



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

List of issues and questions in relation to the eighth periodic report of Iraq*

Women and peace and security

1. In relation to the second national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), covering the period 2021–2024, and the evaluation conducted on the needs and situations of religious minorities, including Christian, Sabaeen Mandaean, Shabak and Yazidi families (para. 10),¹ please provide information on the evaluation outcomes related to women belonging to religious minorities. Please also provide information on the third national plan, including on its priorities, the budget allocated, the participation of women in its development, its implementation and the integration of lessons learned from the second plan, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. Please provide information on the composition and activities of the national network of female peace mediators (para. 14), including the outcomes of its plan of action for the period 2023–2025, as noted in the report submitted by the State Party under the fourth cycle of the universal periodic review ([A/HRC/WG.6/48/IRQ/1](#), para. 34).

Constitutional and legislative framework

2. Please provide information on:

(a) The outcomes of the examination of article 41 of the Constitution (2005), with a view to repealing the article, by the special committee for constitutional amendments established by the Council of Representatives, as noted in the information received from the State Party on follow-up to the concluding observations on its seventh periodic report ([CEDAW/C/IRQ/FCO/7](#), para. 1 of the section entitled “Constitutional and legislative framework”);

(b) The adoption of the draft law on protection from domestic violence (para. 20) and the amendment of the Combating Domestic Violence Act (Act No. 8 (2011)) in the Kurdistan Region (para. 25);

* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group on 26 February 2025.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, paragraph numbers refer to the eighth periodic report of the State Party ([CEDAW/C/IRQ/8](#)).



(c) The 2025 amendments to the Personal Status Act (Act No. 188 (1959)), as endorsed by the Council of Representatives, and the legal implications of those amendments in relation to marriage and the minimum age of marriage and to divorce, custody and inheritance, including on the basis of religion.

3. Please provide information on the status of the adoption of, and amendments to, other relevant legislation, regulations and directives aimed at addressing direct and indirect discrimination, as well as intersecting forms of discrimination against women and girls, and on their specific impact on women and girls, including:

(a) The draft laws on sectarian and racial incitement and hate speech and on the protection of ethnic and religious minorities (para. 13);

(b) The amendments to the Penal Code (Act No. 111 (1969)) (para. 19), the Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 23 (1971)) (para. 21) and the Nationality Act (No. 26 (2006)), including in relation to the provisions that permit men to “punish” their wives and that enable the cessation of proceedings, such as in cases of rape, if the offender marries the victim ([CEDAW/C/IRQ/CO/7](#), paras. 13, 14 (b), 27 and 28 (a));

(c) The recent legislation affecting amnesty, property restitution and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and girls.

4. Please provide detailed information on the data available in the database of domestic legal provisions that discriminate against women and girls and on the specific measures taken by the Supreme Judicial Council since 2017 to review existing legislation with a view to amending or repealing the legal provisions that discriminate against women and girls ([A/HRC/WG.6/48/IRQ/1](#), para. 298).

Women’s access to justice

5. In the light of the Committee’s general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women’s access to justice, please provide information on:

(a) The measures taken to strengthen the capacity of judges, prosecutors, police officers, corrections officers, other law enforcement officials and lawyers in relation to gender-responsive procedures and women’s rights and to address victim-blaming beliefs and judicial gender bias;

(b) The number and percentage of women in each of the above-mentioned professions;

(c) The status, scope and provisions of the draft law on legal aid, including for women and girls who are victims of domestic and sexual violence and of trafficking (para. 82), and the specific measures taken to institutionalize and strengthen access to quality legal aid services for women and girls.

6. Please provide information on:

(a) The number of cases in which women have been sentenced to death and the number of women executed in the past four years, including in the Kurdistan Region, with data disaggregated by age and type of offence charged;

(b) The measures taken to prevent, investigate and ensure accountability for allegations of surveillance, harassment, threats, reprisals and arbitrary detention faced by women human rights defenders and journalists.

National machinery for the advancement of women

7. The Committee notes that the Department of Women’s Empowerment fulfils the role of a ministry for women, has a similar mandate to that of the former Ministry of

State for Women's Affairs and has been established at the highest level of Government, as part of the Secretariat of the Cabinet; and that the National Council for Women's Affairs serves as the executive arm of the Department and that several high committees remain functional, including the High Committee for the Advancement of Women, the Higher Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Rural Women and a high committee to empower women politically (paras. 28, 30–32 and 43; and [CEDAW/C/IRQ/FCO/7](#), paras. 1 and 2 of the section entitled “National machinery for the advancement of women”). In that regard, please explain:

- (a) The human, technical and financial resources allocated to the Department of Women's Empowerment and to the High Council for Women and Development in the Kurdistan Region; whether the resources of the Department are comparable to those that were available to the former Ministry of State for Women's Affairs; and whether those resources allow the Department to effectively influence the formulation, design and implementation of public policies on gender equality and to assume a coordination and oversight role in the preparation and implementation of legislation in the field of gender equality and in mainstreaming gender perspectives into all laws and policies;
- (b) The differences in mandates, status, authorities and reporting lines between the Department of Women's Empowerment, the National Council for Women's Affairs, the high committees, the administrative structures for the empowerment of women that have been established in government and governorate-level institutions (para. 28) and any other relevant government entities; as well as the updated numbers of such administrative structures, the plans for their expansion and the measures taken to reduce duplication of mandates and inefficiencies in the implementation of gender equality strategies and policies;
- (c) The amount and specific budget allocations made under the gender-responsive budget that has been piloted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (para. 16), the outcomes of any impact assessments that have been conducted on the effectiveness of that approach by the committee chaired by the Deputy Secretary of the Cabinet and whether there are plans to improve and replicate the approach across government entities, including in the Kurdistan Region.

