive, therapeutic and health awareness services, with priority placed on maternal, child and reproductive health programmes with regular field visits, which numbered 12,037 in 2017.

Table 12

Field visits made by mobile medical units during the 2012-2017 period

<i>Year</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>
Field visits	10 045	11 589	12 032	12 618	12 859	12 037

154. Field visits by multi-specialty medical convoys have seen an increase since the launch of the medical assistance system. There were 437 in 2018. To ensure the health of the population of remote areas subject to the effects of cold snaps, “Care” operations started to be implemented in 2014. From November 2018 to March 2019, they targeted 28 provinces, conducted 4,558 mobile medical unit field visits and organized 233 medical convoys. Some 650,112 health services were provided.

Table 13

Medical campaigns

<i>Year</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Number of medical campaigns	83	117	87	94	282	564	437

According to the National Survey on Population and Family Health, health indicators in rural areas saw an improvement between 2011 and 2018, with maternal mortality dropping from 112 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010 to 72.6 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2017. The rate was reduced by 37 points (from 148 to 111.1) in rural areas, compared to 28 points (from 73 to 44.6) in urban areas.

155. Although maternal mortality decreased, there are still disparities between urban and rural areas, particularly in prenatal care. Further efforts are needed to ensure equitable access to health services.

156. A network of social medicine institutions (2013) was created in accordance with the health map, in response to the specific needs of certain segments of society. They include institutions for persons with disabilities and health facilities for young people and students.

157. The Government is currently working to strengthen health services for the elderly by launching a national elderly health strategy, “Vision 20-30”, for the 2020-2025 and 2025-2030 action plans. Geriatric units and a unit for psychological and mental health for the elderly have been established at a university hospital for the mentally ill. Rules and standards have been set forth for creating units for short-term in-patient geriatric units. A geriatric component was added to the multi-specialty basic training curriculum for nurses in 2012.

158. To enhance maternal and child health services, under the 2011-2020 National Reproductive Health Strategy, comprehensive, accessible and reasonable services have been provided and existing services have been enhanced to help improve maternal reproductive health. Indicators on women’s use of family planning have improved, rising from 63 per cent in 2004 to 70.8 per cent in 2018. The proportion of unmet family planning needs fell to 11.3 per cent.

159. Starting in 2012, as part of the national pregnancy and childbirth monitoring programme, a series of measures have been taken to strengthen the policy of exemption from payment for emergency pregnancy and neonatal treatments and health services provided in basic health facilities, caesarean sections and basic laboratory tests. Medical transportation of pregnant women between health facilities is ensured. Support is provided for ambulance units for pregnant women in remote areas with less coverage. The level of coverage of pregnancy complications has been improved. There is an annual training programme in emergency obstetrics for doctors and obstetric specialists. Act No. 44-13 was enacted to protect the midwifery profession. According to the 2018 National Survey on Population and Family Health, certain other indicators have improved significantly, including the following:

- More than 88.6 per cent of pregnant women were being monitored by health institutions in 2018, compared to 76 per cent in 2011.
- More than 86 per cent of births took place in health institutions in 2018, compared to 73 per cent in 2011.

160. To improve maternity conditions, the Government has continued to hold national campaigns to motivate pregnant women to use health services to monitor pregnancy and childbirth, especially those from remote areas. The “mothers section” policy has been adopted in 60 per cent of relevant institutions.

161. Under the 2010-2019 National Cancer Prevention and Control Plan, early monitoring of breast and cervical cancers has been enhanced. In 2017, more than 1,832,000 women aged 40-69 made use of early breast cancer screening services. More than 1,504 breast cancers were diagnosed. Some 920,000 women underwent screening and about 133 breast cancer cases were diagnosed during the 2018 national campaign. More than 145,500 women benefited from early detection and diagnosis of about 455 pre-cancerous cervical lesions and 23 cases of cervical cancer in 2018.

162. As part of the national strategy to combat curable sexually transmitted diseases, more than 350,000 women are provided services each year. HIV testing is provided to women of childbearing age and pregnant women. The number of pregnant women benefiting from screening rose from 43,000 in 2012 to more than 120,000 in 2018.

163. As part of the national plan to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of AIDS and congenital syphilis by 2020, women of childbearing age are being made aware of the dangers of transmission of the virus and syphilis-causing bacteria. HIV carriers are urged to avoid unwanted pregnancies. A programme has been implemented to prevent the transmission of HIV and all other sexually transmitted diseases from mother to child through early detection and treatment for women who test positive. The proportion of pregnant women living with HIV who received triple therapy increased from 12 per cent in 2007 to 65 per cent in 2018.

164. The gender approach has been adopted in disability care programmes. In 2016, some 68,450 women and girls benefited from medical training classes in various disciplines in regional centres, compared to 62,161 in 2012, an increase of 10 per cent. In 2016, some 1,944 disabled women and girls received prosthetic and orthotic artificial limbs provided by regional centres, compared to 650 in 2012, a 199 per cent increase, thanks to the increase in the number of such centres from 12 in 2012 to 15 in 2016. A national plan for the health of persons with disabilities⁸⁵ has been prepared for the 2015-2021 period.

165. With regard to strengthening partnerships with local actors, experiments have been conducted in community participation, including activities to raise awareness about major health problems. Emergency obstetric cases are transferred to appropriate health services through the emergency medical assistance system for mothers and newborns, which now operates at 31 locations. Health facilities have been moved closer to remote populations (there are now approximately 30 maternity homes). Civil society has taken part in developing projects and programmes to promote maternal health. They target rural areas by expanding the concept of the maternity house and promote parent education by enlisting local development actors to encourage childbirth at health facilities. In 2018, 20 partnership agreements were signed with various actors, including 9 with health associations.

Article 13

166. The living conditions of women-run households have seen improvement, reflected in a decline in poverty and vulnerability between 2007 and 2014, as follows:

Table 14

Poverty rate among women

<i>Poverty and vulnerability among women heads of households</i>	<i>Rural</i>		<i>Urban</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>2007</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2014</i>
Cash poverty	15.1	9.6	4	1.9	7.4	3.9
Vulnerability	23.2	17.4	13.4	8.2	16.4	10.6

Source: High Commission for Planning, poverty map 2014.

167. To promote social protection and economic empowerment for women, Decree No. 791-14-2 (December 2014) was issued to provide direct support to widows in vulnerable situations who are raising children up to the age of 21. It is conditional on school-age children pursuing studies or vocational training, with the exception of

⁸⁵ The scheme focuses on six areas: strengthening preventive health programmes with early detection of disability-causing diseases; improving health care services; strengthening basic training and continuing training; strengthening the legal and participatory framework; social mobilization to combat stigma and discrimination; and promoting monitoring, evaluation and scientific research.

orphan children with disabilities. A monthly stipend has been set at 350 dirhams per orphan child, up to a maximum of 1,050 dirhams per month per family.

