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Country matrix 2024

Qatar

The country matrix adopts and adheres to the coding standards adopted in the "Gender Justice and the Law" initiative.

General framework of the State

Has the State ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)? Does it have any reservations on the implementation of the provisions of the Convention?

Qatar ratified the Convention in 2009 with reservations to article 2 (a) (public policy measures and amendments to laws); article 9 (2) (equal rights between men and women in passing nationality on to children); article 15 (1) and (4) (freedom to choose housing and place of residence); and article 16 (1) (a), (c) and (f) (equality in marriage and family life).

Does the Constitution refer to gender equality and non-discrimination?

The Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar, adopted in 2004, states that all people are equal before the law and discrimination based on sex, race, language or religion is not allowed.

If customary law is a valid source of law under the Constitution, is it valid if it violates constitutional provisions on gender equality or non-discrimination?

Customary law is not a source of legislation according to the Constitution, nor does the Constitution address its validity if it contradicts constitutional provisions on equality between the sexes.

If personal status law is a valid source of law under the Constitution, is it valid if it violates constitutional provisions on equality or non-discrimination?

Article 1 of the Constitution expressly states that Islamic Shariah is the primary source of legislation. The question of validity of the Personal Status Law contradicting constitutional provisions concerning equality in legislation or legal precedent has not been addressed.

Do national laws clearly define the mandate and jurisdiction of informal justice systems, where they exist, in terms of their enforcement of formal and informal laws, both of which must conform to international standards, including non-discrimination?

Neither the Constitution nor the national law defines the mandate and jurisdiction of informal justice systems.

Is there a law on discrimination that prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination against women?

The Constitution asserts the principle of equality, but there is no public law that prohibits direct and indirect gender-based discrimination.

Is there a national action plan or policy to address violence against women and girls that is overseen by a national mechanism with the mandate to monitor and review implementation?

No policy or national plan is in place in this regard.

Are there budgetary commitments provided for by government entities for the implementation of legislation addressing violence against women and girls by creating an obligation on the Government to provide a budget or allocation of funding for the implementation of relevant programmes or activities?

The budget does not include commitments to implement legislation addressing violence against women and girls.

Is there a national strategy or action plan currently in place containing measures to ensure full and equal access to the entire range of sexual and reproductive health information, services and supplies, with budgetary, human and administrative resources allocated for its implementation?

The National Health Strategy 2018–2022 only covers some aspects of sexual and reproductive health (mainly maternal health), and it is not clear whether resources have been allocated for its implementation.

Is legal aid mandated and guaranteed in criminal matters?

Some provisions of the Constitution and Law No. 23 of 2006 regarding enacting the Code of Law Practice mention legal aid and defence for defendants and offering legal assistance (including, for

example, legal representation, financial assistance and legal advice).

Is legal aid mandated and guaranteed in civil/family matters?

There are no obligatory clauses regarding legal aid in civil matters.

Are there laws that explicitly require the production and/or

dissemination of gender statistics?

There are no laws referring to the production or dissemination of gender-based statistics.

Legal capacity and public life

Do women and men have equal rights to apply for passports?

The Passports Law and the Government's e-services website provide equal rights for women and men to obtain passports.

Do women and men have equal rights to obtain an identity card?

The law regulating national identity cards and the Government's e-services website provide equal rights for women and men to obtain an identity card.

In civil law matters and procedures, are women required to obtain permission from judicial or administrative authorities, spouses and other family members prior to initiating legal action?

Women are not required to obtain permission from judicial or administrative authorities, spouses or other family members prior to initiating legal action in civil matters.

In personal/family law matters, are women required to obtain permission from judicial or administrative authorities, spouses and

other family members prior to initiating legal action?

Women are required to obtain permission from their spouses or other family members before initiating legal action in some personal/family law matters. For example, the woman's guardian concludes her marriage contract for her, with her consent, regardless of her age.

Does a woman's testimony carry the same evidentiary weight in court as a man's?

A woman's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in court as a man's in civil and criminal cases. However, there are still significant exceptions in family/personal matters. For example, the testimony of male witnesses carries more evidentiary weight than the testimony of females in most cases.

Can a woman enter into a contract the same way as a man?

There are no restrictions related to women's right to enter into contracts.

Do women and men have equal rights to own, access, and control or use property?

The Ownership Law guarantees equality between men and women in the right to own, access, control and use property.

Does the law allow for women to register businesses the same way as men?

There are no legal limits with regards to gender when registering businesses.

Do women and men enjoy equal rights and access to hold public and political office (legislature, executive, judiciary)?

All laws related to public offices in legislative, judicial and executive authorities adopt gender-neutral language in defining work standards in these positions, such as in the judiciary, parliamentary and ministerial posts, and other national civil service jobs.

Are there quotas for women (reserved seats) in the national parliament?

There are no legal provisions for quotas for women, whether for seats in the national parliament or for the candidate list.