National human rights institution

8. Please provide information on the measures taken to strengthen the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights and to address the recommendations made by the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in 2024, including with regard to ensuring that government officials are not involved in the decision-making organs of the Commission, advocating for the expedited appointment of its Board of Commissioners, amending the law to prevent prolonged vacancies in its leadership and strengthening its efforts to address all human rights violations.

Gender stereotypes and harmful practices

9. Please provide further information on the implementation of the National Strategy for Iraqi Women (2023–2030) and the phased sectoral plans, in particular their impact in addressing gender stereotypes and harmful practices (para. 60).

10. Please provide comprehensive data, disaggregated by sex, type of offence charged, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability status, geographical region and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, on court cases in which articles 128, 130 and 131 of the Penal Code, in relation to the defence of “honour” as a mitigating circumstance (para. 65), have been invoked. Please also provide information on studies conducted to assess the extent of

underreporting of relevant cases and the impact of those legal provisions on women and girls, including whether they play a role in legitimizing patriarchal attitudes, harmful practices and acts of gender-based violence committed in the name of so-called “honour”.

Gender-based violence against women and girls

11. Please provide further information on:

- (a) The implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Act (No. 8 (2021)), including on the applications for support and reparations submitted by women and girls who are survivors of various forms of violence committed by Da'esh and on the corresponding decisions issued by the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs (paras. 72–77 and 302), with data disaggregated by age, ethnicity, disability status, religion, processing time and the types of reparations and support provided, including financial and psychosocial support;
- (b) Whether any discussions are being held to broaden the eligibility criteria for women and girls under the Yazidi Survivors Act and on the reported addition of a new precondition that requires the filing of a prior criminal complaint to be eligible to file an application for support and reparations under the Act, including the rationale for such a requirement and the data on the number of applications filed by women and girls before and after the requirement came into effect;
- (c) The number of investigations, prosecutions and convictions and the sentences imposed on perpetrators in cases of crimes committed by Da'esh against women and girls, including in relation to abductions, as well as the reparations provided to the victims as a result of those proceedings.

12. Please provide information on:

- (a) The training plans that have been developed to ensure that the draft law on protection from domestic violence is effectively and promptly implemented once it has been enacted (para. 94), and the measures taken to effectively reinforce the legal protection of women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence and to ensure that perpetrators are held criminally accountable;
- (b) The measures taken to strengthen the human, technical and financial resources and expand the geographical coverage of the Directorate for Family and Child Protection from Domestic Violence and its departments in Baghdad and other governorates, as well as the Directorate for Combating Violence against Women in the Kurdistan Region, including to support the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women (2018–2030) (para. 59) and to increase the availability of shelters and victim support services for women and girls;
- (c) Disaggregated data available in the database of the Ministry of the Interior on cases of gender-based violence and on the unified data system supported by the Central Statistical Organization and the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office (paras. 112 and 114).

Trafficking in women and girls

13. Please provide information on the measures taken to prevent and address trafficking in women and girls for the purposes of forced and temporary marriages (para. 128) and to ensure their early identification and referral to appropriate services. Please provide comprehensive data, disaggregated by age, nationality, geographical region, type of trafficking and type of support provided, on the number of victims of trafficking in women and girls who have received support.

Participation in political and public life

14. Please provide information on the status of the draft amendment to the Political Parties Act (No. 36 (2015)) and its impact on women (para. 42). With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/IRQ/CO/7](#), para. 26 (c)) and its general recommendation No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, please provide information on the measures taken to remove barriers and ensure the equal participation of women in political and public life, including in high-level leadership positions in all sectors, and the representation of women belonging to ethnic and religious minorities.