168. Through the end of 2018, the programme had benefited 91,126 widows raising more than 156,000 girl and boy orphans, with over 90,000 beneficiary families. The amounts allocated for this programme increased from 196 million dirhams in 2015 to 587 million in 2017.

169. The Social Cohesion Fund was created under section 18 of the 2012 finance act to strengthen social cohesion mechanisms for the benefit of people in vulnerable situations, particularly women and girls. The goal is to finance expenditures related to implementation and expansion of the medical assistance plan, and to provide assistance to persons in vulnerable situations. Financial subsidies for social programmes started to be disbursed in 2014.⁸⁶

170. The Family Solidarity Fund protects divorced women and their children from destitution resulting from a husband's insolvency. The justice sector has tried to overcome problems that emerged with enforcement of the act setting the conditions and rules for beneficiaries⁸⁷. The provisions of the implementing decree for that act have been amended, mainly those regarding the documents that are required for advance payments, and the Fund's ceiling.⁸⁸ The pool of beneficiaries has been expanded to include destitute wives, abandoned mothers and children entitled to maintenance during an existing marriage, along with children who are entitled to alimony after the dissolution of the marriage contract. Amendments to the draft act were approved by the Cabinet in December 2017.

171. In 2017, a ministerial committee was set up to implement the Cabinet decision to register children in the civil status registers. Two campaigns were held in the wake of that decision, the first between 2017 and 2018 and the second launched in 2019, with 23,151 persons (children and adults) having their civil status registered. Some 39,481 files were submitted to the judiciary, and 16,808 declaratory judgments were issued as a result.⁸⁹

172. With regard to paragraph 43 of the Concluding Observations, under the National Human Development Initiative, women in vulnerable situations have been targeted in four key areas, including supporting income-generating activities, improving access to education services, creating socio-cultural and sports activity frameworks and supporting intake centres. From 2005 to 2017, some 4.2 million women benefited from improved social and economic conditions.⁹⁰ In 2017, more than 7,764 income-generating activities (65 per cent of them in rural areas) were recorded with a total investment of approximately 2.4 billion dirhams, of which 1.4 billion was contributed by the National Initiative to 118,000 male and female beneficiaries.

⁸⁶ The Tayseer, Million Schoolbag and medical assistance programmes. The Disability Support Programme and the Widows Support Programme were launched in late 2015, after drafting benefit criteria, procedural guidelines and guidelines for grant disbursement.

⁸⁷ Act No. 20-18-1 (February 2018) concerning implementation of Act No. 83-17 amending Act No. 41-10 concerning the Family Solidarity Fund (Annex 32).

⁸⁸ Decree No. 249-18-2 approved by the Cabinet, published in Official Gazette No. 4427 (July 2018) amending Decree No. 195-11-2. (September 2011) concerning implementation of Act No. 41-10 on setting the conditions and rules for access to the Family Solidarity Fund. Annex 21.

⁸⁹ Annex 22

⁹⁰ Women's representation in governance bodies was 21 per cent in 2017, compared with less than 6 per cent in 2005.

Table 15
Distribution of female beneficiaries by area of income-generating activities

<i>Area</i>	<i>Number of enterprises</i>	<i>Number of beneficiaries</i>
Agriculture	4 320	26 477
Traditional industries	1 102	10 624
Neighbourhood shops	1 914	12 351
Traditional hunting	315	816
Tourism	113	799
Total	7 764	51 067

173. The Initiative has made sure that women play a pivotal role in implementing its programmes. Approximately 9,400 income-generating activities were administered during the 2005-2018 period for certificate holders from the different target groups, of whom 50 per cent were women who were enabled to improve their social and economic conditions.

174. A package of projects has been developed to combat school dropout and encourage rural girls in particular to stay in school. The Initiative has worked to build and equip a number of student dormitories and acquire school transport vehicles.

175. To improve access to women's health services, health centres have been provided and renovated. Medical convoys and awareness campaigns have been organized, and around 240 maternity homes and labour wards have been established, which has contributed to reducing maternal and child mortality. Some 1,134 centres have been set up to take care of women in difficult situations.

176. The third phase of the National Human Development Initiative (2019-2023) was launched on 18 September 2018. That phase is will be implemented using a precise targeting system based on a programme aimed at promoting human capital. The tasks of the local governance bodies have been redefined in line with the requirements for greater regionalism and administrative decentralization. The representation of women in these bodies has been increased to 20 per cent. A financial envelope of 18 billion dirhams has been allocated for this phase to fund four programmes:

- A programme to make up the infrastructure and basic services gap in the less well equipped localities, with a budget of 4 billion dirhams.
- A programme to support people in vulnerable situations in eleven different categories, with a budget of 4 billion dirhams.
- A programme to increase income, improve economic inclusion and create jobs for young people through training and support, with a budget of 4 billion dirhams.
- A programme to support human development for coming generations with support during early childhood and youth, with a budget of 6 billion dirhams. One of the goals of this programme is to improve the health and nutrition of mother and child.

177. To develop an environment conducive to women's employment and entrepreneurship, several measures have been implemented in partnership with associations, the private sector and international development partners. They include the following:

- The "Ilayki" fund has been established to encourage women to start businesses by granting them up to 80 per cent of bank loans. From its launch in March 2013

to November 2019, some 3,643 projects have been approved, with a budget of 773 million dirhams, distributed among the health and social work sectors (36 per cent), trade (27 per cent), services (16 per cent), hotels and restaurants (6 per cent), industry (5 per cent) and education (4 per cent).

- Under a self-employment system, from 2015 to the end of April 2019, some 103,160 self-employment enterprises were created, of which 31 per cent were female.
- Women’s entrepreneurship is supported through the development of tools to support small and medium-sized enterprises, and the generation of data for that category.
- International cooperation programmes on women’s economic empowerment aim to support the creation and development of women-led enterprises, improve the entrepreneurial climate for them, and provide technical assistance to strengthen the capacities of national professional women’s associations. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is overseeing implementation of a project on “Promoting women’s empowerment for comprehensive and sustainable industrial development in the Middle East and North Africa”.

178. In partnership with UN-Women, it has administered several activities aimed at integrating the gender approach into urban design and planning, taking into account women’s right of access to public facilities and services. This partnership made it possible to carry out research on international experiences before drafting a reference guide for integrating a gender approach into proposed urban policies.

