



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

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

**Fifty-fifth session**

1-19 October 2012

Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

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

**Reports by specialized agencies on the implementation of  
the Convention in areas falling within the scope of  
their activities**

**Report by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural  
Organisation (UNESCO)**

*Summary*

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

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\* CEDAW/C/55/1.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) will, at its fifty-fifth session, examine the national reports of the following countries: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Serbia and United Kingdom.

2. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, UNESCO contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information. In accordance with UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013, gender equality has been designated as one of the two global priorities of the Organization. The Priority Gender Equality is pursued through a two pronged approach, (i) gender specific programming and (ii) mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in all of UNESCO's fields of competence.

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

4. UNESCO's efforts to promote women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality are guided by UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013, UNESCO's bi-annual Programme and Budget document, UNESCO's organization-wide Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2008-2013 which supports and guides the implementation of its global "Priority Gender Equality", the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action as well as resolutions and international and regional instruments relevant to UNESCO's areas of action.

5. UNESCO's commitment to pursue the priority Gender Equality is facilitated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director-General. As the UNESCO focal point for gender equality, the Division provides policy guidance and recommendations to the senior management and the Programme Sectors for mainstreaming gender equality considerations in UNESCO policies, strategies and programmes; carries out capacity-building; monitors gender parity and work-life balance within the Secretariat and develops and establishes partnerships with other UN bodies, regional bodies, IGOs, NGOs, private foundations and private sector partners that support women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives.

## II. MEASURES TAKEN BY UNESCO TO IMPLEMENT THE PROVISIONS OF CEDAW IN THE COUNTRIES TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE 55th SESSION

### **Afghanistan**

6. Afghanistan is party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since January 2010. Afghanistan was not asked to report to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for implementation of the Convention, since

the consultation covers the period before 2010, i.e. before Afghanistan has become party to the Convention.

7. Article 43 of the Constitution of Afghanistan (2004) guarantees the right to education to all citizens of Afghanistan, which is free of charge up to B.A. level (e.g. undergraduate level) in the state educational institutions. The legislation covering education (the Education Law of 2008) defines the main objectives of education, inter alia, to ensure equal rights of education and training for all citizens of Afghanistan through promotion and development of universal, balanced and equitable education; strengthen the respect to human rights, protection of women's rights, democracy and elimination of every kind of discrimination. Article 4 of the Education Law specifically stipulates that (i) intermediate (basic) education (covering grades 1-9) is compulsory; (ii) preschool, basic, secondary, technical, professional, vocational and higher education in the public educational institutions are provided free of charge. The National Education Strategic Plan 2010-2014, reveals the vision of the Afghan Government to develop human capital based on Islamic principles, national and international commitments and respect for human rights by providing equitable access to quality education for all to enable them to actively participate in sustainable development, economic growth and stability and security of Afghanistan. To do this, the Government facilitates education opportunities for children and adults, without discrimination, across Afghanistan.

8. There has been a huge expansion in school attendance throughout the country since 2001. Girls and boys are back to school in unprecedented numbers and more girls are attending school currently than at any time in Afghanistan's history. School enrolment has grown in the past five years from about 900,000 to nearly 6.4 million (Ministry of Education, National School Survey 2008). The percentage of girls in schools has grown from almost 0% in 2001 to over 37% in 2008. Tens of thousands of female teachers are also receiving training. Thousands of schools are being built every year. Meanwhile, one million young people and adults are expected to take part in adult literacy programmes over the next three years.

9. Afghanistan is one of the poorest and least educated countries in the world with large gender disparities exacerbated by geographical disparities in relation to the access to education. It is estimated that 75% of the population live in rural areas with about 50% below the age of 18. Afghanistan has thus one of the highest proportions of school age children in the world. Statistics show that there were no girls enrolled in schools in the year 2000 in areas under Taliban control, as girls were not allowed to attend the schools. In the past five years, however, girls' enrolment has rapidly increased to reach 37% today (The Development of Education - National Report of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan). About 2.2 million girls are now enrolled in school. In urban areas, enrolment in primary school is higher than in rural areas and the ratio of girls to boys attending primary school is almost 1 to 1. According to the National School Survey 2008, the average school enrolment rates in rural areas are 27% for girls and 44% for boys. Girls still face many challenges which prevent them from accessing school, such as long distances between their homes and schools, restricted movement, shortage of female teachers, poor facilities, and most importantly, the lack of value placed on female education. The Afghan education system is not yet fully inclusive, however, a promising beginning has been made as more and more girls continue to enroll in school, and the number of female teachers increases. Although the disparity between boys' and girls' enrolment has narrowed, female enrolment still lags far behind that of boys, particularly in rural areas.

