

# DRAFT NOTE for NHRIs: CEDAW and Sport\*

## What is CEDAW?

The Convention on the Elimination all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979. It lays out the human rights of women and girls and measures states need to take to end gender-based discrimination. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women is composed of 23 independent experts from around the world. They monitor the implementation of the Convention, in particular through receiving and considering the reports of states who have ratified the treaty.

## What is the relationship between human rights, gender and sport?

In July 2017 the Kazan Action Plan (KAP) was adopted " to facilitate international and multi-stakeholder policy convergence, ease international cooperation and foster capacity-building efforts of governmental authorities and sports". The sports sector globally is unifying and advancing its human rights activities considerably. Participation in sport has been shown to have numerous benefits for women and girls. Participating in sports promotes health and mental wellbeing. Being physically active helps to prevent serious conditions, such as type-2 diabetes and obesity. Correlations between women and girls' participation in sport and increased academic achievements have been found. Participation in sports also increases confidence, self-esteem and social skills such as teamwork, leadership and discipline.

\*"Sport" is being used to reflect physical education, physical activity and sport in this note.

## Relevant articles of CEDAW

### Article 10 (Education)

Men and women must be treated equally in education through:

- Access to the same curricula and examinations, equally qualified teachers and school premises and equipment of the same quality.
- Encouraging coeducation, revising textbooks and school programmed and adapting teaching methods
- The same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education.



### Article 13 (Economic and Social Life)

States must guarantee the equal right of men and women to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

There are also other articles which, while not directly relating to sports, are relevant:

### Article 8 (Participation at international level)

States must ensure that women are able and encouraged to represent their governments at the international level and participate in the work of international organisations.



### Article 11 (Employment)

States must guarantee that women have the same employment opportunities as men, including in relation to promotion, training, equal remuneration, social security, and health and safety. States must also guarantee that women must not face discrimination due to pregnancy, maternity or marital status and must be protected during pregnancy.



### Article 12 (Health)

States must ensure that women have equal rights with men to access to health care services, including reproductive health services.



### Article 14 (Rural women)

States must take measures to ensure the equal right of rural women to take part in all community activities



## KAP specific action areas

I.5 Enforce gender equality / Empower girls and women

I.7 Foster empowerment and inclusive participation

II.4 Build peaceful, inclusive and equitable societies

II.6 Advance gender equality and empower all women and girls

II.2 Protect children, youth and other vulnerable groups

# CEDAW AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

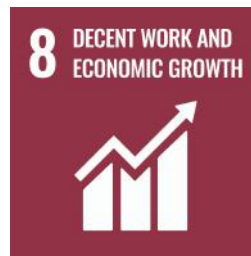
*"Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives."*

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically commits to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. However links to CEDAW articles can be found throughout the SDGs.



Article 12 - health



Article 11- work and employment



Article 10 - education  
Article 11- work and employment



Article 14- rural women



Article 13 - participation in economic and social life  
Article 8 – participation at international level



Article 8 – participation at international level



# ENGAGING WITH THE COMMITTEE ON SPORT

*"A national institution shall... contribute to the reports which States are required to submit to United Nations bodies and committees, and to regional institutions, pursuant to their treaty obligations and, where necessary, to express an opinion on the subject, with due respect for their independence"*  
Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (The Paris Principles)

## How can National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) improve reporting on sports to CEDAW?

### REPORTS:

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) recommends that States hold consultations with civil society during the preparation of their national reports. NHRIs will often be actively involved in this regard and can reach out to sports organisations and practitioners during State consultations and make sure their inputs are made possible.

In general NHRIs will submit their own parallel reports to the Committee. As the NHRI covers all aspects of human rights in a country, its report will tend to be more broad than most other parallel reports submitted by civil society actors who tend to have a thematic focus. CEDAW asks that they highlight priority concerns and suggest specific recommendations. The inclusion of sports related information and recommendations in the NHRI report add significant weight to the case for inclusion in the Committee's review of the country. Suggested topics for reporting on sports can be found on the following page.

### BEFORE THE SESSION:

At the end of each session CEDAW holds pre-sessional working groups to prepare the work for the review of State parties which will take place two sessions later. CEDAW invites NHRIs to make oral interventions to the working-group to provide country-specific information. This is an opportunity to reiterate information and recommendations on sports presented in the shadow report.

### DURING THE SESSION:

CEDAW usually meets with NHRIs on the Monday of the week that their State will be reviewed. During these public meetings the NHRI can remind the Committee of the sports related information presented through the parallel report and during the pre-sessional working group. The NHRIs of other countries due to be reviewed that week may also be present. Therefore this is an opportunity not just to remind the Committee but also to raise awareness among NHRIs of the possibility and importance of reporting on sport.



# SUGGESTED REPORTING INDICATORS

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- 1) What percentage of schools offer physical education?
- 2) Is the physical education curriculum designed to take a variety of abilities into account? Is it the same for boys and girls?
- 3) What percentage of the total education budget is allocated to sport and physical education?
- 4) Is investment in physical education equal across girls/ boys/ co-educational schools?
- 5) Have any qualitative studies on the experiences of students with physical education been carried out, particularly in relation the differences between boys/ girls and within groups of girls? If so what were the findings from such reports?
- 6) How many higher-level institutions offer degrees or diplomas related to physical education, sport and physical activity? Disaggregated data on who takes these courses.
- 7) Where sports scholarships, bursaries and support are offered at educational institutions are female athletes equally represented among the recipients?

- 1) What percentage of the population participate in sport and physical activity (disaggregated by gender)?
- 2) Do national sports bodies have specific inclusion and equality policies? Do these policies recognise specific groups? Do these policies have dedicated budget lines?
- 3) What percentage of the national sport budget is allocated to equality and inclusion initiatives?
- 4) How many organisations receive targeted public funding to deliver gender-transformative sport-based programmes? Are there any examples of best practice projects in this regard?
- 5) Are sports facilities full accessible? Do they take into account the safety of women and girls?
- 6) Are sports coaches/ practitioners given sensitivity training on the multiple intersecting barriers that women and girls may face in accessing sports? Has any follow up been done with sports coaches/ practitioners who have received training on the impact it has had on their interactions with women and girls?

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What is the gender ratio of sport National Governing Bodies?  
Are there efforts to increase the number of female members?

- 1) What percentage of the total workforce is employed in the sports and fitness sector?  
Disaggregated by gender and disability
- 2) Have there been any qualitative studies conducted on the experiences of women and girls working in the sports and fitness sector? Are there any examples of good practice programmes to encourage/ increase employment of women and girls in the sports and fitness sector? Are there any examples of practice programmes to encourage/ increase employment of women and girls with disabilities in the sports and fitness sector?

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- 1) What percentage of the population is sufficiently active as defined by WHO? Disaggregated by gender
- 2) What percentage of national sports bodies are investing in mental health and well-being?
- 3) What percentage of national sports bodies use sporting events/ programmes to communicate health messaging (e.g. benefits of physical activity; HIV prevention: substance abuse etc.). Do such programmes target both men and women? Are there specific programmes focusing on women's health issues?

What measures are in place to ensure that rural women are able to participate equally with men in community activities, including sport, recreation and physical activities?

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This document has been prepared by the UNESCO Chair in the Institute of Technology Tralee as part of a global collaboration to implement the Kazan Action Plan.

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Chair "Transforming the Lives  
of People with Disabilities, their Families  
and Communities, Through Physical Education,  
Sport, Recreation and Fitness"