179. During 2018, the employment sector implemented a training programme (18 sessions) in the field of basic rights at work. It raised awareness of Act No. 19-12 concerning the conditions of work and employment for female and male domestic workers. Within the framework of mobilizing human resources, it also retrained 30 administrators to act in the capacity of labour inspectors.

180. Within the framework of international cooperation with the United States Department of Labor and with the participation of the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises, the Ministry has followed up implementation of the “My situation” project (2015-2017) in the Casablanca region to strengthen women’s participation in political and economic life, and to develop their social responsibilities within business. In that regard, the following has been done:

- Some 400 women were identified and trained to raise their chances of obtaining employment.
- A gender equality audit programme was conducted for 10 out of 15 contract businesses located in the Rabat-Sale-Quneitra region.
- A guide to gender approach auditing for businesses has been drafted and circulated to all enterprises via the project website.

181. The “Baynahunna” programme was launched in the regions as part of an agreement among the National Agency for the Promotion of Small and Medium-sized Businesses (ANAPEC), the regional investment centres and the German Corporation for International Cooperation. It aims to support and follow up with women owners of very small and small enterprises immediately after they are established. The programme had benefited 120 contractors as of the end of 2013. That included 80 contracts for women during the first round of the programme and 40 in the second. The third round of the programme will support 70 women contractors.

182. In 2018, the Self-Employment Support Programme, which aims to support the creation of very small businesses, helped 2,785 entrepreneurs, 30 per cent of whom were women, compared to 27 per cent in 2017, and 1,351 very small businesses or self-financed income-generating activities. It contributed to the creation of 4,526 jobs.

183. In April 2017, as part of a Moroccan-Belgian collaboration, and in partnership with the Association for the Advancement of Education and Training Abroad (APFEF), the labour sector launched the second round of the “Min ajliki” project for the 2017-2021 period. The project, specifically aimed at women, aims to promote the economic empowerment of women in Morocco through quantitative and qualitative improvement of self-employment and employability among women. The project is targeted at the following groups:

- Potential women enterprise owners wishing to enter the business world;
- Women engaging in activities in the informal sector;
- Women who own businesses and want to expand them;
- Women who run social or solidarity activities (cooperatives);

Since the launch of the second round of the project, the following results have been achieved:

- 13,500 people have been notified of the programme and 1,650 women have participated in entrepreneurship awareness workshops.
- 1,670 women benefited from advance support and 557 from follow-up support, and 59 women’s enterprises have been incubated.
- 567 women entrepreneurs benefited from marketing support.
- 231 businesses were created by programme partners.
- 298 businesses were created under the auto-entrepreneur system, and 50 informal enterprises were helped to transition to the formal sector.
- 792 job opportunities were created.

184. The “Youth works” project⁹¹ continued to operate during 2018. It pays special attention to the issue of gender equality and has set goals and indicators for women in all areas of its intervention. It has also devoted attention to scientific research on women’s access to the business world through a national study on the progress of businesswomen in Morocco.

185. In August 2016, the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development signed a partnership agreement with the Association of Women Entrepreneurs in Morocco (AFEM) on the project to develop women’s entrepreneurship in urban, semi-urban and rural settings through accelerators and incubators for businesses in three regions of Morocco.

186. In 2016, a memorandum of understanding was concluded with the World Tourism Organization, the National Tourism Confederation and UN-Women on a women’s social and economic empowerment project to promote the positive impact of tourism development on women’s lives and its contribution gender equality. It aims to increase opportunities for small tourism enterprises through microfinance and encourage women’s participation in tourism planning, local administration and decision-making.

⁹¹ Implemented in a partnership between the Labour Sector and the International Labour Office with funding from the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2012 to June 2018.

187. Through December 2014, as part of the “Innovation Morocco” strategy launched in 2011, the Central Guarantee Fund has supported 60 innovative projects, of which 10 per cent have been women-run. The Government is working to foster entrepreneurship and investment among women entrepreneurs through several training programmes. Beneficiaries include the following:

- 128,339 girls in the field of “income-generating businesses and projects” in women’s institutions;
- About 11,000 young people, including about 5,000 young women, under a self-employment programme supported by the World Bank;
- 200 female and male students conducting 50 innovative projects, 50 per cent of them female enrolled in training units on “creating innovative enterprises” in five higher education institutions in 2011-2014.
- 113 projects, 48 per cent of them run by women, under the Youth Integration Fund programme.

188. Under the programme to modernize neighbourhood commerce, 24,480 points of sale have been modernized in over 100 cities and villages in different regions. Some 2,452 female merchants benefited from, or 10 per cent.

189. The 2011 Constitution enshrined the concept of sustainable development and made it the right of every citizen. A new list of 56 sustainable development indicators has been developed that is more in line with current concerns and the need to track and evaluate sustainable development policies being pursued by various actors. Gender mainstreaming has emerged as an important indicator of sustainable development.

190. A strategy to institutionalize gender mainstreaming in the area of the environment and sustainable development was completed under a partnership agreement with UN-Women (March 2018). It has adopted the following guidelines:

- It contributes to the Government’s National Strategy for Equality and Gender Parity, in line with the goals and action programme of the National Sustainable Development Strategy.
- It integrates the principle of equality into the human resources and capacities management.
- It institutionalizes gender units and promotes gender equality in practices, behaviours, programmes and action plans in the area of environment and sustainable development.

191. In order to lay the foundations for a green economy by 2020, a national sustainable development strategy has been developed. The Global Cleantech Innovation Programme Morocco was launched to promote a green economy in partnership with the Global Environment Fund and UNIDO to promote women’s participation in achieving sustainable development, on the margins of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Six projects were selected for financial and technical support.

192. As part of support for associations in formulating and submitting environmental initiatives and projects, a gender approach is integrated into the selection of projects as follows:

- Care is taken to ensure that women’s associations are represented.
- Attention is paid to women and young people at the various stages of formulation and implementation of projects.

- Efforts are made to ensure that projects have positive implications for women, especially in rural areas, and especially with regard to girls' schooling, environmental awareness and sustainable development.
- Income-generating activities are promoted by creating and encouraging women's cooperatives that intend to cultivate local products. During the 2016 cycle, civil society climate change-related projects and initiatives were promoted. The gender diversity indicator was taken into account by monitoring the extent to which the activities of projects contributed to gender equality and empowered women to pursue income-generating activities.

193. The youth and sports sector launched the "Accompanying the cooperatives" programme at the beginning of 2013. It involved 121 income-generating and cooperative projects. Vocational training institutions are also working on self-empowerment of women and girls, and facilitating their integration into socio-economic life and access to the labour market. There is a project to integrate 2,000 graduates into the spare automobile parts field in partnership with the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC).