10. In order to promote quality basic education for all children in Afghanistan, particularly for the most vulnerable based on the principle of the right to education, UNESCO has been focusing on two specific objectives: to better inform policy on inclusive education; and to strengthen capacities to create inclusive learning-friendly environments.

UNESCO is co-chairing the Inclusive Education Coordination Working Group together with the Afghan Ministry of Education. With support of UNESCO, the Ministry of Education has conducted an Inclusive Education Needs and Rights Assessment for Afghanistan which informs policy incorporated in the national education action plan and moves inclusive education forward and addresses the needs of children vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization in view of achieving EFA goals.

11. Mainstreaming gender equality issues in the reconstruction process in Afghanistan, particularly through education, is a major comparative advantage of the UNESCO. As a member of the Afghanistan Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI) in the broader framework of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), UNESCO is supporting the Afghan Ministry of Education in developing and disseminating a Communication Strategy on Girls' Education to support the implementation of the National Education Strategic Plan. UNESCO Office in Kabul is supporting the promotion of gender parity and equality in Afghanistan, most notably by supporting work undertaken by the Gender Studies Institute based at Kabul University established with the support of UNESCO. UNESCO and UNDP recently supported the Institute in conducting a multi-province research project in universities in Afghanistan, which aimed at documenting the experience and nature of gender-based violence within educational institutions in Afghanistan in order to inform policy makers and take concrete actions at policy and university levels. UNESCO is also a part of the UN Country Team Gender Working Group, the Gender Donor Coordination Working Group in addition to being an active member of the Afghanistan Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI).

12. Despite improvements, the status of women in Afghanistan continues to be a source of concern. Women still face serious challenges to access basic services such as health and education, or the justice system, as well as to enter the labour market. To build the capacity of women to contribute to the social, political, cultural and economic development of the country, UNESCO has been giving strong priority to women in its programme planning and implementation, focusing on women's empowerment in its provision of literacy classes (62 percent of the beneficiaries are women), in its research activities, as well as in the promotion of free media.

13. Among the most recent major results achieved in the area of education is the UNESCO support to the Afghan Ministry of Education in developing its planning capacity at central as well as provincial and district levels, thus enabling the training of over 1,000 staff from the Ministry in basic educational planning and monitoring and reporting, thus enabling provincial education plans to be drafted. UNESCO in collaboration with UNDP supported the Gender Studies Institute of Kabul University to conduct research on women's role in the economic and agricultural development of Afghanistan. The study is in its final stages and will be released in 2013. In the area of communication and information a project has been implemented dealing with capacity building of the media organizations in the remote areas of Afghanistan with a focus on community radios run by women.

14. Within the UNESCO Participation Programme, three projects related to gender equality and women's empowerment have been approved at the request of the Afghan National Commission for UNESCO: (i) Workshop and campaign for increasing girls enrolment to schools in following provinces of Afghanistan: Nangrhar, Daikundi, Samangan, Takhar, Badakhshan and Laghman; (ii) Capacity building in the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs using creative approaches, including modern information technology facilities to empower women for a greater participation in the political, economic, cultural and social life of the country, and (iii) Capacity building training programs on management & communication, gender equality and computer for the staff of the Afghanistan National Commission for UNESCO.

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

15. Bosnia and Herzegovina is party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, but did not report to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for its implementation.

16. According to the Dayton-Paris Agreement, since 1995 Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of two political entities: the Bosniak/Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb-led Republika Srpska - each of them with their own political structure (cantons and municipalities) and administration.

17. Article 2 of the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1994 as amended in 1997) states that the Federation will ensure the application of the highest level of internationally recognized rights and freedoms, including the right to education. Similarly, Article 38 of the Constitution of Republika Srpska (1992 as amended in 1996) provides the guarantee and protection of human freedoms and rights, including the right to education, in accordance with international standards.

