



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports submitted by
parties to the Convention under article 35**

List of issues in relation to the initial report of Morocco

Addendum

Replies of Morocco to the list of issues*

[Date received: 15 May 2017]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



A. Purpose and general obligations (arts. 1-4)**1. Please clarify whether the Convention has been incorporated into domestic law and whether it can be invoked before the courts.**

1. Since ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009, Morocco has directed its efforts at harmonizing domestic law with the provisions of the Convention. That process was facilitated by the fact that the Constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco has established that international treaties the country has ratified take precedence over domestic law (once they have been published), while the preamble to the Constitution specifically states that all forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of disability, are to be banned and combatted. Article 34 of the Constitution stipulates the need for the public authorities to formulate and implement policies designed to benefit persons with disabilities by addressing the need to “rehabilitate persons with physical, motorial and mental disabilities, integrate them into social and civil life and facilitate their enjoyment of the rights and freedoms enjoyed by all persons”. On a separate front, and as a way to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Framework Law 97.13 was passed in 2015. It seeks to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities and comprehends most of the principles contained in the Convention.

2. As for the second part of the question, in line with the aforementioned rule of precedence, the courts can indeed invoke the provisions of the Convention. In fact, the motivations of rulings and sentences issued by the Moroccan judiciary have referenced provisions from other international treaties the country has ratified.

2. Please provide information on:**(a) The measures taken to fully harmonize laws and policies with the Convention, in particular to ensure that the concept of disability, as stated in Framework Law 97-13 on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, is fully in line with the human rights model of disability.**

3. It should be pointed out that the Government of Morocco has shown a strong commitment to harmonising domestic legislation with relevant international treaties, and Framework Law 97.13 represented a paradigm shift in that direction. The Law, in fact, lays down general guidelines for the State in the field of disability and helps to translate general principles and the strategic national vision into a legal reality in all areas. Thus, the adoption of the Framework Law was a first step towards harmonizing national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and a backdrop for the implementation of the public policy to advance the rights of that category of persons. It should also be pointed out that workshops on harmonization are a priority part of the strategic vision of that policy.

4. Also in the context of harmonization and in line with article 33 of the Convention, a new government coordinating mechanism has been created: the Interministerial Commission to monitor the implementation of strategies and programmes for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. At the same time, two new decrees have been adopted to guarantee access to the public sector labour market for that category of persons. This will be achieved by strengthening the quota system, which in some cases is in excess of 7 per cent.

(b) The modalities and time frame for the implementation of the Framework Law and specify if it covers all persons with disabilities.

5. The implementation of the Framework Law is linked to a package of associated legislation and regulations, due to be issued as part of the legislative programme during the mandate of the current Government (2016-2021), although some provisions, notably those regarding the quota system for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector, were already implemented in 2016. Out of respect for the constitutional principle of the equality of all persons before the law, the Framework Law covers all persons with

disabilities, without exception. This is in line with the definition of the concept of disability contained in article 2 of the Framework Law, which is notable for its conformity to the text of the Convention.

3. Please provide information on:

(a) The resources allocated for the implementation of the integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities (2017-2026).

| <i>Public policy mechanisms</i> | <i>Time frame</i> | <i>Overall cost in Dirhams</i> | <i>Other costs</i> | <i>Status</i> |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| National action plan to promote the rights of persons with disabilities | 5 years (2017-2021) | 6 805 073 180.00 | Mobilizing human and logistical resources in the relevant areas | In the course of final ratification by the Interministerial Commission to monitor the implementation of strategies and programmes for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities |

Estimation of the costs of the five-year national plan 2017-2021

| <i>Area of focus of the national plan</i> | <i>Estimated budget in Dirhams</i> |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Prevention of the causes of disability | 2 374 659 500.00 |
| Inclusive environment | 1 031 591 760.00 |
| Appropriate and reliable public services | 1 218 970 000.00 |
| Guaranteed standards of living and suitable work | 2 060 530 000.00 |
| Citizens' participation | 7 650 000.00 |
| Transversal workshops (system for evaluating disabilities, information systems, unification of sign language, national disability observatory) | 111 671 920.00 |
| Total in Moroccan dirhams (DH) | DH 6 805 073 180.00 |
| Total in United States dollars | US\$ 686 188 960.00 |

6. International partnership and cooperation agreements will be concluded with stakeholders working in the field of disability. Likewise, thematic programmes will be developed to address those aspects of the integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities that require the mobilization of additional financial resources.

(b) Concrete mechanisms for the consultation and participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in legislative and administrative processes and other matters that affect them.

7. Participative democracy is a basic principle consecrated in the 2011 Constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco, a principle that the Government takes into account when formulating its disability policies. In that context, it should be pointed out that the Ministry has undertaken wide-ranging consultations with persons with disabilities and civil society organizations that operate in the field of disability: in fact, it published the draft of the Framework Law on the website of the general secretariat of the Government then drafted the text taking account of proposals submitted. The drafting of public policy was also opened for consultation through seminars and meetings with all relevant actors at the provincial level. In addition to the public consultation mechanism, which is in constant and

regular communication with the authorities responsible for the issue of disability, the new Constitution gives citizens the right to participate in the decision-making process through other mechanisms. For example, under article 14 they have the right to present legislative applications while under article 15 they can submit petitions to the public authorities.

8. Persons with disabilities are also consulted vis-à-vis the work of the National Human Rights Council, which is an independent, constitutional and pluralistic body whose functions include monitoring and following up on human rights issues at the national and provincial levels, undertaking the necessary investigations and inquiries, and addressing complaints from citizens. Persons with disabilities are duly represented within the Council and its structures, both on the Council itself and in its provincial committees. The Economic, Social and Environmental Council is another area in which groups operating in the field of disability are consulted and involved.

9. Within that same context and in order to provide a mechanism for the involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities, in 2017 the Ministry of the Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development launched a project to establish the National Centre for Monitoring, Research and Documentation on Disability. The membership of the new body will include representatives from organizations of persons with disabilities as well as representatives from the government sector, universities, research centres and other experts.

10. Organizations of persons with disabilities also participate in drafting policies, programmes and legislation that aim to promote disability rights. They do so through seminars, meetings and workshops where ideas and proposals from persons with disabilities are examined and discussed. Given below is a list of meetings in which such organizations have participated, and the relevant programmes:

- **Drafting of an integrated public policy to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.** The drafting process involved the following series of thematic workshops at the provincial level:
 - Workshop on prevention and medical services, held in Tangiers on 6 May 2013 and attended by 30 representatives from government departments and public institutions and by 20 networks, federations and alliances active in the field of disability rights;
 - Workshop on education, held in Fez on 21 May 2013 and attended by 30 representatives from government departments and public institutions and agencies, and by 40 associations active in the field of disability rights;
 - Workshop on professional formation and integration, held in Ouarzazate on 4 June 2013 and attended by 47 representatives from civil society organizations working in the field of the professional formation of persons with disabilities, both in Ouarzazate and in other regions of the country;
 - Workshop on accessibility and social participation, held in Marrakech on 18 June 2013 and attended by 30 representatives from government departments and public institutions at the central and local levels, and 37 community leaders active in the field of promoting disability rights in the Marrakech-Safi region;
 - Workshop on reception facilities, held in Marrakech on 19 June 2013 and attended by 50 disability associations.
- **Drafting of a government action plan for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities:**
 - Workshop with networks operating in the area of disability to discuss ways to enrich the draft national action plan; the workshop took place in Rabat on 28 January 2016 and involved 20 networks of disability associations.
- **Drafting of Framework Law 97.13**, which promotes and protects the rights of persons with disabilities. Civil society was involved in the drafting process over two phases:

Phase one

- A national seminar was convened on 18 March 2008 by the Ministry of Solidarity, Women, the Family, and Social Development to discuss the background of the draft text of the law to reinforce the rights of persons with disabilities. There was broad participation including from civil society organizations;
- Four provincial consultations on the draft of the text were held: in Casablanca on 16 March 2008, in Laayoune on 21 June 2008, in Meknes on 30 June 2008 and in Agadir on 12 July 2008. Participants included the external offices of a number of ministries as well as local authorities and representatives from local civil society;
- A committee made up of ministerial officials and civil society representatives was formed to draft the text of the law on the basis of the results and recommendations that had emerged from the consultative process. Civil society was represented on the committee by members of the National Alliance for Persons with Disabilities as well as by experts, university professors and representatives of the Alaouite Organization for the Blind.