194. The "Supporting entrepreneurship capacities for young people in vulnerable situations in the informal sector" programme, which offers training to micro-enterprises for about 5,000 young men and women, 40 per cent of whom are women, was implemented under the Programme to Promote Entrepreneurship for Youth (PPEJ). Some 40 per cent of the beneficiaries were girls.

195. In order to promote women's access to cultural rights, the following has been implemented:

- The gender approach has been institutionalized in the culture sector by creating gender units.⁹²
- Women's opportunities in arts education and heritage professions are being promoted and enhanced. The number of girls enrolled in higher institutes and music conservatories has seen an increase from 6,250 during the 2016 academic year to 7,114 during the 2017-2018 academic year.
- The same opportunities for support are provided to both sexes in order to empower women economically. That is part of a policy of supporting cultural projects in the areas of theatre, music, singing, plastic and visual arts, heritage arts, festivals, publishing and writing.

Table 16
Support for women-led projects

<i>Area of support</i>	<i>2014</i>		<i>2015</i>		<i>2016</i>		<i>2017</i>	
	<i>Number of women-led projects</i>	<i>Total</i>						
Book publishing	24	204	43	350	84	459	37	315
Magazine publishing	2	63	3	83	2	113	7	86
Reading awareness	2	18	7	31	12	56	9	37
International fairs	10	43	21	104	48	138	46	144

Source: Ministry of Education.

⁹² Decision of the Minister of Culture and Communication No. 17/2018.

- Efforts are made to ensure that women and women's creativity in various are represented in Moroccan exhibits and culture weeks held abroad.
- Women take part in various intellectual meetings and studies that address women's issues.
- Data is collected and customs, traditions, skills, crafts and arts created by women are documented.
- A prize has been created for for best female actor at the National Theatre Festival.
- Female artists and pioneers are honoured in all artistic exhibits.

Article 14

196. The public authorities have taken measures and initiatives in accordance with a participatory approach aimed at improving the condition of rural women, by both creating local development programmes for their benefit and involving various stakeholders in public policies and programmes.

197. Implementation of the national programme to provide rural areas with drinking water increased the supply from 87 per cent in 2008 to 97 per cent in 2018. Beneficiaries numbered some 13,754,197 people, including 6,825,481 women. That helped increase girls' schooling and gave women extra time to engage in income-generating activities.

198. The comprehensive rural electrification programme has helped to improve the lifestyle of women in rural areas. The use of electric appliances in domestic work has saved time that is used to provide more education to rural girls, combat illiteracy, promote income-generating activities (the establishment of cooperatives) and learn new skills. Health awareness is being enhanced through television programmes. Electrification of neighbourhood treatment centres has allowed pregnancies to be monitored, thereby reducing the mortality of pregnant women and infants and ensuring better care.

199. From 1996 to the end of November 2018, that programme increased the rural electrification rate from 18 per cent in 1995 to 99.63 per cent as of November 2018. The following have benefited from electrification:

- 40,393 villages containing 2,123,291 dwellings were connected to the national grid.
- 51,559 solar panels were installed in 3,663 villages⁹³ between 1998 and 2009.
- 19,438 solar devices were installed in 900 villages between 2016 and January 2017.

200. As part of the implementation of the First National Rural Roads Programme (1995-2005), 11,000 km were completed at a cost of 7 billion dirhams. That increased rural access to road networks from 34 per cent to 54 per cent. In continuation of that effort, the Second National Rural Roads Programme (2006-2016) was implemented. That increased the total length of rural roads completed since the start of the programme to 13,871 km as of June 2016, ending the isolation of 2,885 million rural residents, of whom 50.7 per cent were women (according to the 2014 census), or about 1,462,695 inhabitants.

201. A study of the impact of those two programmes conducted in 2013 showed the following positive indicators:

⁹³ By "village" (*douar*) we mean a group of dwellings for a group of residents.

- The number of girls in school increased by 7.4 per cent (from 65 per cent to 72.4 per cent).
- The annual rate of family visits to health centres increased by 32.3 per cent (from 6.4 to 8.5 visits per year per family).
- Travel time to the nearest health centre decreased by 35.1 per cent (from 57 to 37 minutes) during the dry season and 35.7 per cent (70 to 45 minutes) during the rainy season.
- Transportation costs went down by 26 per cent (from 0.88 to 0.65 dirhams per person/km).
- The cost of transporting goods decreased by 14.7 per cent, from 3.24 to 2.76 per ton/km.

202. During 2015, an integrated action plan was developed to finance infrastructure projects in local communities and remote areas. A programme was designed to reduce geographic disparities, as part of the National Development Plan for Rural and Mountainous Areas. That programme's goals were as follows:

- End the isolation of remote and mountainous areas by building highways, roads and crossings.
- Improve and universalize access of the rural population to basic electricity, drinking water, education and health services.
- Create conditions for enhancing and diversifying the economic capacities of rural and mountainous areas.

The financial envelope for implementing that programme is about 50 billion dirhams over seven years. The facilities built through this programme will end the isolation of 5,190 villages and permit access to health services, education, water and greater rural electrification for more than 6 million beneficiaries in 1,100 communities.

203. The Government's 2005-2011 localities rehabilitation programme projected a cost of 2.5 billion dirhams, covering 2,313 km and building 90 transit facilities, of which 68 were isolated, benefiting 810,960 people across 207 local communities in 22 regions. The access rate increased from 50 per cent to 85 per cent after completion of the Second National Rural Roads Programme and the localities rehabilitation programme.

204. In implementation of Framework Act No. 34-09 concerning the health system, a series of programmes have been implemented in rural areas. They include an action plan to accelerate the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality, a 2011-2013 action plan on saving the lives of mothers and children, a national plan for child health, a national nutrition strategy (2011-2019), a national reproductive health strategy and a rural areas health plan. The mobile model for health coverage has been enhanced. A "Care" initiative was launched for regions affected by climate change, particularly those suffering from heavy rainfall.⁹⁴

205. With regard to paragraphs 27 and 33 of the Concluding Observations, rural girls' schooling was supported by the expansion of the scope of services of social welfare institutions (dormitories and homes for girls), which include nutrition, shelter, classes, school support, summer camps, cultural and sports activities and psychological support services. In 2014, there were 46,675 beneficiaries, accounting

⁹⁴ See article 12 of the report.

for 45.08 per cent of the total number of beneficiaries. The school pass rate for girl beneficiaries was 80 per cent in 2014.