Education

15. In the light of the Committee's general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education, please provide information on:

- (a) The implementation of the National Education Strategy (2022–2031) and the plan to increase school enrolment and reduce dropout rates covering the period 2020–2030 (paras. 171 and 177), in particular in relation to the education of girls and the measures taken to reduce dropout rates among girls and address gender disparity in access to education at all levels, in all fields of study and in all areas of the country;
- (b) The legal amendments to extend compulsory education to the secondary education level (para. 168), and the measures taken to increase the transition rate for girls from primary to secondary education;
- (c) The measures taken to review and amend school curricula and textbooks beyond the integration of human rights principles, specifically to remove discriminatory content and gender stereotypes;
- (d) The integration of age-appropriate sexuality education at all levels of education and on the relevant training provided to teachers;
- (e) Comprehensive data, disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, disability status, socioeconomic status and geographical region, on enrolment, completion and dropout rates and on the number of teachers and faculty members in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Employment

16. Please provide information on:

- (a) The implementation of the plan for the economic empowerment of women for the period 2019–2024 ([A/HRC/WG.6/48/IRQ/1](#), paras. 239 and 280) and the National Strategy to Prevent and Reduce Inequalities in the World of Work (2024–2028) as it pertains to women, including women in rural and remote areas and women belonging to ethnic and religious minorities;
- (b) The measures taken to increase the participation of women in the labour market and reduce the gender pay gap, including by addressing the root causes of occupational segregation and wage disparities in all regions;
- (c) The measures taken to improve and harmonize the legislative framework for labour, including the adoption of a new labour law in the Kurdistan Region in 2023 containing provisions on facilitating the economic participation of women; and to properly enforce the existing legislation to prevent discrimination against women in employment and retirement, and ensure their legal and social protection, including the expansion and licensing of affordable, high-quality childcare facilities and guaranteed access to social security for all women, irrespective of their sector of

work, marital status, disability status, geographical region or migration status (paras. 184, 189 and 190);

(d) The results of the survey conducted on women's employment in the formal and informal economies, the data available in the data collection systems relating to informal work conducted by women (para. 310) and any studies conducted on the impact of sponsorship systems on women migrant workers.

Health

17. Please provide information on:

(a) The measures taken to amend the legislative framework to legalize abortion in cases of rape, incest, threats to the life or health of the pregnant woman and severe fetal impairment (para. 245), to decriminalize abortion in all other cases and to ensure that women have access to safe abortion and post-abortion services, including through the enforcement of the regulations and the implementation of the instructions issued by the Ministry of Health (para. 247);

(b) The measures taken to continue reducing maternal mortality rates across the country, including by improving access for women and girls to high-quality obstetric services and prenatal and postnatal care (paras. 237 and 240) and by improving and expanding healthcare infrastructure in urban and rural areas;

(c) The availability of sexual and reproductive health services and information for women and girls, including access to affordable modern methods of contraception, especially in rural and remote areas.

Women in detention

18. Please provide information on the measures taken to consider non-custodial measures and improve the situation of women in detention, in particular with regard to conditions of hygiene, food and health, including sexual and reproductive health services, protection from gender-based violence and discrimination, and access to independent and confidential complaint procedures, in line with the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules).

Refugee, returnee and internally displaced women and girls

19. Please provide information on:

(a) Whether there are any distinctions, in law and in practice, between the services and reintegration support provided to internally displaced women and girls and those provided to women and girls returning from abroad, including from the north-eastern region of the Syrian Arab Republic;

(b) Updated and comprehensive data on the number of returnee, internally displaced and refugee women and girls, disaggregated by age, nationality, ethnicity, disability status, place of and reason for displacement, when relevant, place of reintegration or settlement and type of support provided;

(c) The measures taken to address the social stigma, intersecting forms of discrimination and challenges in gaining access to legal documentation faced by returnee, internally displaced and refugee women and girls;

(d) Whether Act No. 76 (2017), concerning the residence of foreigners, has been amended (para. 307) and, if so, how women and girls have been affected.

Climate change and disaster risk reduction

20. In the light of the Committee's general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change, please provide information on the steps taken to ensure the full and effective participation of women and girls in decision-making processes on climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster response and disaster risk reduction. Please provide information on the integration of a gender perspective in relevant legislation, policies and programmes, including in relation to rural development and climate-resilient agricultural practices.

Marriage and family relations

21. Please provide information on:

(a) The measures taken to prohibit child marriage, in law and in practice, including the amendment of discriminatory legal provisions based on sex; and to address the prevalence of child marriage, including its root causes related to parental preferences, including the dowry system, and to socioeconomic factors and religious and traditional practices and customs;

(b) The specific measures taken to enforce the legal prohibition of unregistered and forced marriages (paras. 253, 254 and 257), including information on specific cases of judicial action and protection measures;

(c) Comprehensive data collected on child marriage since the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted in 2018, disaggregated by age, sex, disability status, religion, socioeconomic status, geographical region and justification for marriage.

22. Please also provide information on:

(a) The measures taken to address discriminatory legal provisions and judicial practices that disadvantage women in relation to child custody and guardianship, inheritance and other family law matters;

(b) The measures taken to discourage and prohibit polygamy, and whether women in polygamous unions have access to legal recourse, such as the ability to promptly seek a divorce on the grounds of polygamy and to seek child custody and support.

Data collection and analysis

23. Please provide information on the development of a comprehensive database on women's issues (para. 309), the types of data collected through that database and the specific measures taken to utilize the database to support the identification and analysis of gaps in the implementation of, and to inform improvements to, relevant policies and strategies. Please clarify whether the data contained in the database is accessible to the public. Please also provide relevant data on women and girls collected through the national population census conducted in November 2024.