Phase two

- Dialogue was opened with a number of actors within Government and society in the context of the drafting of an integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. The process, which was launched by the Ministry in March 2013, provided an opportunity for civil society, including the National Alliance for Persons with Disabilities, to air its views over the course of five thematic workshops held in Rabat on 23 April 2013, in Tangiers on 6 May 2013, in Fez on 21 May 2013, in Ouarzazate on 4 June 2013 and in Marrakech on 18 and 19 June 2013. During these consultative meetings, considerable time was dedicated to the specific subject of drafting of a new framework law on the rights of persons with disabilities that was in line with the Constitution and with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- **Developing national indicators to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.** The Ministry of Solidarity, Women, the Family, and Social Development, with the support of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the participation of government departments, national institutions and organizations of persons with disabilities, has worked to develop indicators to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Morocco. In that context, three workshops were held:
 - Workshop held in Rabat on 27 October 2015 in which 15 government departments took part along with 5 networks representing associations working in the field of disability;
 - Workshop held in Rabat on 28 March 2016, which focused on discussing draft indicators prepared by 24 networks of associations working in the field of disability;
 - Two-day training course held in Rabat on 30 and 31 March 2016 to build the capacities of national human rights groups and of members of the technical commission that emanated from the Interministerial Commission to monitor the implementation of strategies and programmes for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.
- **Activating the Social Solidarity Support Fund.** The Fund was created as a new support mechanism to consolidate the rights of persons with disabilities. It is part of an integrated social policy that, by taking new directions and incorporating a rights-based approach, implements the results of a series of workshops on the causes and consequences of all forms of social exclusion of persons with disabilities. In that

context, the following consultative and informative gatherings were held to examine the standards to apply in operating the services of the Fund:

- Consultative meeting on operating the services of the Fund, held on 16 June 2015 and attended by 125 persons representing associations, networks, alliances active in the field of disability. The purpose of the gathering was to propose standards and procedures in the various areas covered by the Fund through discussion with relevant stakeholders;
- Informative meeting to present the final draft of specifications and guidelines, as well as information from other participants, at the launch of the Fund's services for beneficiaries. The meeting was held on 20 October 2015 and was attended by representatives from government departments and national institutions as well as from associations and federations active in the area of disability.

B. Specific rights

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

4. Please indicate whether the denial of reasonable accommodation is defined as a prohibited ground of discrimination in domestic law.

11. Article 2 of Framework Law 97.13 to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities includes a number of conceptual definitions. One of these is that of reasonable accommodation, which is considered to be a package of accommodations and adaptations which may be required in specific situations in order to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to enjoy and exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms on an equal footing with others. Comparing that provision with paragraph 7 of the same article — which defines discrimination on the basis of disability as any act, omission, behaviour or procedure that aims to deny persons with disabilities, by reason of that disability, from obtaining or exercising a right, or denying them a service available to the public — it is clear that the reference is to the public as a whole and, therefore, there is nothing to prevent the judiciary from interpreting denial of reasonable accommodation as discrimination. It should be noted, moreover, that the Framework Law also requires the State to provide reasonable accommodation in the field of education, in accordance with the needs of students.

5. Please provide data on violations reported of the rights to equality and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities, investigations conducted and the nature of resulting sanctions, including the remedies provided to victims.

12. The National Human Rights Council is expected to play a pivotal role in this area. Bill No. 76.15, which reorganizes the National Human Rights Council, includes a number of new features the most important of which are:

- Provision for creating national mechanisms to protect certain vulnerable categories. This includes a national mechanism for the protection of persons with disabilities, which will have the following functions:
 - It will receive complaints concerning persons with disabilities whose rights have been violated, submitted either directly or through a delegate;
 - It will investigate, examine, address and resolve the complaints it receives;
 - It will arrange sessions to listen to the parties involved in the violation or the complaint as well as to witnesses, experts and anyone else whom it sees fit to summon;
 - It will, of its own volition, challenge any violations of the rights of persons with disabilities of which it is aware, on condition that it informs the person

concerned and he or she does not object to the involvement of the national mechanism.

- Provision for consolidating the rights stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons and its Optional Protocol, and monitoring the implementation thereof.

6. Please provide information on the situation of persons with disabilities belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, such as Amazigh, Sahraoui and black people, migrants with disabilities and refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities, and indicate the measures taken to ensure that legislation and policies on disability include and protect them.

13. It should be noted that the laws and regulations that protect all persons are also applicable to persons with disabilities. This includes protection against crime, both through the Criminal Code, which protects individuals from any violation of their rights, freedom or safety and through the Code of Criminal Procedure, which comprehends a number of safeguards to protect and assist victims in the course of public and civil proceedings.

14. Taking public health policies as a model, the Ministry has implemented the following measures for migrants and refugees with disabilities:

- Standardizing access procedures for migrants to hospital emergency services;
- Facilitating access to care for migrants.

15. In order to empower migrants and refugees with the same rights as Moroccan citizens, a framework agreement to create a health assistance system for migrants and refugees was signed on 26 October 2015, in partnership with the Ministry for Moroccans Resident Abroad and Migration, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of the Economy and Finance. The system provides the same health services as those enjoyed by Moroccan citizens within the “Ramed” health assistance system.

16. In order to meet treaty obligations towards migrants and refugees with disabilities in Morocco, they will be provided with facilitated access to a package of health-care services. These include care in local, provincial and regional hospitals, as well as in university hospitals and specialized hospitals, depending on the level of services those institutions provide. They will also be given access to specialized medical consultations, emergency medical testing and medical and surgical care, also including maternity services.

Women with disabilities (art. 6)

7. Please provide information on the measures taken to mainstream the rights and a positive image of women and girls with disabilities as right-holders into gender equality policies and strategies and combat the discrimination experienced in all areas of life by women and girls with disabilities, especially discrimination arising from traditional and cultural practices. Please provide information on collaboration with organizations representing women and girls with disabilities.

17. The government plan for gender equality “*Ikram*” 2012-2016 includes a package of measures that aim to ensure the due implementation of the plan’s goal No. 20, which focuses on promoting the rights of women with disabilities. Those measures include the following:

- Promoting their physical and mental health by consolidating disability prevention programmes, facilitating access to assistive devices and rehabilitation services and building capacity among persons who work in the sector;
- Improving levels of schooling and professional training among girls with disabilities by establishing integrated faculties and simplifying access for girls with profound disabilities to specialized training centres;
- Creating programmes to integrate women with disabilities into the labour market through integration mechanisms and self-employment programmes.