206. Many women's cooperatives have been supported in the fields of agriculture, traditional industry and tourism. They have seen a significant increase, from 738 in 2008 to 2021 in 2014 (14.6 per cent of the all cooperatives) with 34,877 members. They are active in agriculture (12,662 members), traditional industry (12,582 members) and raising argan trees (6,860).

207. With regard to agriculture⁹⁵, the Green Morocco Plan pays particular attention to rural women through comprehensive development policies aimed at reducing gender gaps and ensuring equal opportunities for women to be included in agricultural development programmes, which integrates gender diversity.

208. With regard to the socio-economic empowerment of women, the relevant sector is devoting attention to the following:

- It is developing operational tools and mechanisms to stimulate entrepreneurship and investment and encourage the creation of women's agricultural businesses through projects implemented under the second pillar of the Green Morocco Scheme.
- It is adopting a guide to priorities for collective agricultural projects that include gender criteria and, since 2017, has used the gender approach indicator within the framework of a programme to support the agricultural sector policy of the European Union. That indicator promotes women's representation in professional organizational hierarchies.
- It promotes agricultural consultation targeting rural women (providing ongoing assistance to 217,567 women),
- It promotes and maintains professional organization for agricultural women that includes (1410 women's agricultural and Argan cooperatives at 25 per cent).
- It supports the raising, marketing and distribution of agricultural cooperative products and access to regional, national and international fairs (more than 8,000 women have benefited). It creates marketing stations for products in certain regions of the Kingdom. It arranges regional partnerships with large commercial spaces. It has set up 8 Internet sites for selling products, and done coding for 45 groups headed by women.
- 52 per cent of women benefiting from projects are in Argan and oasis areas.
- 31 broadcast programmes and gender awareness capsules have been disseminated.
- 75 women are practicing the profession of agricultural consultation out of 883 who were granted accreditation (8.5 per cent).

209. As part of the strategic vision for the integration of diversity into the agricultural sector, the following was done:

- A study was conducted on the advancement of women's agricultural business in Morocco.
- The agricultural education and training system has been revamped on the basis of parity and equality while establishing a culture of agricultural entrepreneurship.
- Training courses have been held for ministerial focal points for the strengthening of capacities and the acquisition of tools to integrate gender into programmes and projects for the development of agricultural production chains.

⁹⁵ The Green Morocco Plan.

210. In the field of marine fishing, two projects have been supported for building and equipping two marine farming units. One is a women's cooperatives unit with a prepared discharge point for collecting, processing and packaging offshore marine products, and collecting, dehydrating and storing algae. The other is a unit for a women's cooperative for salting and smoking surface fish. A network for Moroccan women working in the marine fishing sector was established in 2013.

211. In the field of traditional industry, through the end of 2014, 64 "manufacturing houses" were created in rural areas to support traditional manufacturers. In 2015, that included 3,650 women in the field and 11 manufacturing houses. The goal is incorporate fair trade within women's cooperatives and the integration of a gender approach into the strategy for trademarking for traditional industry and marketing finished brands. By the end of 2014, 839 women's cooperatives had been created. That was 41.5 per cent of the total number of cooperatives, with 34,877 members. Fifteen traditional industry brands have been established or are in progress for traditional manufacturers, representing 40 per cent of all brands.

212. With regard to social integration through women's economic empowerment in rural areas, in 2015, the relevant sector supported 276 projects, with a financial envelope of 50,878,338 dirhams.

213. In 2015, as part of a Moroccan-German collaboration, implementation was launched of a programme to enhance the employability of women in rural areas of Morocco. It aimed to enhance neighbourhood services by implementing a project involving mobile units belonging to the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment. Four mobile units were acquired with a view to improving the employability of rural women in four regions. These units are designed to respond to the needs of the rural population, and offer a package of services directed at rural women, including the following:

- They translate sections of the guide to jobs and professions into Arabic and provide information on creating business and available training.
- They have introduced new services focused on improving life skills and practices, and some awareness workshops for rural women. Women account for 40 per cent of the beneficiaries of the programme.

Part IV

Article 15

The act setting conditions and rules for benefiting from the Family Solidarity Fund has been amended, as has the implementing decree for that law. A joint decision of the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Economy and Finance was issued with the following goals:

- Expanding the pool of beneficiaries to include children entitled to maintenance during marriage as well as children who are entitled to child support after the dissolution of the marriage contract;
- Simplifying procedures for qualifying for financial allocations;
- Widening the scope of the Fund's intervention for maintenance awarded by judicial decision to include the 12 months prior to the application for the benefit;
- Strengthening the mechanism for protecting the Fund's resources against fraud;
- Increasing the financial benefit granted to the family of a destitute wife and her children from 1,050 to 1,400 dirhams per month.

214. To raise awareness about the Fund, its objectives and how to benefit from its services, a communications plan was developed to include various actors and civil society organizations. The amendment contributed to increasing the number of judicial decisions in favour of the Fund's target group. By 2018, there had been a total of 4,542 decisions with a financial envelope of 46,699,409.58 dinars.

215. With regard to paragraph 17 of the Concluding Observations, measures have been taken to promote positive discrimination for women. They are granted access to legal assistance. Care cells have been activated. Personal status cases brought by divorced women are free of charge. Intake procedures have facilitated the access of women to the courts. Women social workers have been enlisted to implement the Family Code. Field campaigns have been conducted to document marriage contracts all over the Kingdom.

216. With regard to family courts, the Ministry of Justice has tried to universalize the use of separate buildings for family court sections subsidiary to the courts of first instance, in order to facilitate women's access to family justice. It equips these sections with women social workers to take care of women and children.

217. The public authorities have promoted gender equality in the use of traditional collective lands. They have implemented Ministry of the Interior circulars issued in 2010 and 2012 that urge the representatives of the traditional collective groups to include women in the registers of rights holders who benefit from in-kind and material compensation. In 2010, the Supreme Council for Religious Learning issued a fatwa affirming that women should benefit from the same material and in-kind benefits as men in real estate deals involving collective land. The 2010 Religious Endowments Code abolishes the favouritism granted to males over females. Article 113 provides that the dividend of family waqf endowments is to be divided equally among the male and female beneficiaries, unless otherwise stipulated by the person who originated the endowment⁹⁶.

218. The Cabinet approved three laws, the most important of which was Act No. 62-17 (August 2019) on administrative guardianship of traditional collectives, which provide for the enshrinement of equality between women and men in rights and duties.