18. In accordance with the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education (2003), among the principles and general objectives of education is to ensure equal educational opportunities regardless of gender, race, national identity, social and cultural origin, family status, religion, psycho-physiological and other personal traits. The Law guarantees to every child equal rights of access and equal opportunities for participation in appropriate education, without any discrimination. Equal access and equal opportunities include ensuring equal conditions and opportunities for all (Article 4). Article 16 stipulates that primary education shall be mandatory and free of charge for all children. Mandatory education shall begin at six years of age and shall last, without interruption throughout a period of eight years. Article 17 specifies that secondary education shall be accessible to all, on the basis of the performance in the primary school, personal interest and abilities. Secondary education shall be free of charge in public educational institutions.

19. UNESCO's activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are implemented mainly through participation in the work with the UN Country Team and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in joint project in the following areas: (i) Social Inclusion; (ii) Environment; (iii) Economic Governance (iv) Human Security. Main results achieved within the joint programme "Improving Cultural Understanding in Bosnia and Herzegovina": The program focused on improving the policy and strategic planning in the culture and education sectors, developing statistical tools for data collection and improved programming, analyzing of cultural industries and their contribution to the development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, strengthening the capacity of local municipalities to create an integrated supply of cultural tourism, supporting intercultural dialogue in schools and in the media, renovation and rehabilitation of cultural heritage in order to respect diversity, and also to develop greater respect for interculturalism, and increase awareness of cultural commonalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina through actions focused on strengthening cross-cultural understanding.

20. Within the UNESCO Fellowship Programme, a fellowship has been granted to a woman-researcher from Bosnia and Herzegovina for a research project in the area of information and communication technologies – "Media as a tool of democratization: promoting free media in post conflict society."

### **Cape Verde**

21. Cape Verde is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for its implementation.

22. Article 50 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cape Verde (1992 as amended in 2010) guarantees to all individuals the freedom to learn, to educate, and to teach. The freedom of learning, education, and teaching includes, *inter alia*, the right to attend educational establishments and to teach without discrimination, as provided by law, to choose subjects and courses, and to create schools and educational establishments. The Constitution prohibits the State from basing educational curricula on philosophical beliefs and political or religious ideologies and from teaching religion in public schools. Families have the right to educate their children according to the ethical and social principles resulting from their philosophical, religious, ideological, aesthetic, political, or other convictions. The State does not possess the exclusive right to teaching and education, recognizing that communities, social groups, and individuals are free to create schools and educational establishments, as provided by law. Article 78 of the Constitution guarantees to all individuals the right to education. Education must stimulate creativity, encourage democratic participation in national life, promotes tolerance and solidarity. The State guarantees equality of opportunities in access and success in school. The basic education is mandatory and free of charge. The State encourages and supports the creation of institutions and public and private associations which promote education and the defense of national culture. The Constitution (Article 80) also guarantees equal rights for men and women in the field of physical education and sports.

23. The new legislation in the area of education sets out the basic principles for the organization and functioning of both public and private education systems. The Framework Act on Education (2010) reaffirms as a general principle the right of all individuals to have free access to the education system, irrespective of gender, age, socioeconomic status, intellectual or cultural level, religious belief or philosophical conviction (art. 6 of the Framework Act). In this context, the State has a duty to promote progressively equal access for all to the various levels of education and equal opportunities for access to school. This legislation also sets out the concept of an education system characterized by plurality and diversity that takes into account collective and individual values, needs and aspirations, making the education process more relevant to Cape Verdean life and culture. In order to create the necessary conditions for the realization of citizens' rights with regard to education, the State has a duty to ensure that the public education system is developed and improved, prioritizing compulsory education. The legislation provides that the Government shall promote equal access for men and women to all levels of education as well as sports activities. The above-mentioned provisions remove any uncertainty regarding the equality of men and women in the field of education and culture. Moreover, in order to ensure the right to education, the Constitution gives the State responsibility for promoting education at all levels and establishes the conditions for universal access to the various levels of education and to scientific research and artistic output. To achieve these aims, the state ensures the right to equal opportunities in terms of access to school and success at school. Primary school education in Cape Verde is mandatory between the ages of 6 and 14 years and free for children ages 6 to 12.