Restructuring of the education and training system on the basis of fairness and equality

| <i>Area</i> | <i>Academic year</i> | <i>Females</i> | <i>Males</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|--|----------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Schooling of children with disabilities under the Social Solidarity Support Fund | 2012/13 | 571 | 1 008 | 36.6% |
| | 2013/14 | 600 | 1 200 | 33.33% |
| | 2014/15 | 2 368 | | - |
| | 2015/16 | 4 744 | | - |
| Persons with disabilities benefitting from university scholarships | 2015/16 | 69 | 85 | 44.8% |

18. Remedial measures for women with disabilities:
• Health care

- The right to reproductive health: preventive measures against forced sterilization or forced abortions for women with disabilities;
- Access to specialized treatment for gynaecological and reproductive conditions.

• Education

- Support for education for girls with disabilities.

• Communication

- Improving access for women with disabilities to hearing and sight aids.

• Justice

- Psychological, social and judicial assistance to female victims of violence or other violations.

• Social Solidarity Support Fund

- Introducing a gender- and equality-based approach as a criterion when providing support to associations;
- Providing special support for associations working with women with disabilities;
- The gender-based approach has been made a central strategic part of the integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, just as it has been adopted into all the procedures associated with the national action plan 2017-2021.

8. In line with target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls with disabilities in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other forms of exploitation, please:
(a) Provide data and information on gender-based violence and any programmes designed to protect and support women and girls with disabilities against violence.

19. According to the results of a national disability survey in 2014, 11.1 per cent of persons with disabilities claimed that they had been subjected to violence by reason of their disability. The data available regarding gender-based violence is contained in the first annual report on violence against women in Morocco, prepared by the National Observatory on Violence against Women. That data shows that 63.3 percent of violence against women is physical violence, 31 per cent is economic violence and 9 per cent is sexual violence.

(b) Programmes designed to protect and support women and girls with disabilities against violence.

20. The government plan for gender equality “*Ikram*” 2012-2016 includes a package of measures that aim to combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women. They include the following:

- Creating multifunctional spaces to protect female victims of violence at the local level. The spaces are integrated into other structures that offer guidance and provide legal and social services and psychological support for women with disabilities who are victims of violence. The added value of the spaces resides in the fact that they are local-level institutions that reinforce economic and social empowerment programmes for women and provide temporary shelter and care for women and girls with disabilities;
- Relaunching partnership with reception centres where women and girls with disabilities who are victims of violence receive counselling and guidance. This takes place by defining the procedures, quality of support and normative standards for the services offered to that category of persons. In fact, the Ministry of the Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development has developed unified national specifications to regulate the institutional services available to women with disabilities who are victims of violence.

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

9. Please provide information on:

(a) How the rights of children with disabilities are taken into consideration in national strategies for children, including in the integrated public policies for the protection of children in Morocco.

21. A number of measures in that regard are contained in the programme for the implementation of the integrated public policy for the protection of children. They include:

- Measure 30: ensuring that all child victims, including children with disabilities, receive compensation for any harm they have suffered, in accordance with the law;
- Measure 46: developing resources and means for families of children in need of protection by enabling them to benefit from the services offered by the Social Solidarity Support Fund and the Family Solidarity Fund, and at the same time enabling parents with disabilities to benefit from the quota system for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector and providing support for income generating activities;
- Measure 47: building reception structures in line with the needs of children with disabilities and their families, or repurposing and renovating existing structures;
- Measure 64: drafting and disseminating a guide to standards for use in the system for the protection of children and families, which includes persons with disabilities;
- Measure 90: supporting the schooling of children in situations of vulnerability, including children with disabilities, while reinforcing the number of teaching staff and the educational structures that work with children with disabilities;
- Measure 91: improving access to leisure activities for all children by creating appropriate infrastructure, in accordance with the needs of the children themselves, including those with disabilities.

10. Please also provide data, disaggregated by sex, age and type of impairment, on the number of children with disabilities in the children’s parliament and children’s congress.

22. The children’s parliament is a non-governmental institution that possesses legal personality and is based on democratic rules and statutes. Its roots lie in the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Morocco ratified in 1993. According to its own statutes, the goals of the parliament are as follows:

- Educating people in democracy, citizenship and tolerance;
- Allowing children to exercise their right to participate, promoting their role in encouraging a culture of children's rights and sensitizing people to the importance of such rights;
- Creating a culture of dialogue among children themselves and between children and the authorities;
- Following up on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

23. Acting at the local, provincial and national level, the children's parliament defends the rights of children and submits recommendations, proposals and queries to the authorities.

24. The children's parliament is made up of 357 children. Of them, 325 are enrolled in the national educational system and represent all educational institutions in the legislative districts, reflecting the administrative divisions of the country. There are also eight children from professional training institutes, **eight children who are blind, six children who are deaf and six children with special needs**. These children, who are invited on an annual basis by the arbitration commission according to the priorities of the national parliamentary session, are not allowed to put questions before the House of Representatives or to speak on behalf of the child parliamentarians either in the media or anywhere else. There are also four Moroccan children from foreign educational missions.

25. Membership criteria for schoolchildren are established by the Ministry of National Education on the basis of entering into one of two age groups (10-13 and 14-16) and of having obtained the highest annual average within that group during the previous academic year, depending on academic disciplines and with a view to maintaining local representative balance.

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

11. Please provide information on regulated mechanisms for financial support for and consultation and participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in government awareness-raising campaigns, including mass media campaigns aimed at eliminating discrimination faced by persons with disabilities.

26. The fourth tool of integrated public policy in the area of disability focuses on awareness-raising to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. It has been shown that widespread negative social representations of disability within society and the lack of communication and awareness about the issue of disability in government departments and public institutions is one of the main obstacles standing in the way of the social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

27. As the national disability survey of 2014 showed that just 10.6 per cent of persons with disabilities claimed to possess a complete knowledge of their fundamental rights, the Ministry of the Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development launched applications for associations working in the field of disability to present projects for the year 2016. The idea was to intensify awareness-raising activities on the rights of persons with disabilities under the supervision of the relevant stakeholders, particularly the associations. The initiative involved:

- Organizing campaigns in the provinces to promote a positive image of persons with disabilities and illustrate their rights;
- Producing and disseminating sensitization programmes and media materials (leaflets, films, etc.) addressed to persons working in the public sector, professionals and the general public;

- Holding thematic meetings on awareness-raising attended by public sector workers, elected representatives and professionals.

28. Of the 54 associations that applied to present projects, 41 received support for a total value of DH 2,900,145.00.

29. A national outreach campaign to sensitize people to the issue of accessibility took place from 14 November to 3 December 2016 under the slogan: “Providing access. Facilitating life”. The initiative, which involved 2 meetings at the national level and 12 at the provincial level, received effective support from disability associations, which made important legislative, institutional and service-related recommendations regarding accessibility. The associations were subsequently provided with all the outreach material produced during the campaign in order for them to use it to raise awareness about accessibility at the local level.

30. In order to mark the national day for persons with disabilities in 2014, the first international conference on autism was organized in partnership with the alliance of Moroccan autism associations and with the support of the National Human Rights Council and the Société Nationale de Radiodiffusion et de Télévision (SNRT). The conference — the first event in which the issue of autism had been raised for discussion and consideration by experts and specialists from Morocco and other countries — was attended by a large number of associations that helped to organize workshops, enrich the debate and make recommendations. A number of associations also produced an awareness-raising film depicting the suffering of families of children with autism, the achievements of the children themselves and the work the associations do to help such children.