Article 16

219. The Family Code has enshrined a set of rights to ensure the right to marriage and freedom of choice of a spouse for both women and men (article 25). It ensures equal rights both during a marriage and upon its dissolution. It ensures the couple's shared responsibility towards children (article 4). It guarantees divorced women the right to benefit from shared assets acquired during the marriage (article 49) and the right to divide property after the end of a marriage. It raises the age of marriage to 18 for both spouses (article 19). It restricts polygamy (articles 40 and 41). It places divorce under judicial supervision and makes divorce and the act of divorcing a spouse a right exercised by the husband and wife on an equal footing (article 78). It forbids a man from taking a second wife without the consent of the first (article 43). It adopts the "discord" ruler, which allows both men and women to divorce a spouse at the request of one of them because of discord. It regulates custody provisions based on the the best interests of the child and standardizes custody provisions for both sexes (articles 166 and 171).

220. Several measures have been taken to ensure proper application of the Code, of which the most important are as follows:

⁹⁶

- Special family justice sections have been created within the courts.
- Special human rights training is provided to judges and provisions have been made to incentivize them.
- Ongoing training of judges has been organized to allow optimal implementation of their tasks in the area of protecting human rights.
- Statistics on implementation of the Family Code application are published annually to allow associations and other actors to monitor implementation of that Code.
- Memorandums have been sent to all the public prosecutors to enforce provisions against violence against women.
- Liaison units have been formed with counselling centres at the public prosecutors' offices. They are overseen by a women Deputy Attorney General or Deputy Royal Prosecutor.
- Marriage verification campaigns are conducted to document marriages in order to preserve women's rights, which has resulted in a decrease in the number of undocumented marriages.
- The number of judgments issued to document marriage decreased from 16,332 in 2014 to 1,871 in 2016.

221. Implementation of the Code has made possible numerous gains. Documentation of marriage is on an upward trend, increasing from about 237,000 marriages concluded in 2004 to more than 280,000 documented marriages in 2017.

222. With regard to paragraph 37 of the Concluding Observations, implementation of the Code has helped to ensure greater stability at the level of polygamy, at 0.38 per cent of total marriage contracts concluded in 2016. The percentage of marriage certificates registered in 2012, 2013 and 2017 was a total of 0.26 per cent, ranging from 0.28 per cent in 2014 to 0.32 per cent in 2015.

223. The courts also made use of reconciliation procedures for 20,278 families in 2016 in divorce cases, which totalled 114,352 cases recorded by the family justice sections. Total marriage certificates for boys and girls under the age of eligibility saw a decline in 2017. There were 262,098 marriage certificates, down by more than 3 point points compared to 2016 (9.72 per cent).

224. With regard to paragraph 39 of the Concluding Observations, the number of documents recording property acquired in the course of marriage saw a relative increase. It rose from 312 in 2004 to 537 in 2017. In 2014 it was 1,607.

225. Article 16 of the Family Code has been amended to extend the interim period for hearing a marriage documentation case for an additional five years. That was under the the article in Act No. 102-15 amending Article 16 of Act No. 70-03 promulgating the Family Code, which was implemented in Dahir No. 2-16-1 of 12 January 2016 and published in the Official Gazette No. 6433 (January 2016).

226. In response to paragraph 35 of the Concluding Observations, the Public Prosecutor's Office sent a circular⁹⁷ to the prosecutors of the various courts (No. 20/3/29 (2018)), urging them to make sure to submit petitions to judges in line with the legislative intent to make marriage prior to the age of majority dependent on the court's approval and not to hesitate to oppose marriage applications that are not in the best interests of the minor. They should also submit petitions to judges to hold

⁹⁷ Office of the Public Prosecutor circular on the marriage of minors (Annex 23).

hearing to make minors aware of the the damage that can result from early marriage and make use of social assistance.

227. It should be noted that the Ministry of Justice reacted positively to a draft law to amend and augment article 20 of the Act No. 70-03 promulgating the Family Code, which places restrictions on the marriage of minors as follows:

- The minimum age of marriage under the age of eligibility has been set at 16 years, at the sole discretion competent family court judges.
- Marriage between minors is only permitted in cases where the age of the minor is between 16 and 18.
- Family judges must rely medical expertise and social research in granting permission to marry.
- Age proximity between the parties must be observed when one of them is a minor.

228. With regard to economic protection for the wife, cutting age jurisprudence may be cited. One example is the ruling issued by the Rabat Court of First Instance in October 2010 (No. 94 - File 2010/1/10), which recognized the wife's right to 50 per cent of the defendant's share after it was proven that she had worked hard⁹⁸ to develop the family's finances by establishing a company. A second example is the ruling the Casablanca Court of First Instance in April 2006 (No. 98-685/4), which affirmed that a wife's daily work, even in the home, is considered a productive contribution on the basis that the marriage contract does not obligate the wife to do housework.

229. To promote equality of rights within the family, a family mediation services programme has been set up to settle family disputes prior to going to court. It aims to spread awareness of the importance of family mediation and to develop professional techniques for its practice; to offer counselling services to maintain family cohesion; to support the creation and spread of family mediation centres; and to support partnerships with relevant associations. In 2014, the projects of 15 associations working in family mediation were supported in the amount of 2,536,600.00 dirhams. In 2015, 43 projects related to family mediation centres were supported, with a financial envelope of 15,412,977 dirhams.

230. In compliance with the provisions of the Constitution, the act creating the Advisory Council on Family and Children⁹⁹ was issued. It uses a participatory approach to monitor and track the situation of the family and children with respect to human rights and social and economic conditions, and to monitor the extent to which national programmes for the family and children meet the international commitments of Morocco. It offers opinions on national plans in those areas and stimulates public policy debate about the family and children. It ensures that all the relevant sectors and agencies are implementing national programmes.

Combating violence against women

231. With regard to paragraphs 17 and 21 of the Concluding Observations, the Kingdom of Morocco joined the fight against violence against women and girls early. It launched the 2008-2012 Tamkeen programme, a multi-sector programme to combat gender-based violence by empowering women and girls. Its offered services to

⁹⁸ The phrase "*kad wa-sa`ayah*" is customarily used to recognize the wife's efforts to increase the family wealth which gives her the right to her share in the event of divorce.