24. Universal primary education is now a fact in Cape Verde. During the last decade, the country went through a very favourable macroeconomic and demographic context for its children's schooling, characterized by low population growth rates, close to European standards, and by an increase in national resources and expenditures allocated to the sector of education. These are all favourable indicators for the initiative aiming at extending the free and compulsory basic education from six to eight years, the plan which was formalized by the new Law of Basic Education. Relieving families of the financial burdens related to school fees, including in the first cycle of secondary education, further promotes education for all, particularly for children coming from the most disadvantaged families.

25. There still exist some disparities in terms of access to post-primary education between urban and rural areas. However, contrary to other African countries, the gross enrolment ratio in secondary education for girls has the tendency to be higher than for boys.

26. Among recent activities related to gender equality issues and education, curriculum developers were trained in the use of the Reference Manual on Education for Peace, Citizenship and Human Rights and in the integration of conflict and disasters prevention theme in education policies. Also educational officials were trained on integration of sexuality education into curricula and on the use of participatory teaching methods for sexuality, on socio-culturally appropriate comprehensive sexuality education using contextualized, locally appropriate content. UNESCO has recently evaluated the status of HIV and sexuality education (SERAT study) with focus on the gender component. The main conclusion of the study is that national primary and secondary school curricula take gender equality seriously but need to link it more explicitly to sexual and reproductive issues to have an impact on young people's health and well-being. These conclusions were shared with the Ministry of Education during a workshop to build their capacities to improve sexuality education curricula, including addressing gender inequalities and gender-based violence. In the same area a project has been implemented dealing with the issue of translating gender into concrete, gender-sensitive actions, such as school health/sexuality education, in HIV/AIDS and Education for Sustainable Development policies, strategies, plans and in the initial training of secondary school teachers.

### **Cuba**

27. Cuba is party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, but did not report to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for its implementation.

28. Under Article 51 of the Constitution of Cuba (1976, as amended in 1992) everyone has the right to education. This right is guaranteed by the free and widespread system of schools, semi-boarding and boarding schools and scholarships of all kinds and at all levels of education. In addition, all educational material is provided free of charge, which gives all children and young people, regardless of their family's economic position, the opportunity to study. Adults are also guaranteed the right to education, which is also free of charge and with the specific facilities regulated by law, by means of the adult education programmes, technical and vocational education, training courses in state agencies and enterprises and the advanced courses for workers. Article 52 of the Constitution guarantees that everyone has the right to physical education, sports and recreation. Enjoyment of this right is assured by including the teaching and practice of physical education and sports in the curricula of the national educational system; and by the broad nature of the instruction and means placed at the service of the people, which makes possible the practice of sports and recreation on a mass basis.

29. A number of statutes regulate the education and the educational system. According to this legislation, primary education (which lasts 6 years) and the basic secondary education (which lasts 3 years) are mandatory. The education is the responsibility of the state and is free of charge. Education is accessible to all Cubans, without distinctions and privileges.

30. A number of UNESCO initiatives in Cuba have mainstreamed gender equality issues at all programme levels, both nationally and regionally. Actions have been carried out at Inter-sectoral/multi-sectoral as well as inter-agency levels with regular program and extra-budgetary sources such as UN-WOMEN and the governments of some donor member states. For example, a series of actions fostering gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights were carried out in Cuba in the framework of the UN-Secretary General campaign UNiTE to end violence against women in joint efforts with UNDP,

UNFPA and UNICEF. The regional office in Havana has also been implementing activities in the framework of the 2005 Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expression in the promotion of women in audio-visual productions through the program “Camaras de la Diversidad “Promotion of women in audiovisual production” and through the SIDACULT program. Within this framework, a project has also been implemented resulting in production of guidelines on using cultural tools in the fight against gender-based violence and HIV /AIDS in Cuba.

31. UNESCO was an active partner in the drafting of the United Nations Development Action Framework (UNDAF) for Cuba particularly in making sure that gender equality was mainstreamed through the framework of actions proposed. Several publications and audio-visual material addressing gender equality issues have been produced and distributed to universities, legal departments, police forces, hospitals.