Accessibility (art. 9)

12. Please provide information on:

(a) **The steps taken to monitor and enforce compliance on accessibility, including through the use of punitive sanctions, in accordance with Accessibility Act No. 03-10 of 2003, reinforced by decree No. 2-11-246 of 30 September 2011.**

31. Steps taken by the competent Ministry to monitor and promote accessibility include the following:

- It works in coordination with the relevant departments to help turn the integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities into reality on the ground, particularly with regard to the strategic directives on accessibility. Those directives identify accessibility as one of the main ways to guarantee enjoyment of legal rights and underline the importance of facilitating the access of persons with disabilities to services, integrating them into society and allowing them to participate in public life. There are two principal areas of focus: taking accessibility into account in all new designs (housing, pavements, transport, public buildings, etc.) and the progressive introduction of accessibility features into the existing environment. Provision is also made for the creation of municipal committees charged with preparing reports and submitting proposals to improve accessibility at the local level;
- It coordinates with the relevant departments on the implementation of Framework Law 97.13 concerning the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities (article 22 of which covers accessibility) to ensure that the competent public authorities take all necessary measures, in accordance with the law, to make buildings and other facilities, as well as means of transport and communication, accessible to persons with disabilities. The public authorities must also take appropriate measures to ensure accessibility to public spaces and buildings that already existed at the time the Law came into force. The new Framework Law will provide a general legal structure consistent with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and will open the way to harmonising domestic disability laws and regulations;

- It has intensified the activity of the Accessibility Standardization Commission, which was responsible for drafting standard specifications and was created in 2012 by decree of the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Modern Technologies. By the end of 2016, the Commission had examined and approved around 50 Moroccan normative projects in the area of accessibility. It is currently examining a number of other relevant projects as part of its programme for 2017;
- It is seeking to build knowledge and technical capacity in the area of accessibility among stakeholders in the building sector and in disability associations, sensitizing them to the importance of the economic and social integration of persons with disabilities. As part of that initiative, 12 training courses on accessibility were organized in 2016 in which more than 400 construction engineers and technicians from local authorities and urban agencies participated, as well as disability associations;
- In coordination with the Ministry of the Interior, it is seeking to sensitize relevant organizations, particularly local authorities, and to involve them in the question of accessibility. In fact, the Ministry of the Interior encourages prefects and provincial and regional governors to mobilize the human, financial and technical resources necessary to provide accessibility for persons with disabilities, particularly in buildings such as homes, government offices and social, cultural and sporting institutions, and on public transport. At the same time, administrative and legal measures are being put in place to ensure that that goal is achieved by: (a) drafting building regulations that respect established accessibility standards, (b) making accessibility plans one of the fundamental documents that must accompany any application for a building licence, and (c) linking the concession of a building licence and residential plots to respect for established accessibility standards.

(b) How the integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities ensures that various forms of information and communications and related technologies and services provided to the public are fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

32. The integrated public policy includes a number of general approaches in this regard. In particular, it contains provision for improved training in sign language, Braille and other information- and communications-technology related systems. It also seeks to make educational materials universally available while ensuring that they are in line with existing accessibility standards.

33. The policy also includes provision for integrating alternative modes of communication into the public media. This will cover both the national media as well as the administrative information communicated by the public authorities, and it means that public institutions must make information, including documents and websites, available to persons with disabilities.

34. These approaches are being translated into reality via the national action plan for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. The plan includes provision for training in the technology to adapt audiovisual material to the needs of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to make the websites of government departments easy to access for persons with disabilities and to update specifications for public and private channels to help them take on board the need to adapt audiovisual material. The national action plan also contains provision for developing a technical reference guide on digital accessibility to be published and disseminated as widely as possible.

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

13. Please provide information on:

- (a) **The measures taken to ensure the accessibility of the humanitarian and emergency services available to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities, particularly with respect to assistive devices, shelters, relief and other services and facilities, including social support and health services.**

35. The national medical emergency plan 2012-2016, which was launched by His Majesty the King in Fez on 5 March 2013, was an important step towards guaranteeing the right to access care and health services, which is a fundamental right under the Constitution and an obligation on the part of the Government.

36. The plan has five main areas of focus: (1) improving and developing pre-hospitalization treatment in emergency situations; (2) consolidating emergency medical coverage within hospitals; (3) training and formation; (4) enacting a participatory and integrated policy towards emergency service operators, particularly in the Civil Defence, the Royal Gendarmerie, the armed forces, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Planning and Transport, and the private sector; (5) re-examining the legal framework that regulates medical emergencies.

37. In that regard, the Ministry of Health has undertaken the following actions:

- Improving the efficiency of emergency medical assistance units through the allocation of a standard national medical emergency call number, in coordination with their medical switchboard control centres;
- Establishing mobile emergency and resuscitation units at provincial hospitals;
- Adapting and upgrading the ambulance fleet in order to make it possible to resuscitate patients while they are being transported to hospital;
- Improving medical transport facilities through the introduction of medical air transport by helicopter in order to cover regions that are not easily accessible and reduce the time taken to treat emergency cases;
- Progressively establishing emergency proximity units in areas in which hospitals do not exist or are located at a considerable distance;
- Progressively upgrading hospital emergency departments;
- Enhancing the skills of emergency staff through introduction of the occupational grade of nursing specialist in emergency treatment and intensive care, the training of ambulance technicians and the establishment of other centres for the training of emergency and disaster-management staff and the ongoing training of personnel working in emergency proximity units and hospital emergency departments, etc.

38. The Ministry has taken the following measures vis-à-vis refugees and migrants with disabilities:

- Standardizing access procedures for migrants to hospital emergency services;
- Facilitating access to care for migrants.

39. In order to empower migrants and refugees with the same rights as Moroccan citizens, a framework agreement to create a health assistance system for migrants and refugees was signed on 26 October 2015, in partnership with the Ministry for Moroccans Resident Abroad and Migration, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of the Economy and Finance. The system provides the same health services as those enjoyed by Moroccan citizens within the “Ramed” health assistance system.

40. In order to meet international obligations towards migrants and refugees with disabilities in Morocco, they are given facilitated access to a package of health-care services, the most important of which are:

- Care in local, provincial and regional hospitals, as well as in university hospitals and specialized hospitals, depending on the level of services those institutions provide;
- Specialized medical consultations;
- Emergency medical testing and medical and surgical care, also including maternity services;
- Medical equipment for various medical and surgical procedures;
- Biological analyses, X-rays and medical imaging;
- Migrants are also able to benefit from national health programmes including the national programme for the treatment of the elderly.

(b) The way in which organizations of persons with disabilities are involved in the national strategy for the management of emergencies and disaster-related risks.

41. It should be noted that the national action plan 2017-2021, which is part of the integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, includes a project to raise awareness about disability and to consolidate the rights of persons with disabilities particularly with regard to article 11 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons, which enjoins States parties to take the measures necessary to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in emergency situations.

42. The project aims to increase knowledge among persons who operate in the State and civil society sectors, including persons with disabilities and the organizations that represent them, vis-à-vis international treaty obligations, and to integrate a disability dimension into civil protection protocols for the protection of persons with disabilities in emergency situations and natural disasters.

43. Another purpose of the project is to raise awareness about the protection of persons with disabilities in emergency situations and to call upon the competent government departments to meet their obligations under article 11 of the Convention. It also aims to amend Accessibility Act No. 03.10 to include mechanisms for the protection of persons with disabilities in emergency situations and natural disasters.