⁹⁹ Official Gazette No. 6490 (August 2016) (Annex 24).

women and girl victims of violence, and proved to be a model of multi-lateral partnership.¹⁰⁰

232. The Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development drafted Act No. 103-13 on combating violence against women in accordance with a participatory approach involving various actors. It was published in the Official Gazette on March 12, 2018¹⁰¹. It is based on the basic principles for countering that phenomenon, namely: punishing perpetrators of violence, prevention of violence, protection of victims of violence, and care for victims. The Act contains a range of legal provision to protect women from violence, the most important of which are as follows:

- It defines a precise conceptual framework that will help those carrying out interventions to identify and record acts and behaviours that fall under the category of violence against women, by defining the concept of violence and its various forms.¹⁰²
- It criminalizes certain acts as violence that harm women. That includes not allowing an expelled wife to return to the matrimonial home, forced marriage, violating the sanctity of a woman's body, and bad-faith squandering of or failure to provide family finances, and so on.
- It criminalizes sexual harassment, with stiffer penalties for the commission of that act depending on circumstances and the persons involved, such as relatives, co-workers, public security officers, and so on.
- It stiffens penalties for certain acts committed against "women in special situations". That includes violence against women with disabilities, minors, pregnant women or married or divorced women in the presence of their children or parents.
- New protective measures have been adopted. The spouse committing the violation is removed. The perpetrator is warned to desist in cases where threats are made, and forced to pledge not to commit violations. Nursing women are returned with the child they are nursing to the home. The perpetrator is prohibited from being in the vicinity of the victim or her home, and notified that he is prohibited from spending the couple's joint finances, and so on.
- The Act requires protective measures to be taken immediately, and specifies penalties for violations.
- Institutional frameworks have been adopted to coordinate among those responsible or intervening to combat and protect against violence against women, including members of the judiciary, national security agencies, the Royal Gendarmerie, the relevant government sectors, and so on.
- A system has been created to provide care to women victims of violence.
- A section was devoted to prevention. The public authorities are required to take measures to prevent violence against women.

233. On 28 March 2019, as part of the implementation of this law, the Cabinet approved the implementing decree for this law. It addresses a range of regulatory situations that have largely to do with mechanisms for the care of women victims of violence. The decree will enable the creation of the following:

¹⁰⁰ 13 government sectors, eight United Nations system agencies and more than 40 civil associations.

¹⁰¹ Official Gazette No. 6655 (March 2018) (Annex 33).

¹⁰² Annex 33.

- National, regional and local committees to provide care to women victims of violence;
- Central and non-centralized care cells in the courts; the sectors in charge of justice, health, youth and women; the General Directorate of National Security and the High Command of the Royal Gendarmerie.

234. In order to implement the Act on combating violence against women and its implementing decree, a national commission for the care of women victims of violence has been set up. It has important powers under the law. In particular, it ensures communication and coordination among various interventions to counter violence against women and contributes to the development of mechanisms for improving and expanding the victim care system. It also has other related competencies to strengthen mechanisms of cooperation with various actors and submit proposals and reports.

235. In addition to this ongoing legislative work, the Kingdom of Morocco is making parallel efforts to combat the phenomenon, particularly with regard to monitoring violence, providing legal protection for victims and prosecuting perpetrators. That has been reflected in the judicial process. Judges have become firmly convinced that domestic violence can be documented by a variety of means, including doctor's certificates, photographs, exams and a variety of other available evidence (Article 286 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).

236. A significant amendment was made to the Criminal Code in 2011 regarding protection against crimes of violence against women. A section was added on the protection of victims and witnesses containing the following protective measures for victims: physical protection for the victim and her family members; changing her place of residence; non-disclosure of the details of her identity; ensuring physical and psychological recovery by having victims examined by qualified doctors and provided with social care; informing victims of their right to file a civil suit before an investigating judge or the court; and informing victims of their rights under the law.

237. With regard to measures taken to monitor the phenomenon, an institutionalized information system on violence against women has been developed, aimed at collecting various data on women and girls who are victims of violence at the regional and national levels. In order to develop this system, a protocol was signed in 2014 for the exchange of data among the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the General Directorate of National Security and the Royal Gendarmerie.

238. Between June 2009 and January 2010, the High Commission for Planning completed a national survey on violence against women, covering the entire national territory and including a sample of 9,534 women aged 18 to 64. In 2019, in order to obtain updated data and statistics on this phenomenon and to measure indicators of violence under the Sustainable Development Goals, the High Commission for Planning launched a second round of field research on violence against women. It will enable the collection of data on the extent of the phenomenon nationally and regionally for the 15-74 age group and calculation of its economic and social cost.

239. In 2019, the relevant ministry conducted a second round of national research on the prevalence of violence against women. Its objectives are as follows:

- Provide updated data and statistics on violence against women;
- Determine the prevalence of violence against women at the national level, according to the milieu in which it occurs and the forms it takes as defined for in the Act on combating violence against women (103-13);

- Identify the characteristics and socio-economic milieu of both the victims and perpetrators of violence against women;
- Make use of the results of the national research to identify initiatives to eliminate the phenomenon.

240. The research covered 13,543 women between the ages of 18 and 64 in different regions. The Ministry announced the preliminary results of this research in 2019, which showed that the prevalence of violence against women was 54.4 per cent in 2018 compared to 62.8 per cent in 2009. The distribution by area shows that women in urban areas were more vulnerable to violence, with a percentage of 55.8 compared to 51.6 per cent among women in rural areas. The results of the research also showed that psychological violence was the most prevalent. About half of women reported experiencing that form of violence, or 49.1 per cent, followed by economic violence at 16.7 per cent, physical violence at 15.9 per cent and sexual violence at 14.3 per cent.

241. In 2014, the National Observatory for Violence against Women was created as a national institutional mechanism that, in addition to Government sectors, includes, civil society, research and study centres, and universities. Its main functions are monitoring and vigilance through the compilation of regional and national statistical data.

242. In 2015 and 2016, the Observatory issued annual reports based on data collected by the institutional units that serve women victims of violence in the Kingdom's courts, hospitals, the General Directorate of National Security and the Royal Gendarmerie. Data in the second 2016 report showed a downward trend. Cases of physical violence registered by the courts decreased from 12,148 cases of physical violence in 2014 to 10,455 in 2015 to 8,717 in 2016.¹⁰³ That is a decrease of 28 per cent.

243. The Royal Gendarmerie has worked to reinforce the judicial police officers, including women officers, present in its centres to provide care for women victims of violence. In 2017, 9,376 cases were registered, of which 8,339 were resolved. In 2016, 9,801 cases were registered, of which 8,658 were resolved. In 2015, 12,122 cases were registered. In 2018, 9,433 cases were registered, of which 8,390 were resolved. Some 1,303 persons were arrested and brought to justice, and 5,472 testified. Some 9,789 of them were victims of whom 1263 were minors.

244. The Royal Gendarmerie's facilities made available data disaggregated by type of violence, its forms, geographical distribution, the age of the victims and the location of the violence.