32. Within UNESCO Participation Programme, in 2012 a project was launched with local NGOs dealing with the promotion of the social participation of adolescents and youth at local level with emphasis on gender equality. Within the UNESCO Fellowship Programme, 6 fellowships have been granted to 6 women-scientists from Cuba for research in the area of natural sciences and engineering.

### **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

33. Democratic Republic of the Congo is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education.

34. According to Article 13 of the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2006), in the area of education no discriminatory measures shall be taken against any Congolese citizen, be it result of a law or of an act of the executive power, on the basis of his/her religion, family origin, social status, residence, political opinions or convictions, race, ethnic or tribal origin, and cultural or linguistic minority status. Pursuant to Article 43 of the Constitution, everyone has the right to education. Parents have the right to choose the type of school for their children. Primary education is mandatory and free of charge in public institutions. Under Article 45, public authorities have the obligation to promote and to ensure, by virtue of education, the respect for human rights, fundamental liberties and civic duties enshrined in the Constitution. According to the Framework Law on National Education of 1986 (in process of revision), mandatory education covers the period between 6 and 15 years of age.

35. Since 1997 the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been facing serious deterioration of the educational system, thus the current government has elaborated a Framework National Plan for the reconstruction of the educational system. This plan affirms the education for all as an absolute priority and defines the ultimate goal of the new type of education as ensuring that women and men are competent and educated in the spirit of the humanistic, moral, spiritual, cultural and civic values, as well as creative in a new democratic, equitable, prosperous and pacific Congolese society. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is adopting a sector-wide approach in establishing a decentralised education system. With the support from UNESCO through a capacity-development programme on educational planning and management, the country is revising the normative frameworks of its three education sub-sectors – (i) adult and non-formal education, (ii) primary, secondary and professional education and (iii) higher education.

36. The primordial objective of UNESCO’s action in DRC is to ensure primary education for all. The tendency is the general increase of the enrolment rate. However, mostly due to poverty, a significant number of children, mostly girls and children from poor families, are excluded from the benefits of the primary education, which seriously compromises the achievement of the MDGs by 2015. The second objective is the

promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. In spite of certain progress at the normative level, namely the amendments in the family law and the establishment of a national plan on gender equality, inequalities and discrimination based on gender remain a serious problem affecting the entire development process.

37. Within the framework of the Programme for Stabilization and Reconstruction (STAREC) implemented by the UN System a number of UNESCO projects are focused on the consequences of the violence against women, including the medical, legal, psychological and social support for the victims. One among these projects consists of combination of policy and action related research activities involving students and focusses on different perceptions and motivation for sexual and other violence against women. This project allowed the creation of a scientific database meant to serve as the basis for the design of a strategy of integration of the combat against sexual and other violence against women into curricula in schools and universities. Also, within the framework of the projects developed within the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) an analysis was undertaken on different programmes within the primary and secondary education, including the dimension of sexuality education. In the Democratic Republic of Congo a HIV and sexuality education programme analysis (SERAT) was conducted together with several local stakeholders. The analysis took into account various programmes, including programmes designed by the Ministry of Education, the Central Service of Family Life Education, programmes designed by main religious organisations and programmes launched by NGOs active in the area of HIV and sexuality education. The analysis focused on differences between these programmes and how they link with the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE). One of the main findings was the need to highlight more issues related to gender, and gender-based violence in particular. In the area of communication et Information, a programme involving promotion of the access of women to new information and communication technologies and internet as a factor for development, was designed and implemented by UNESCO.

38. UNESCO is focusing its support to DRC on the following main issues: promotion of the culture of peace, prevention of conflicts, promotion of gender equality, prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, and women's participation and leadership in UNESCO domains. Several programmes have been launched, including a programme using socio-cultural approach to sexual and gender-based violence, as well an innovative programme to work with universities and engage male students as ambassadors for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. This programme has involved the production and validation of new teaching modules on gender equality and violence prevention which are now being taught in universities in the North and South Kivu regions. Lessons learned from the pilot project in DRC are also used to inform the planning of a project to develop teaching and training courses on women's political participation and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in other African countries. In the area of women's participation and leadership a programme has been implemented supporting the participation of women in the electoral process, as well as projects on development of rural radio stations for youth and women. In this area also a brochure on women's rights has been issued in the four national languages and widely distributed throughout the country.