Access to justice (art. 13)

15. Please indicate:

- (a) **The measures taken to ensure that persons with disabilities have effective access to justice, on an equal basis with others and, specifically, are not restricted in filing complaints directly before the judiciary.** See the replies to questions 1 and 6.
- (b) **The steps taken to make accessible the physical environment of judicial premises, such as courts, police stations and prisons, and to provide information in appropriate formats to all persons with disabilities.** See the reply to question 11.

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

16. Please provide updated information on:

- (a) **The current status of the bill designed to protect persons from being subjected to medical experimentation and explain how it will benefit persons with disabilities.**

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

17. Please provide updated information on:

(a) The current status of the bill designed to protect persons from being subjected to medical experimentation and explain how it will benefit persons with disabilities.

44. Under the terms of article 3 of Act No. 28.13 concerning the protection of persons participating in biomedical research (published in the Official Gazette No. 6388 on 4 Dhu'l-Qa'dah A.H. 1436/20 August 2015), the conduct of any medical experimentation is subject to the following principles:

- Respect for the life, health, physical and psychological integrity, dignity and privacy of the person concerned;
- Voluntary participation;
- Informed and explicit consent given independently by the person participating in the research;
- The non-mercantile nature of the human body;
- Compliance with the rules governing the proper conduct of clinical procedures in order to ensure the high quality of biomedical research.

45. Article 4 of the said Act further stipulates that, before conducting biomedical research, regardless of its purpose, on any person, the latter's free, informed and explicit consent must be obtained after the researcher or the physician representing him has provided the said person with verbal and written clarifications and information, in a language that he understands, concerning:

- His rights, as specified in this Act;
- The purpose, modality and duration of the research;
- The foreseeable constraints and risks;
- The expected benefits;
- The potential medical alternatives.

46. The person concerned may seek the assistance of any person of his choice in order to understand the clarifications and information referred to in the above paragraph. However, if the person concerned is in a clinical condition that makes it impossible to obtain his prior consent, the written consent of a member of his family must be sought in accordance with the same conditions.

47. For the purposes of this Act, a family member means, exclusively, a husband or wife or, in their absence, a father or mother or, in their absence, a child possessing full legal capacity or the legal representative or guardian of the person concerned, without prejudice to the provisions of article 12 below.

48. As soon as his medical condition so permits, the person undergoing the research must be informed thereof and his consent then becomes indispensable for the completion of the research.

49. Under article 12 of the Act, biomedical research should not be conducted on minors or adults of full legal age who are subject to legal protection measures unless the research is expected to be of direct benefit to their health and provided that the free, informed and explicit consent of their legal representative is obtained in accordance with article 4 above.

50. However, the conduct of biomedical research that is not of direct therapeutic benefit to the above-mentioned persons may be authorized if such research:

1. Is not expected to pose any significant risk to their health;
2. Would benefit persons with the same characteristics in regard to age, pathology or disability;
3. Could not be conducted in any other way.

51. In the event of the conduct of the research being permissible, the free, informed and explicit consent of the person concerned must be obtained in accordance with the provisions of articles 4, 5 and 6 above, provided that the said person is legally competent to express his wishes. In accordance with the Family Code, for the purposes of the application of this article, a minor child who has reached the age of discretion, and a person of unsound mind during lucid intervals, are deemed competent to express their wishes.

52. Refusal or withdrawal of consent by the person concerned or his legal representative must not be disregarded.

(b) The measures taken to adopt legislation to protect women with disabilities from forced sterilization, with particular reference to women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.

53. In addition to the guarantees provided by Act No. 28.13, concerning the protection of persons participating in biomedical research, endeavours are also being made to protect women with disabilities from sterilization. By way of example, the Ministry of Health is facilitating access to preventive and therapeutic health services with a view to the prevention of disability and the early detection of its causes in accordance with World Health Organization directives and the latest scientific developments, as illustrated by the services provided under the following programmes:

- The national programme for the early detection of thyroid deficiency in newborn infants which was launched in 2012 and is in the process of being implemented throughout the country;
- The national immunization programme which is designed to provide protection against a number of diseases including, in particular, poliomyelitis;
- The national programme designed to provide protection against neural tube defects through the free distribution of iron and folic acid supplements to pregnant women and the early detection of such defects in newborn infants in order to expedite treatment and avert any complications that might ensue;
- The national nutrition strategy which is designed to improve the state of health of mothers and children, promote breastfeeding and prevent the problems arising from malnutrition that might lead to disability;
- The integrated child health-care strategy which includes a number of directives concerning the provision of treatment and medical services appropriate to the child's state of health.

(c) Whether the National Human Rights Council, as the national monitoring mechanism for the prevention of torture, will be mandated to monitor all settings in which persons with disabilities may be deprived of their liberty. See the reply to question 5.

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

19. Please provide details on any training provided to family members and caregivers of persons with disabilities and to staff within the health and law enforcement systems to help them to recognize all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, particularly in the case of orphans.

54. In the health sector, the competent Ministry is developing skills and capabilities through:

- The formulation and implementation of ongoing training programmes on the fitting of prosthetics and medical habilitation. A total of 29 training courses have been held for the benefit of 600 health professionals working in the field of medical habilitation;

- A total of 43 training courses have been held on the prevention of disability and the health care of persons with disabilities for the benefit of 1,165 health professionals and midwives;
- Reference materials on the prevention of disability, the health care of persons with disabilities and the manner in which disability should be registered, in addition to guidelines and advice on the prevention of genetic diseases that might lead to disability, have been prepared and printed for the benefit of health professionals.

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

20. Please:

- (a) **Specify the number of persons with disabilities who are living in “segregated arrangements” and provide information on their living conditions and on measures to include them in society when they leave such arrangements.**

55. The results of the second national disability survey provided important data on the living conditions of persons with disabilities, including:

- The situation in regard to the schooling of children with disabilities in the age group 6-17 years: See the reply on article 24;
- Family environment and forms of assistance: The national survey showed that 1 in every 15 orphans under 18 years of age (6.4 per cent of the total number of persons with disabilities) had lost their father, mother or both and 6.20 per cent of children with disabilities had lost their father;
- Social protection benefits: Only 34.1 per cent of the persons with disabilities were benefiting from social protection schemes. The survey showed that two thirds of those persons had insurance coverage (60.8 per cent by the medical assistance scheme RAMED, 15.4 per cent by the National Social Security Fund CNSS and 12.7 per cent by the National Provident Organizations Fund CNOPS) while the others had been unable to obtain coverage;
- Access to treatment: The national survey indicated that 60.8 per cent of persons with disabilities were facing difficulties in obtaining access to health services, 62.9 per cent were unable to benefit therefrom for financial reasons and 18.3 per cent stated that local health services and facilities were inadequate;
- Technical aids: 37.5 per cent of persons with disabilities (from moderate to profound) said that they needed to use technical aids appropriate to their type of functional disability and 67.7 per cent of them (170,000 persons) were suffering from a motor impairment. The survey showed that one in every three of them (31.4 per cent) used technical aids which 53.3 per cent had acquired by their own means, 35.8 per cent with family assistance, 23.7 per cent through associations and 23.4 per cent with help from charities or benevolent persons;
- Employment of persons with disabilities: See the reply on article 27;
- Right of access to transport: The national survey indicated that 56.9 per cent of persons with disabilities travelled on foot, 21.1 per cent did not use public transport due to its distance from their places of residence and 16.6 per cent did not use it due to difficulties of access or use.