Is there a law that explicitly prohibits violence against

women in politics and elections?

There is no law that prohibits any form of violence against women in politics and elections.

Protection from violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres

Is there legislation on domestic violence that includes all forms of physical violence?

There is no legislation concerning protection from domestic violence.

Is there legislation on domestic violence that includes all forms of sexual violence?

There is no legislation concerning protection from domestic violence.

Is there legislation on domestic violence that includes all forms of psychological/emotional violence?

There is no legislation concerning protection from domestic violence.

Is there legislation on domestic violence that includes financial/economic violence?

There is no legislation concerning protection from domestic violence.

Are there criminal and civil protection orders available for victims of violence for which a breach (constitutes

a criminal offence) has legal consequences?

There is no legislation concerning protection from domestic violence. Furthermore, there are no legal provisions for victims of violence to obtain criminal and civil protection orders.

Does the law allow mitigating circumstances for femicide?

Article 47 of the Penal Code allows a lighter sentence for perpetrators of "honour" crimes.

Does the law criminalize female genital mutilation (FGM) or cutting if practised?

There is no law prohibiting FGM/cutting.

Does the law criminalize adultery?

Adultery is punishable under articles 281, 282 and 285 of the Penal Code.

Do laws that criminalize rape act based on absence of consent without requiring proof of the use of physical force or penetration?

According to the Penal Code, rape is the action of a man having sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent.

Does the law criminalize marital rape?

Marital rape is not considered a crime. Cases of marital rape are not brought before the courts due to the requirement of obedience in the Family Law.

Does the law include exoneration if the offender marries his victim?

The law does not mention exoneration of the offender if he marries his victim.

Is sexual harassment defined in any legislation?

There is no legislation concerned with criminalizing sexual harassment, but the Penal Code could be referenced since article 291 criminalizes derogatory comments, voices or gestures directed at women and girls.

Is there a provision in the law that criminalizes cyberviolence against women and girls?

The law does not have a clause to define cyberviolence against women and girls, but there are provisions that could be applied to all. The Cybercrime Prevention Law of 2014 punishes actions that lead to defamation, violation, and obstruction of a person's or family's private life

by spreading any personal information about this person/family on the Internet.

Are sex work and prostitution criminalized?

Sex work and prostitution are criminalized according to article 298 of the Penal Code.

Are there comprehensive provisions (punitive, protective and preventive) on human trafficking in any law?

Qatar adopted a comprehensive law to combat human trafficking in 2011 that includes punishments of up to 15 years in prison and protective services for victims of human trafficking.

Employment and economic benefits

Does the law mandate non-discrimination against women in employment?

The law does not prohibit gender-based discrimination in employment, but one could resort to general provisions that prohibit discrimination.

Does the law mandate equal pay for the same work as men?

Article 93 of the Labour Law of 2004 stipulates that the woman shall receive the same pay as that of a man when she is doing the same job, and that she shall have the same training and promotion opportunities as the man.

Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?

The law does not grant a woman the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value as a man's work. The law refers to the same work but not work of equal value.

Does the law allow women to do the same jobs as men?

There are legal restrictions with regard to heavy labour. The Labour Law expressly stipulates

not to hire a female worker in dangerous or arduous work that could harm her health or morals or any other work specified in a ministerial resolution.

Does the law allow women to work the same night hours as men?

There are legal restrictions for women with regard to night work, whereby the female worker may only work at the times allowed by a relevant specific ministerial resolution.

Do national labour and civil service-related laws (labour codes, civil retirement acts, etc.) discriminate between men and women in terms of retirement age?

The Retirement and Pensions Law states that the retirement age is 60 for men and 55 for women.

Do national labour and civil service-related laws grant men and women equal rights to pass on their pensions to their spouses?

Spouses may transfer their retirement pensions to each other. However, a widower may only receive half of his deceased

wife's salary if he has his own salary. By contrast, a widow receives her deceased husband's full pension whether she has her own salary or not, but she loses this right if she remarries.

Does the law prohibit dismissal during pregnancy and maternity leave?

Article 98 of the Labour Law prohibits employers from dismissing a woman due to pregnancy.

Does the law provide for maternity leave that meets the International Labour Organization (ILO) standard of 14 weeks?

The woman has a right to maternity leave of 50 days paid by the employer, which is less than the ILO standard of 14 weeks.

Does the law provide for paid paternity leave available to fathers?

The law does not provide for paid paternity leave for fathers.

Does the State provide or subsidize childcare facilities?

There are no childcare facilities that are subsidized or offered by

the State in either the public or private sectors.

Does legislation tackle sexual harassment in the workplace?

The law does not include a specific ruling to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace. Nevertheless, such actions could be unlawful according to other general legal provisions. Article 291 of the Penal Code criminalizes any action that could be a crime against a female by words, voice, gesture, proposition or any other act that violates the female's privacy.

Are there provisions allowing for civil claims/remedies for sexual harassment in the workplace?