39. UNESCO is closely involved in the establishment and development of the Regional Research and Documentation Centre on Women, Gender and Peace Building for the Great Lakes Region in Kinshasa, particularly on topics such as women's participation in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction and prevention of gender-based violence. This initiative is part of the strategy to develop partnerships with academic, policy-making and civil society networks, in particular through the establishment and development of a series of regional and international gender equality research and documentation centres as centres of excellence for research and teaching on gender equality and for collection and diffusion of documentation and resources through virtual networks and libraries. UNESCO also

supported Member States of the Great Lakes Region in establishing their National Associate Centres through planning meetings with the ministries concerned, and training for the establishment of virtual libraries.

40. Within the UNESCO Participation Programme, a project has been approved dealing with a campaign for awareness raising and reinforcement of the capacities of rural women for adaptation to the climate change and for the protection of environment. Within the UNESCO Fellowships Programme, 4 fellowships have been granted to women-researchers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo for research in the area of development and administration of micro-enterprises.

### **Dominican Republic**

41. Dominican Republic, is party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, but did not report to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for its implementation

42. Article 39 of the Constitution of the Dominican Republic (2010) elaborates the principle of equality before the law and states that: all persons are born free and equal, shall receive the same protection and treatment and shall enjoy the same rights, freedoms and opportunities without discrimination due to gender, skin, color, age, etc. Women and men are equal before the law. Any act with the purpose or result of lessening or invalidating the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of equality in the fundamental rights of women and men is prohibited. All necessary steps shall be taken to ensure that eradication of inequality and discrimination due to gender. The state shall promote and guarantee a balanced participation of women and men as candidates for elective positions, at the management and decision-making level in the public sphere, the judiciary and agencies of the state with a supervisory role. Article 63 of the Constitution guarantees the right to education and states that all persons have the right to education under the equal conditions and opportunities and without any limitations except those coming from one's aptitudes, vocation and aspirations and without any discrimination based on race, sex, religion, economic and social or any other status. Parents have the freedom to choose the type of education for their minor children. The state guarantees public education free of charge, which is mandatory for primary, basic and first cycle of the secondary level, i.e. for the duration of 8 years. The General Law on Education (1997) further elaborates the obligation of the state to ensure equality of educational opportunities, as well as equity in providing educational services.

43. Major activities of UNESCO in the Dominican Republic related to gender equality and women's empowerment include participation in the UN Country Team planning by identifying four priority areas for joint projects: (1) promotion of social and economic inclusion; (2) women's empowerment and rights; (3) protection of the rights of children, adolescents and youth; and (4) environmental sustainability and integrated risk management. In particular, broader gender vision was introduced in project design, implementation and evaluation; active participation in United Nations gender focal point group; leadership in the campaign and work with artists in the UN Secretary-General's campaign against violence against women ("Yo digo no"); extension of Cultural Tools programme to include gender and violence against women.

44. UNESCO is working in close cooperation with the University of Santo Domingo in establishing the UNESCO Chair on Water, Gender and Governance in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, which will address women's role in local knowledge concerning water governance. Once formally in place, the chair will enlarge the network of water and gender Chairs in the region and worldwide.

45. Within UNESCO Participation Programme three gender equality and women's empowerment related projects were approved at the request of the National Commission of the Dominican Republic: (i) Literacy programme for women with disabilities in rural regions of the Dominican Republic; (ii) "No more violence!": The contribution of ICTs to end violence against women in the Dominican Republic; and (iii) Education and promotion of a culture of peace and tolerance and non-violence against women in 10 provinces of the Dominican Republic through the music. Within the UNESCO Fellowship Programme a fellowship has been granted to a women-scientist from the Dominican Republic for a research in the area of environment - Water management for coastal sustainability.

### **Serbia**

46. Serbia is party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, but did not report to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for its implementation.

47. Under Article 21 of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006), all are equal before the Constitution and law. Everyone shall have the right to equal legal protection, without discrimination. All direct or indirect discrimination based on any grounds, particularly on race, sex, national origin, social origin, birth, religion, political or other opinion, property status, culture, language, age, mental or physical disability shall be prohibited. Special measures which may be introduced to achieve full equality of individuals or group of individuals in a substantially unequal position compared to other citizens shall not be deemed discrimination. Further, under Article 71 of the Constitution, everyone shall have the right to education. Primary education is mandatory and free, whereas secondary education is free. All citizens shall have access under equal conditions to higher education. The Republic of Serbia shall provide for free tertiary education to successful and talented students of lower property status in accordance with the law.