Table 17

Statistics on violence against women registered at the Royal Gendarmerie facilities (2018)

<i>Victim age group</i>	<i>Sexual violence</i>	<i>Physical violence</i>
18-	623	640
18-30	425	2 177
30-45	319	3 441
45+	131	2 033
Total	1 498	8 291

¹⁰³ Observatory reports, 2015-2016 (Annex 34).

245. Government mechanisms to provide care for women victims of violence have been expanded by creating intake cells at the courts of first instance. There are now 88 such cells nationally. They undertake the tasks of listening and offering psychological support to victims. A plan for improving the judicial process has been designed, and is updated every year. It focuses on building the capacities of people working in the care cells. Social workers were also recruited (the number rose from 81 in 2008 to 298 in 2015, an increase of 268 per cent). Child-specific spaces have been created within family justice sections. The experience of the women social workers has been disseminated to different sections, and they receive continuous social research training, especially with regard to the marriage of minors.

Table 18

Increased recruitment of social workers at the Ministry of Justice

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of social workers</i>	<i>Percentage increase</i>
2008	81	
2010	105	30
2011	202	149
2013	273	237
2015	298	268

246. Medical and psychological care units have been created for women victims of violence and put in place in health institutions. Medical evidence can be obtained free of charge. There are 99 such integrated units, 16 in local hospitals, 64 in district hospitals, 11 in regional hospitals and 11 in university centres.¹⁰⁴ More than 17,290 battered women and 5,244 children victims of violence were served in 2016. Procedures and systems for taking care of women victims of violence have been developed, including a care protocol. The system for exchanging information among institutional partners to combat violence against women has been strengthened. The capacities of health professionals and social workers have been raised.

In October 2007, intake units for women victims of violence were created at judicial police facilities, and they have been restructured. Priority has been placed on having them headed by females so as to enhance the services offered, especially since the enactment of the Act on combating violence against women.

Table 19

Cases registered involving violence against women

<i>Victim age group</i>	<i>Sexual violence</i>	<i>Physical violence</i>
18-30	623	6 940
31-45	283	6 600
46-60	58	3 052
61 or younger	14	610
Total	978	17 202

¹⁰⁴ Article 5 of Minister of Health Decision No. 1299-13, April 2013 (and Ministerial Circular No. *mim sin* 1040 and Ministerial Circular No. 162 *mim mim ayn mim*. (Annex 25).

Table 20
Violence by age group

<i>Year</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>
Number of cases	15 573	18 110	20 488	19 199	16 501	15 012	16 873

Table 21
Judgements handed down against defendants in cases of violence:

<i>Year</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>
Number of judgments	11 001	10 684	11 786	11 851	12 062	12 461	13 525

247. At the local level, in 2015, 40 new multi-functional spaces were created, specializing in the care of women victims of violence (listening, guidance, assistance and temporary accommodation), in addition to placement and guidance for women in difficult situations. Specifications were set for those spaces in accordance with international standards. In partnership with associations operating in that area, listening centres and legal guidance for women victims of violence are supported in accordance with an approach that extended the duration from one year to three years to ensure continuity and quality of the services provided by these centres to women victims of violence. Between 2012 and 2018, some 264 centres were supported in the amount of 80.3 million dirhams.

248. In 2013, a four-year inter-sectoral awareness programme to combat violence against women was launched. It promoted awareness the dangers of violence and discrimination against women and facilitated collaboration among the various actors in the overall social mobilization. It institutionalized cross-sectoral partnership to raise awareness of the fight against violence against women.

249. The national campaign against violence against women has been institutionalized as an annual awareness campaign aimed at all men and women citizens. It covers all regions of the Kingdom. The 2012 campaign addressed problems associated with that phenomenon. The 2013 campaign focused on women wage workers. The 2014 campaign focused on raising awareness of various forms of violence and exploitation against women. It organized regional meetings with the participation of the National Mutual Aid Society and local nongovernmental organizations. In 2015, the third campaign was launched under the slogan “Final warning of punishment for perpetrators of violence”. It highlighted the various classes of perpetrators of violence against women, and included 12 regional meetings at the local level in collaboration with elements from the social sector. The 2016 and 2017 campaigns focused on the theme of “violence against women in public places.” The results of the first and second annual report of the National Observatory for Violence against Women cast light on the high rates of violence against women in public places and the diversity of its forms. The 15th National Campaign was more qualitative than its predecessors, given the large target groups. Attention was more focused on the issue of reducing violence against women, from the centre to the regions and their local subdivisions. One of the results was the adoption of the Rabat declaration on ending violence against women in public spaces, which established a basis for cooperation with various parties nationally and locally. The 2018 campaign adopted the theme of collective community mobilization to eliminate violence.

250. The Government has also put in place programmes for forums and lectures on religious directives relating to women and the family that reject all forms of violence. They have covered the entire national territory, in coordination with the local religious councils. Lessons have been devoted to the topic of rejecting psychological and

physical violence against women. In 2015, there were 589,728 such lessons given by 5,280 male preachers and 863 female preachers. The Friday sermon on 30 November 2018 was devoted to the theme of combating discrimination and violence against women. It was delivered in 24,500 mosques all over the national territory.

251. The Ministry of Justice is strengthening the capacities of persons working in the field of combating violence against women by integrating human rights materials into basic training programmes for judges. From 2012 to 2015, 852 judicial attachés were trained in human rights and gender equality. In addition, there were training programmes for other officials and staff. That included 1,523 staff working in the women and children care units in the courts and in the family justice sections. The Royal Gendarmerie administered a training programme for 1,000 beneficiaries intended to establish standardized procedures for the care of women victims of violence. A procedural manual was drafted for judicial police officers and circulated to all Royal Gendarmerie stations and units.

252. Between 2009 and 2018, the General Directorate of National Security held 55 ongoing training courses for 1029 staff on legal and human rights approaches, intervention techniques, the role of forensic medicine in cases of violence against women, listening techniques, and the latest updates to the information system on violence against women.

253. The Ministry of Justice is working to strengthen the capabilities of justice professionals, including judges, staff, court clerks and female and male social workers through training programmes and outreach days on the fight against violence against women. The Public Prosecutor's Office has worked to strengthen the capabilities of prosecuting judges in the field of protecting the women's rights. A study day on was held on criminal protections for women under Act 103-10 (November 2018 in Rabat), as part of the implementation of paragraph 17 of the Concluding Observations, which called for intensified awareness campaigns and training on newly adopted legislation for prosecutors, lawyers and judges. The Public Prosecutor's Office issued Circular No. 31 *sin ra' nun ayn* (June 2018) to public prosecutors in all the courts on implementing the new provisions of Act No. 103-13.