- (b) **Explain the State party's policy and road map for abolishing segregated arrangements and stepping up independent living arrangements in the community for persons with disabilities, including any measures taken to ensure that such persons, regardless of their place of residence, have access to a range of independent living support services.**
- The integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities during the period 2017-2026 is continuing to be implemented in two phases through thematic programmes and national plans of action;
 - The national plan of action for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities during the period 2017-2021 is being implemented;
 - Access by persons with disabilities to the benefits provided by the Social Solidarity Support Fund is being facilitated and extended throughout the country;
 - The quota of 7 per cent for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector is being applied and, in competitive examinations in which the number of vacant posts ranges from 5 to 7, one post is allocated to such persons;
 - A contractual framework has been established for the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector;
 - Technical aids and compensatory and assistive devices are provided;
 - Accessibility requirements are being met in the principal public facilities;
 - The provisions of the Framework Law No. 97.13 concerning the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, and particularly article 6 thereof concerning the social assistance scheme and encouragement and support for that category of persons, are being implemented.

Personal mobility (art. 20)

21. Please indicate:

- (a) **The mechanisms in place to support persons with disabilities in obtaining mobility aids, devices and other assistive technologies and forms of life assistance and intermediaries, in order to enhance their personal mobility.**

56. The Social Solidarity Support Fund is a social support mechanism that provides special devices and other assistive products, technologies and systems that persons can use to obviate or alleviate the severity of their disabilities. These devices, which are highly instrumental in enabling them to achieve independence and socioeconomic integration, are essential for purposes of self-care, mobility, employment, communication, learning and engagement in household tasks and leisure and sports activities. They include:

- Technical aids such as wheelchairs, crutches and other devices which, in particular, facilitate mobility;
- Assistive devices which are used to support or correct the functioning of a specific bodily organ, and compensatory devices designed to fully or partially replace such an organ.

- (b) **Specifically, the measures taken to address the challenges faced by persons with disabilities, with particular reference to persons with visual impairment and persons with motor disabilities.**

57. On 28 June 2013, Morocco signed the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, which combines copyrights with the rights of persons with disabilities.

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

22. Please provide information on:

(a) The measures taken to recognize sign languages as official languages of deaf persons.

58. Article 17 of the Framework Law No. 97.13, concerning the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, stipulates that persons with disabilities are entitled, on an equal basis with other persons, to recognition of their cultural and linguistic particularity which should be supported by every available means, including sign language and deaf culture.

59. Sign language constitutes not only a strategic tool to implement the integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities but also a basic means to enable persons who are totally deaf to participate fully and effectively. This strategic motivation has given rise to a project for the formulation of a standard Moroccan sign language and the development of training therein. It is noteworthy that this sign language standardization project forms part of a series of projects programmed within the framework of the cooperation agreement concluded on 17 January 2017 between the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development and United Nations Development Programme.

(b) The adoption of legislation to ensure that private entities which provide services to the general public and mass media outlets which provide information do so in accessible forms and formats for all persons with disabilities.

60. Article 3 of Act No. 11.15 of 25 August 2016, concerning the reorganization of the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication, stipulated that persons suffering from visual or hearing impairments should be enabled to follow television programmes.

61. Under the terms of the Audiovisual Communication Act No. 77.03, as amended and supplemented, and particularly article 8 thereof, audiovisual communication entrepreneurs holding a licence or permit, as well as the public audiovisual communication sector, have an obligation to respect the rights of persons with disabilities. Article 48 thereof further stipulates that, in particular, the contractual specifications under which radio and television companies provide a public service should specify the need to ensure that their broadcasts are accessible to persons with hearing impairments.

62. The same Act also stipulates the need for national audiovisual communication companies to comply with the specifications, under which their broadcasts are required to be accessible to persons with hearing impairments, through interpretation into sign language for the deaf and persons with hearing impairments.

63. As already indicated, on 28 June 2013, Morocco signed the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, which combines copyrights with the rights of persons with disabilities.

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

23. Please indicate:

(b) What support services are available to families of children with disabilities, including early intervention services.

64. In order to upgrade the services provided by the Social Solidarity Support Fund for the benefit of persons with disabilities, the guidelines and specifications have been updated and 117 million dirhams were allocated for 2017, representing an increase of 70 per cent in comparison with 2015, to support the following services:

- Improvement in the educational situation of children with disabilities. It was expected that, at the end of 2016, funding in the amount of 55 million dirhams would be allocated to support the schooling of 6,000 children with disabilities;
- Encouragement of occupational integration and income-generating activities through the funding in 2016, at a cost of 15 million dirhams, of around 400 income-generating enterprises for persons with disabilities;
- Procurement of special assistive devices and other high-technology aids. It was expected that, in 2016, a total of 6,000 high-technology aids would be distributed at a cost of 7 million dirhams.

65. In 2017, plans were made for the introduction of mobile social assistance, nursing, rehabilitation and psychological support services to be provided at home.

66. Families living in remote areas are being supported and assisted in partnership with the national community rehabilitation network.

Right to education (art. 24)

24. **Please provide updated data on the number of children with disabilities, disaggregated by age, sex, type of impairment and area of residence (rural/urban), who are deprived of education, and the measures taken to remedy that situation.**

67. The second national disability survey provided the following data in this regard:

Proportion of persons with disabilities attending school between the ages of 6 and 17 years

| <i>Age</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|-------------|--|
| 6-17 years | 41.8% |
| 6-11 years | 37.8% (proportional school attendance by other children in the same age group amounted to 99.5%) |
| 12-14 years | 50.1% (proportional school attendance by other children in the same age group amounted to 87.6%) |
| 15-17 years | 39.9% (proportional school attendance by other children in the same age group amounted to 61.1%) |

Proportion of children with disabilities not attending school due to their disability

| <i>Children not attending school</i> | <i>Urban milieu</i> | <i>Rural milieu</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 85.7% | 87.1% | 83.9% |

Proportion of children with disabilities attending school, by area of residence

| <i>Urban milieu</i> | <i>Rural milieu</i> |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 49.5% | 32.9% |

Proportion of children with disabilities attending school, by sex

| <i>Females</i> | <i>Males</i> |
|----------------|--------------|
| 29.1% | 49.2% |

26. Please provide information on “integrated classes” in regular schools, including on their management, the training of teachers, the programmes taught, their inspection by the Ministry of Education, rehabilitation services related to special education and the measures taken to include children with disabilities in ordinary classes after graduating from integrated classes.

68. The Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research is endeavouring to meet the requirement that all Moroccan children should enjoy the right to high-quality schooling in keeping with the requirements of international and national instruments and the strategic vision for reform of the education and training system (2015-2030) by ensuring equality of opportunity, fairness, quality, individual and community advancement and good management of the educational reform process as a whole. The Ministry is also seeking to restore and enhance the standing of public schools, upgrade their social roles in education and training and strengthen the values of citizenship, democracy and open-mindedness in conformity with that strategic vision which comprises a road map of systematic ways to introduce the desired changes. The fourth pillar of the strategic vision focuses on the need to ensure that education and training are accessible to persons with disabilities or special needs by requiring the competent governmental authorities to respect the right of such persons to receive high-quality education and training within the school system.

69. Accordingly, the Ministry has formulated a number of projects, including integration project No. 3 which is designed to make high-quality education more accessible to children with disabilities or special needs in accordance with the following four main principles:

- School enrolment of children with disabilities in order to put an end to their discriminatory exclusion, with due regard for the type of their disability and the requirements needed to ensure that they are treated fairly and enjoy the same opportunities as their peers to achieve academic success;
- Provision of education and training for persons with disabilities or special needs;
- Incorporation of the need to combat negative portrayals and stereotypes of disability in educational curricula on the subject of human rights and values and in all mass media outlets and channels;
- Encouragement of support and partnership programmes.