48. Article 6 of the Law on the Foundations of the Education System (2009) stipulates that every person shall have the right to education. Article 91 specifies that one year of preschool education as well as elementary education (grades 1-8) and secondary education shall be provided free of charge in public educational institutions. According to Article 97, all children shall be enrolled in a preschool institution one year before starting the first grade of elementary school. Compulsory education also covers elementary education (grades 1-8). On the basis of this law, a series of statutes have been issued, which constitute the normative basis of the education system in different segments of the education, starting with preschool education, through elementary, secondary, vocational and tertiary, and higher education, including a statute preventing discrimination against persons with disabilities and ensuring equality in the field of education. In accordance with these normative texts, the education system must provide children, students and adults with equality and accessibility of education without any discrimination or segregation based on gender, social, cultural, ethnic, religious or other affiliation, place of residence, economic status or health conditions, developmental difficulties and impairments. Also, the education system must provide equal opportunities for education at all levels and types of education, in keeping with the needs and interests of children, students and adults, without any obstacle to continuation and completion of education and lifelong learning. Among the objectives of education, these normative texts define inter alia developing and respect for the racial, national, cultural, linguistic, religious, gender and age equality, tolerance, and respect for differences.

49. Within UNESCO's cooperation with other UN agencies in projects related to Serbia, this country is part of a new generation of UNDAFs, moving from a situation of development assistance to one of partnership for development. Within this framework, experts and representatives of the country are regularly invited to regional- and global-level

activities. The document “UN Country Partnership Strategy for Serbia”, which involves 19 UN agencies, moves around three priority areas: (1) strengthening good governance, (2) sustainable development and social inclusion, and (3) regional stability and cooperation.

50. Within the UNESCO Fellowship Programme, in co-sponsorship with l’Oreal a fellowship has been granted to a women-scientist from Serbia for her research in the domain of medicine - Urine proteomics in kidney disease and urothel cancer.

### **United Kingdom**

51. United Kingdom is party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and reported to UNESCO for the Seventh Consultation on the measures taken for its implementation.

52. The framework for the education system in the United Kingdom is set out in a number of acts of Parliament, as well as other regulations of the authorities of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The provision of compulsory education free of charge for all within a specified age group (5-16) is fundamental for the education system in the United Kingdom. Concerning the implementation of international human rights standards, including those related to the right to education, the most important legislative acts are the Human Rights Act of 1998 and the Equality Act of 2006. The Human Rights Act incorporates into law nearly all the rights contained in the international human rights instruments and gives citizens a clear legal statement of their basic rights and fundamental freedoms. With regards to education, the Act states that nobody should be denied the right to education. Parents also have the right to ensure that their religious or philosophical beliefs are respected when public bodies provide education or teaching to their children. The Equality Act introduces a number of measures to promote equality across a broad range of areas, including the establishment of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, which aim to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people and promote and protect human rights. The Commission enforces equality legislation on age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender status, and encourages compliance with the Human Rights Act. The revised Equality Act of 2010 brings together and replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws and includes a new public sector equality duty (the “general duty”) replacing previous separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality.

53. The United Kingdom has a law specifically targeting racial discrimination in all areas of social life, including in education. The Race Relations Act of 2000 makes it unlawful for public authorities (including schools and educational institutions) to discriminate when carrying out their functions. It imposes a general duty on specified bodies (including the governing bodies of schools and higher education institutions) to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunities and good relations between people of different races.

54. The United Kingdom has the highest rate of teenage births in Western Europe. In an attempt to comply with its obligation to ensure school attendance, while recognizing that suitable educational provisions other than regular school may be required to accommodate the needs of school-aged parents, the Government provides a range of alternatives. For example, education in a specialized unit for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers, further education or home tuition are some of the options available, being understood that the authorities are not to impose any one option on a student, but to consult them, their parents or carers and their school to secure a package which is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and individual needs. This policy makes it clear that pregnancy is no reason for exclusion from school.