There are no legal provisions regarding civil claims/remedies to combat sexual assault and harassment or to punish the employer who takes revenge by firing the employee [victim].

Does the Labour Law provide protection for domestic workers?

Labour Law No. 15 of 2017 on domestic labourers sets the

maximum work hours, paid leave, health and safety rights in the workplace, including prohibiting making the workers work during their sick leave.

Is there a public entity that can receive complaints on gender discrimination in employment?

There is no official authority to receive complaints on discrimination against women in employment, but there are labour dispute resolution committees that specialize in adjudicating all disputes arising from the Labour Law.

Family matters (personal status)

Is 18 the minimum age at marriage, with no legal exceptions, for both women and men?

The Family Law of 2006 sets the minimum marriage age at 18 for young women and 16 for young men. The judiciary may approve a marriage under these ages in exceptional cases.

Is marriage under the legal age void or voidable?

Marriage under the legal age is not considered void or voidable. The law defines prerequisites for a valid marriage contract, but the spouses' age is not a factor that voids a marriage contract.

Do women and men have equal rights to enter marriage (i.e. consent) and initiate divorce?

The Family Law requires the husband to support the wife and

in return the wife obeys the husband. The husband has the right to divorce, while the wife has the right to divorce for specific reasons. She may also make a request for divorce, or khula (removal), without giving a reason and if she forfeits her financial rights.

Does the law prohibit polygamy?

The Family Law permits polygamy according to Islamic Shariah provisions.

Do women and men have equal rights to be legal guardian of their children during and after marriage?

Fathers are the sole guardians of children.

Does the law grant women and men equal custody rights of their children?

After divorce or separation, women maintain the right to custody of their sons up to the age of 13 and daughters to the age of 15, unless the court decides otherwise. Most rulings grant custody of males until the age of 17, while custody of females remains until they are married, reach adulthood or get a job.

Do women and men have equal rights to choose where to live?

There are general legal provisions that assert equal legal eligibility between women and men, which includes choice of where to live (area and place of residence), but in some cases a married woman must obey her husband and may lose her right to financial support if she refuses to move to her marital home in the manner regulated by the Family Law.

Do women and men have equal rights to choose a profession?

Women and men have equal rights to choose a profession, and there are no restrictions on the types of work a woman may pursue.

Do women and men have equal rights to own, access, and control or use marital property including upon divorce?

The Civil Law regulates ownership (private, communal and shared/family property). Qatar applies a system of separation of ownership between spouses.

Where rights to inheritance are enshrined by law, do women and men have equal rights?

The Family Law defines inheritance rules based on Islamic Shariah principles. Women have the right to inheritance, although they receive a smaller share than men in many cases.

Are there specialized civil courts or civil court processes for family law matters that provide for the equal rights of men and women?

Family courts are the civil courts specialized in family/individual disputes.

Do women have equal rights as men to pass their nationality to children?

According to the Nationality Law (Law No. 38 of 2005), the woman does not enjoy the same rights as the man to pass her nationality to her children.

Do women have equal rights as men to pass their nationality to a foreign spouse?

According to the Nationality Law (Law No. 38 of 2005), the woman does not enjoy the same rights as the man to pass her nationality to her foreign husband.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Do law(s) or regulation(s) exist that guarantee access to maternal health care for all women and girls, irrespective of marital status and without third-party authorization?

No law or regulation addresses access to maternal care.

Do law(s) or regulation(s) exist that guarantee access to contraceptive services for all women and adolescent girls, irrespective of marital status and without third-party authorization?

No law or regulation addresses access to contraceptive services.

Do law(s) or regulation(s) exist that guarantee access to emergency contraception

for all women and adolescent girls, irrespective of marital status and without third-party authorization?

No law or regulation addresses access to emergency contraception.

Is induced abortion legal at least when the life or health of the pregnant woman is at risk and in cases of rape, incest or severe fetal impairment, and is abortion decriminalized in any case for both the pregnant woman as well as health-care providers performing it (when consent is fully given)?

According to the Penal Code, abortion is not legal unless it aims to save the life of the

woman, or if the fetus is weak. Both spouses must agree to the abortion if the fetus is weak, as well as obtain a medical permit in any case. Abortion is not allowed in the case of rape or incest.

Irrespective of the legal status of abortion, do law(s) or regulation(s) exist that ensure access to post-abortion care for all women and girls, independent of their marital status and without third-party authorization?

No law or regulation addresses access to post-abortion care.

Do law(s), regulation(s) or national policies exist that make comprehensive sexual health education a

mandatory component of the national school curriculum?

No law or regulation mentions mandating the inclusion of comprehensive sexual health education as a component of the national school curriculum.

Do law(s) or regulation(s) exist that guarantee access to voluntary HIV testing and counselling services for all women and girls, irrespective of marital status and without third-party authorization?

No law or regulation mentions access to voluntary HIV testing and counselling.

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