70. The Ministry has established a structural organizational framework to facilitate the gradual inclusion of children with mild or moderate disabilities in integrated or ordinary classes at public schools. At the beginning of the 2014/15 academic year, there were more than 700 integrated classes in which 7,000 children (37 per cent of whom were female) suffering from autism or intellectual, motor, hearing or visual disabilities or learning difficulties were being taught. In addition, 6,400 pupils (2,452 of whom were female) with mild to moderate motor, intellectual, hearing or visual disabilities or chronic diseases were studying in ordinary classes in which no distinction was made between them and their peers. The Ministry meets their requirements in regard to accessibility and special educational services and adapts the supervisory and qualifying examination systems in accordance with their needs. It has also adapted the academic programmes and curricula, as well as the training programmes for teachers and school inspectors, in a manner appropriate to this category of students. Endeavours have been made to ensure that the open spaces and facilities of a number of educational institutions are accessible to these students and to provide appropriate social and health services under a variety of special projects and educational programmes that are being implemented through fruitful partnerships between regional educational and training academies, or their provincial branches, and associations concerned with this category of children. A total of 159 civil society associations are sponsoring these classes.

71. The Ministry is about to announce a systemic restructuring, in collaboration with UNICEF, of classes in which children with disabilities are taught. This will involve the introduction of an effective and beneficial pedagogic approach in order to make the teaching and learning processes more appropriate to the requirements of that category of children in the light of the nature of the disabilities from which they are suffering, the

accessibility facilities that they need within the school environment and any supplementary education that might be required. The facilities provided in classes in which such children are studying, as well as the content of the curricula applied, would have to be approved by a multidisciplinary medical team. Through this strategy, the Ministry will endeavour to improve the quality and outcome of the services that educational institutions provide for the benefit of children with disabilities with a view to ensuring their effective and productive integration in their family, educational, occupational and social environments.

Measures taken to remedy the problem of children with disabilities who are deprived of education

72. The integrated public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities includes a strategy designed to ensure that children with disabilities enjoy the right to education. Measures have been taken and mechanisms established to facilitate their access, as far as possible, to a comprehensive and inclusive academic system that takes the disability perspective fully into account in educational programmes and provides the human and material resources needed to that end.

73. A legislative and regulatory framework consistent with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has been established through the promulgation of the Framework Law No. 97.13, section III of which is devoted to the education and training of persons with disabilities, and regulatory provisions in this regard will be issued in coordination with the sectors concerned.

74. The Social Solidarity Support Fund allocates financial subsidies for associations working to improve the educational situation of children with disabilities. These subsidies amounted to 55 million dirhams in the year 2016, during which more than 6,000 male and female children benefited from this service, as compared with 44 million dirhams in the year 2015 in which a total of 4,744 children benefited therefrom.

Health (art. 25)

27. Please provide detailed information on:

(a) The “integrated communication strategy” to raise awareness of the health of persons with disabilities and on the measures taken to increase the quality of and access to health care for persons with disabilities and to improve the training of medical staff on the rights of persons with disabilities.

75. With a view to facilitating access by persons with disabilities to high-quality preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative health-care services provided in accordance with the rights-based approach and the proximity-based policy, the Ministry of Health has drawn up and is implementing a national health and disability plan for the period 2015-2021.

76. The said national plan is divided into six sections, the fifth of which emphasizes the need for social mobilization and efforts to combat stigmatization and negative discrimination by raising public awareness concerning the health of persons with disabilities and countering stigmatization by helping to change social stereotypes and alien concepts of disability.

77. Preventive health services are provided by health institutions at the primary level, consisting in urban and rural dispensaries and health centres, the secondary level, consisting in regional and provincial hospitals, and the university level, consisting in the five university hospitals.

78. Rehabilitative health services, which have been considerably improved during the last five years, are currently available throughout the country at the 15 regional centres in which persons with disabilities receive functional rehabilitation and are fitted with prostheses and orthotics. Eleven of these are integrated regional centres offering the four specialized types of medical rehabilitation services. There are also 94 locomotor rehabilitation units, 40 speech therapy units, 23 visual rehabilitation units and 21 sensorimotor rehabilitation units in the provincial hospitals, in addition to the medical

rehabilitation departments in the university hospitals in Fès, Oujda, Casablanca and Marrakech.

(b) Social and medical protection schemes for persons with disabilities and the scope of the care covered by such schemes.

79. Under the national health and disability plan for the period 2015-2021, the availability of rehabilitative health services has been increased through:

- The provision of specialized human resources:
 - 21 physiotherapists;
 - 522 locomotor rehabilitation nurses;
 - 104 speech therapy nurses;
 - 90 visual rehabilitation nurses;
 - 92 sensorimotor rehabilitation nurses;
 - 107 prosthetic and orthotic technicians.
- The provision of financial resources: allocation of annual budgets for the procurement of:
 - Equipment for medical habilitation and prosthetics: 7-9 million dirhams;
 - Prosthetic requisites: 6-8 million dirhams;
 - Ancillary medical equipment: 3-5 million dirhams;
 - Hearing aids and eyeglasses: 10-15 million dirhams.
- The development of skills and capabilities:
 - Formulation and implementation of an ongoing training programme in the field of prosthetics and medical rehabilitation under which 29 training courses have been held for the benefit of 600 health professionals;
 - Organization of 43 training courses in the field of the prevention of disability and the health care of persons with disabilities from which 1,165 physicians and midwives have benefited;
 - Compilation and printing of reference materials on the prevention of disability, the health care of persons with disabilities and the manner in which disability should be registered, in addition to guidelines and advice on the prevention of genetic diseases that might lead to disability, for the benefit of health professionals.

80. With regard to psychological and mental health, the following measures have been taken to improve the accessibility and quality of the health care provided for persons with disabilities:

- A communication plan has been formulated to raise awareness and combat the stigmatization from which persons with mental disorders or disabilities are exposed;
- A handbook has been prepared on the standards to be observed by the multidisciplinary authorities providing medical care for persons with mental disorders or disabilities and helping them to integrate within their families and society;
- A multidisciplinary centre has been established in each of the Kingdom's regions;
- The Mental Health Act has been updated;
- General practitioners and nurses have been trained in ways to receive, counsel and care for persons with mental disorders, including those accompanied by a mental disability;

- Communication courses have been held to raise awareness of the rights of persons with mental disorders or disabilities and the need to combat the stigmatization to which they are exposed.

Work and employment (art. 27)

28. (a) **Please provide updated data on the number of unemployed men and women with disabilities in comparison with persons without impairments and information on the measures taken to overcome the lack of access to employment for persons with disabilities, as revealed by the 2016 national survey on disability.**

81. The second national disability survey revealed that 83,000 (13.6 per cent) of the total number of 612,000 persons with disabilities in the age group 15 years and above were economically active. This employment rate of 13.6 per cent (ranging from 11.3 per cent in the urban milieu to 16.5 per cent in the rural milieu) for persons with disabilities was three times lower than the national average rate of 50 per cent determined by the High Commission for Planning in April-June 2014.