55. The United Kingdom has developed several interesting practices regarding inclusive education. For instance, the revised inclusive framework introduced by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) (2001) has contributed to a growing awareness of the benefits of inclusion and has led to concrete improvements. This Act extended the application of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to schools, further education and higher education institutions, making it illegal for them to discriminate against disabled students in relation to admissions, exclusions and education and associated services and requiring them to make reasonable adjustments to their policies and practice to prevent students with disabilities from being treated less favourably and being put at a substantial disadvantage. Schools and local authorities are also required to plan ahead to ensure that information is available in alternative forms for pupils with disabilities and that access to the school itself is possible for all students.

**Gross enrolment ratio female and male - gender parity index educational statistics for countries reporting to the 55th session**

COUNTRY	YEAR	<i>Gross</i>	<i>Gross</i>	<i>Gross enrolment</i>	<i>Gross enrolment</i>	<i>Gross enrolment</i>	<i>Gross enrolment</i>	<i>Gender parity</i>	<i>Gender parity</i>	<i>Gender parity</i>
		<i>enrolment ratio. Primary. Female</i>	<i>enrolment ratio. Primary. Male</i>	<i>ratio. Secondary. Female</i>	<i>ratio. Secondary. Male</i>	<i>ratio. Tertiary. Female</i>	<i>ratio. Tertiary. Male.</i>	<i>index for gross enrolment ratio. Primary</i>	<i>index for gross enrolment ratio. Secondary. All programmes</i>	<i>index for gross enrolment ratio. Tertiary</i>
<i>Data</i>										
Afghanistan	2008	74	114	20	47	...	...	0,65	0,43	...
	2009	74	110	26	53	1	5	0,67	0,49	0,24
	2010	79	114	30	60	...	...	0,69	0,51	...
	2011	81	114	34	62	...	...	0,71	0,55	...
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2008	106	105	93	91	39	31	1,01	1,02	1,29
	2009	106	104	94	92	41	31	1,02	1,02	1,3
	2010	88	87	91	88	41	31	1,02	1,03	1,3
	2011	91	90	91	88	43	33	1,01	1,03	1,29
Cape Verde	2008	108	115	91	82	14	10	0,93	1,11	1,31
	2009	106	115	93	78	17	13	0,92	1,19	1,35
	2010	105	114	95	80	20	16	0,92	1,19	1,29
	2011	105	114	97	83	24	17	0,92	1,17	1,37
Cuba	2008	101	103	91	91	149	89	0,97	1	1,67
	2009	102	104	89	89	145	87	0,98	0,99	1,67
	2010	102	104	89	90	119	72	0,98	0,99	1,65
	2011	100	102	90	91	101	61	0,98	0,99	1,65
Dominican Republic	2008	105	112	84	71	...	...	0,93	1,19	...
	2009	102	118	84	74	...	...	0,86	1,13	...
	2010	102	115	81	72	...	...	0,88	1,12	...
	2011	102	112	81	72	...	...	0,91	1,13	...

Democratic Republic of the Congo	2008	85	101	(*) 26	(*) 46	3	8	0,84	(*) 0.56	0,36
	2009	86	100	27	49	3	9	0,86	0,56	0,31
	2010	87	100	28	48	...	...	0,87	0,58	...
	2011	89	103	29	50	5	10	0,87	0,59	0,45
Serbia	2008	(*) 101	(*) 101	(*) 92	(*) 89	(*) 55	(*) 42	(*) 1.00	(*) 1.03	(*) 1.30
	2009	(*) 97	(*) 98	(*) 93	(*) 90	(*) 56	(*) 44	(*) 0.99	(*) 1.03	(*) 1.29
	2010	(*) 96	(*) 96	(*) 92	(*) 91	(*) 56	(*) 43	(*) 0.99	(*) 1.02	(*) 1.30
	2011	(*) 95	(*) 95	(*) 92	(*) 91	(*) 57	(*) 44	(*) 1.00	(*) 1.02	(*) 1.32
United Kingdom	2008	106	107	101	98	67	48	1	1,02	1,41
	2009	106	106	103	101	69	49	1	1,02	1,4
	2010	107	107	106	105	70	50	0,99	1,01	1,38
	2011	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

*Data not available (\*) National Estimation*

**Source:** UNESCO Institute for Statistics ([www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org))