

Concluding Observations Committee on the Rights of the Child CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4 para 78(f)

Full recommendation:

Ensure adequate human, technical and financial resources to schools in rural areas.

Assessment using Impact Iran human rights indicators¹

According to Article 3 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the State “has the duty of directing all its resources to”, among other goals, “free education and physical training for everyone and at all levels”. Article 30 stipulates that “The government must provide all citizen with free education up to secondary school”. Article 43 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran provides that the economy of the Islamic Republic of Iran shall be based on providing essential needs to all its citizens, including education.²

In its National Report to the UPR in 2019, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran stipulated that under the “Document on the Fundamental Transformation of Education System”, “ensuring access to appropriate education in all regions of the country, regardless of race and gender, with emphasis on the education of girls and vulnerable groups in less developed, rural and nomadic regions, is among the most important objectives of the country.” The Government also reportedly engaged in the development of pre-school education, “especially in less-developed, rural and nomadic areas” and distributed “7,000 educational packages and other supplies, free of charge, in less developed areas”.³ There is no readily available information as to what extent these measures translate effectively in practice.

In June 2019, the state-run IRNA News Agency reported that approximately 27% of Iran’s school building were in ruin, 34% needed repair and only 39% of schools had safe buildings. A lot of the schools requiring renovation are reportedly located in the Sistan and Baluchestan province,⁴ where a significant part of its population reportedly live in rural areas.⁵ In 2016, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concerns about “poor living conditions in regions traditionally inhabited by ethnic minorities, that in some cases completely lacked basic

¹ CRC.28.1.S.1; ESCR.13.2.S.1
ESCR.13.2.P.17

CRC.28.1.O.7; ESCR.13.2.O.5; ESCR.13.2.O.19;

² Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, English translation, <https://irandataportal.syr.edu/wp-content/uploads/constitution-english-1368.pdf>

³ UPR 2019, National Report, Islamic Republic of Iran, <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/WG.6/34/IRN/1>

⁴ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, July 2019, <https://undocs.org/A/74/188>

⁵ Iran Wire, <https://iranwire.com/en/features/5523>

services such as [...] schools, which had a direct negative impact on the rights of children living in those regions.⁶

The state organization for School Renovation, Development, and Equipment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, reporting to the Ministry of Education, is in charge of school facilities and equipment countrywide.⁷ In 2019, Iran's Ministry of Education stated that the government was committed to improve the quality of education as well as school infrastructures.⁸ In January 2020, Tehran's mayor stated that between 60 to 70% of schools in the city were unsafe while noting limited public funds due to the financial crisis.⁹ Reports have indicated the involvement of the Iranian Government in school-building projects abroad, notably in Syria.^{10 11}

Iran's budget for education has been reportedly particularly low compared to other low-income countries in the region,¹² although it increased for the past few years¹³ but remains under the world average.¹⁴ The lack of resources for schools has been particularly felt in rural and remote areas. In border provinces, predominantly inhabited by ethnic minorities, the lack of schools and the prominence of poor infrastructures combined with the lack of access to basic services such as running water is reportedly severe, notably in the Sistan and Baluchestan province.¹⁵ In Khuzestan, children reportedly have to travel long distances to receive and education, and a significant number of schools are in makeshift facilities.^{16 17}

There is a general shortage of teachers in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Female teachers reportedly lack in rural areas.¹⁸ Teachers in Iran have been protesting their low salary and poor work conditions, which may well impact the quality of education provided to children.¹⁹

In its General Comment on Article 13 of the Convention, the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights stipulates that education should be available in functioning educational institutions and in sufficient quantity. Conditions to function include notably "buildings or other protection

⁶ Concluding Observations, Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4&Lang=En

⁷ <http://dres.ir/en/page/14/about-us>

⁸ Iran Press, https://iranpress.com/iran-i138709-education_minister_our_priority_is_to_raise_the_quality_of_education_for_school_pupils

⁹ Iran Wire, <https://iranwire.com/en/features/6660>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Iran Press, https://iranpress.com/middle-east-i143081-tehran_ready_to_help_damascus_to_rebuild_and_re_equip_schools

¹² Iran News Wire, <https://irannewswire.org/irans-school-student-budget-one-quarter-of-world-average/>

¹³ Data World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=IR>

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, July 2019, <https://undocs.org/A/74/188>

¹⁶ Centre for Supporters of Human Rights, <http://en.cshr.org.uk/2016/10/02/education-sectors-share-state/>

¹⁷ European Ahwazi Human Rights Organization, 3 January 2016, <https://www.ahwazna.org/en/article/11019> (Please note that the Ahwazi Arab communities use the spelling Ahwaz for a region explained in this article: <https://unpo.org/members/7857>)

¹⁸ Beyond the Veil: discriminations against women in Iran, https://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/MRG_CFR_Iran_EN_Sept191.pdf

¹⁹ Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/11/22/iran-mounting-crackdown-teachers-labor-activists>

from the elements” but also “trained teachers receiving domestically competitive salaries”. Quality education is also one of the Sustainable Development Goals and entails a sufficient number of schools, safe infrastructure with access to basic services such as running water and sanitation.²⁰ Reports indicate that the Islamic Republic of Iran lacks adequate school infrastructures in rural areas and a significant number of schools in these areas are in poor, even unsafe, conditions. Added to the general lack of teachers, these adverse conditions impact the delivery of quality education to Iranian children.

The adequate human, technical and financial resources to schools in rural areas is not ensured in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Recommendation Status:

This recommendation has **NOT** been implemented.

²⁰ UNESCO, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/documentViewer.xhtml?v=2.1.196&id=p::usmarcdef_0000373718&file=/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach_import_7f053edb-de47-40f5-8f69-5f500df1e977%3F_%3D373718eng.pdf&updateUrl=updateUrl7948&ark=/ark:/48223/pf0000373718/PDF/373718eng.pdf.multi.page=297&fullScreen=true&locale=fr#GEMR_2020-Chapter_17.indd%3A.43150%3A78