82. The results of that survey also revealed that more than two thirds (67.75 per cent) of persons of working age with moderate to profound disabilities, were unemployed. This proportion, representing around 174,494 persons, was six times higher than the national average of 10.6 per cent. The same survey found that women constituted 8.9 per cent, and men 91.1 per cent, of the total number of persons with disabilities in employment. A comparison of this figure of 8.9 per cent with the national average of 27.8 per cent for female employment shows that women with disabilities are suffering from double (gender-based as well as disability-based) discrimination and the likelihood of their finding employment (2.7 per cent) is nine times lower than that for their male peers (22 per cent). The results of the survey indicated that 80.2 per cent of the economically active women with disabilities were in the age group 15-60 years and their employment rate increased exponentially within that group but subsequently declined.

83. The measures being taken to enable persons with disabilities to enjoy their right to work include:

- Implementation of the legislative provisions concerning the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector;
- Establishment of a contractual framework under which the State and private sector enterprises will allocate a quota of posts in that sector for the employment of persons with disabilities;
- Establishment of an occupational guidance, assistance and counselling system;
- Guaranteed access by persons with disabilities to soft loans and State support to enable individuals to set up income-generating enterprises.

- (b) **Please specify the timetable for the adoption of the implementing decrees of the Framework Law concerning the quota allocated to persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors.**

84. In the case of the public sector, the system will be put into operation at the end of 2017, after the results of the present pilot phase have been assessed, since decrees Nos. 2.16.145 and 2.16.145 entered into force only in August 2016 and the following procedures will be needed to ensure the achievement of their objectives:

- Issuance of a circular from the Head of Government to all the sectors concerned;
- Issuance of a schedule of facilitating measures;
- Appointment of a standing committee to monitor relevant recruitment processes;
- Organization of mobilization meetings with human resources management departments in the public sectors in order to ensure the proper application of the quota system;

- Preparation of an assessment report on the pilot phase which will be used in the drafting of a new decree in accordance with article 15 of the above-mentioned Framework Law No. 97.13.

85. In the case of the private sector, a contractual framework is currently being formulated under which the State and private sector enterprises will allocate a quota of posts in that sector for the employment of persons with disabilities. This process was initiated on 30 March 2017 through the organization of a national study day on the occupational integration of persons with disabilities in the private sector. The participants in that event included representatives of international organizations, governmental sectors, associations working in disability-related fields, enterprises, associations of entrepreneurs and trade unions.

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

32. **Please inform the Committee of the measures taken to secure and improve the participation of all persons with disabilities in electoral processes, including by repealing all laws that prevent or restrict the right of persons with disabilities to vote on an equal basis with others and providing election-related information in appropriate formats and a conducive and accessible environment for voting with the necessary support services.**

86. In recent years, the question of political participation by persons with disabilities has become a matter of particular concern in Morocco where the issue of disability has been addressed from a comprehensive rights-based perspective based on equality, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, promotion of the integration of persons with disabilities in political parties, their guaranteed representation within party structures and on electoral lists, their participation in the formulation of programmes and plans, the use of sign language in televised electioneering broadcasts and electoral awareness-raising campaigns, the use of Braille on ballot papers for persons with visual impairments, and provision of all the facilities needed to help persons with disabilities to vote, with due regard for the needs of each category of disability.

87. These requirements have formed the subject of numerous awareness-raising campaigns and activities conducted by the National Human Rights Association and civil society organizations, and especially associations of persons with disabilities, within the framework of partnerships with a number of governmental sectors including, in particular, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development and the Interministerial Commission on Human Rights.

88. By way of example, during the preparations for the parliamentary elections on 7 October 2016, several advocacy and support initiatives were launched to encourage more effective political participation in those legislative elections by persons with disability throughout the country. In response to a memorandum issued by the National Human Rights Council and containing 45 recommendations to enable citizens to participate in more inclusive and proximity-based elections, the Ministry of the Interior issued a circular instructing all governors and prefects to take the measures needed to ensure political participation by persons with disabilities in the Moroccan elections to be held in 2016. These measures included the granting of permission for any voter with a disability to be accompanied by another person who could help him to exercise his right freely, and arrangements under which citizens with motor disabilities would have easy access to ballot boxes on the ground floor. The Ministry's circular also stipulated that ballot boxes should be accessible to persons in wheelchairs and that officials at polling stations should be provided with lists of voters with disabilities so that all the requisite measures could be taken to make it easier for them to reach those stations and exercise their right to vote without being subjected to any pressure or influence.

89. It is noteworthy that the memorandum issued by the National Human Rights Council and containing 45 recommendations to enable citizens to participate in more inclusive and proximity-based elections emphasized the need to facilitate participation by persons with

disabilities at all stages of the electoral process by simplifying the procedures for their registration, ensuring easy access to polling stations and using sign language.

International cooperation (art. 32)

34. Please provide information on the level of consultation and participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in international cooperation agreements, projects and programmes, especially when it affects them.

90. The Moroccan Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development took care to ensure that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were involved at all the preparatory, design and implementation stages of the 2012-2016 cooperation programme with the World Bank to improve accessibility facilities for persons with limited mobility, and particularly persons with disabilities. This was illustrated by the diagnostic meetings that the Ministry held with their associations in order to plan accessibility surveys in the cities of Rabat, Casablanca, Oujda and Tangier, to compile a technical reference handbook on accessibility requirements to be observed in the construction industry and urban planning, and to codify the accessibility standards for public transport.

91. For the purposes of the model project to ensure the accessibility, from the architectural and construction standpoints, of public thoroughfares, facilities and open spaces in the city of Marrakech, the local organizations representing persons with disabilities were involved not only in the identification and selection of the public buildings and open spaces to be adapted but also in the study of tenders, the award of contracts and the monitoring of their performance in order to ensure that the works were of a high quality and respected the technical accessibility standards in a manner consistent with the specific requirements of persons with disabilities. Article 8 of the tripartite agreement on that project which was concluded on 1 November 2011 between the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development, the office of the governor of the Marrakech-Safi region and the communal council of the city of Marrakech made provision for the establishment of a joint committee to undertake the following functions:

- Oversight of the progress of the work carried out under the model accessibility project;
- Monitoring and assessment of compliance with the agreement's provisions;
- Preparation of an annual report on the application of the agreement's provisions concerning accessibility by persons with disabilities.

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

35. Please provide information on:

(a) The mandate of the interministerial commission and the regional focal points.

92. The Interministerial Commission was established under the terms of Decree No. 2.14.64 of 6 July 2014 to monitor the implementation of the strategies and programmes for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. The functions of this Commission, which is chaired by the Head of Government, consist in the following:

- Monitoring the implementation of the international disability-related instruments that Morocco has ratified including, in particular, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto, on the basis of the reports prepared by the authorities and bodies concerned;
- Issuing recommendations concerning legislative and regulatory measures that should be taken to promote the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Taking all the measures needed to ensure effective coordination between the governmental sectors with a view to the implementation of the programmes and

procedures incorporated in the public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities;

- Ensuring close consultation and communication among the relevant governmental sectors, private sector bodies and civil society associations concerning the action that needs to be taken to promote the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Expressing opinions on issues referred to it by the sectors concerned, and looking into problems arising from the application of the public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Assessing the progress that the sectors concerned have made in the implementation of the public policy for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities;

Under the terms of the same decree, a technical committee consisting of representatives of the governmental sectors included on the Interministerial Commission was also established to perform a number of functions including, in particular:

- The drafting of decisions and recommendations to be issued by the Interministerial Commission;
 - The study of files and issues referred to it by the Interministerial Commission;
 - Monitoring the implementation of the directives and decisions issued by the Interministerial Commission.
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