Global Gender Equality Constitutional Database

UNWomen

About The Database

What is the Global Gender Equality Constitutional Database?

The Global Gender Equality Constitutional Database is a repository of gender equality related provisions extracted from 195 constitutions from around the world. The countries are organized according to five geographical regions (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania) and are reflective of the Member States and Territories of the United Nations. Although a number of constitutional websites and resources that contain constitutions on a global scale are available, this Global Gender Equality Constitutional Database is the first searchable database that specifically presents constitutional provisions through a gender lens.

What are the benefits of the database and who are its potential users?

The gender equality constitutional database is a one-stop resource for a variety of technical and non-technical users. Potential users and uses include:

- Gender advocates, who will have access to the fundamental underpinnings of State law and policy, including the basis for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at local level
- Constitutional Review Commissions, Committees, Assemblies and other similar bodies (for south-south and north-south learning of comparative experiences in gender responsive constitution making)
- Constitutional Courts and other judicial bodies (for effective identification and citation of gender equality provisions and advancing gender equality constitutional jurisprudence)
- National Independent Human Rights Bodies (for monitoring compliance with national and international human rights standards within a State)
- Ministries of Justice and Law Reform Commissions (for identifying potential interpretative conflicts and areas of law reform as mandated by constitutions)
- Global and Regional Human Rights Treaty Bodies (to monitor national constitutional compliance with international treaties)
- Public Interest Litigators (for preparing legal arguments and *amicus briefs*)
- Civic Educators (for educating the public on the gender dimensions of their respective country constitutions)
- Academic Institutions (for teaching (including moot courts), research and learning) and
- United Nations, Agencies, Funds, Programmes and Advisory Bodies (for delivery of technical assistance, design and in the implementation of United Nations

- Development Assistance Frameworks).

Why put a gender lens on constitutions?

State Parties commit "to embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions"[1] as part of their domestic legal obligation upon ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Constitutions are the underlying basis of State accountability. As the highest law ("grundnorm") of the land of any country, constitutions spell out the principles behind executive, legislative and judicial power, and the exercise of rights and obligations of public and private persons and entities. Gender responsive constitutions are those that meet internationally agreed upon standards on gender equality. Having women's rights constitutionally entrenched in a national constitution is an important step towards ensuring eliminating gender-based discrimination and advancing women's rights.

What is the scope of the database?

The constitutional provisions contained in database are grouped under 24 categories and 19 sub categories. The extracts are available in the original languages of the constitutional text and their respective English translations. While it consolidates all existing provisions related to gender equality in constitutions worldwide, this database does not seek to endorse or evaluate them. In order to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the provisions in the mapping provided by the database, UN Women recommends that users refer to the entire text of the constitution(s), as well as related resolutions, laws, amendments, constitutional decisions and other judicial mechanisms. Users may also wish to look into how these provisions have been considered, where relevant, by international and regional human rights mechanisms, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

How was the database designed and what sources were used?

The extractions were undertaken manually, using a meticulous, extensive and thorough quality assurance process, including key word searches and an analysis of constitutional provisions. Given that constitutions are diverse in content, users are also informed of the essential elements of each category and sub categories in this codebook. The database can be searched by keywords, category, sub category, country, region or globally. A dashboard is also provided to users, to promote quantitative research and analysis of the category and sub categories. Constitutional sources included websites of governments, inter-governmental organizations (e.g. World Intellectual Property Organization), media, legal research databases (e.g. Hein Online World Constitutions Illustrated). Individual Permanent Missions to the United Nations provided resources in some instances and where web based and external resources were not forth coming, UN Women undertook in-house translations of texts.

Which languages feature in the database?

To date, the database reflects the following 75 different languages:

Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Bengali, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Burmese, Catalan, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dari, Dhivehi, Dutch, English, Estonian, Filipino, Finnish, French, Georgian, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Irish Gaelic, Italian, iTaukei, Japanese, Kazak, Khmer, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Korean, Kyrgyz, Lao, Latvian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malay, Maltese, Moldavian, Mongolian, Montenegrin, Nepali, Norwegian, Pashto, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Serbian Cyrillic, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovene, Somali, Spanish, Swedish, Tajik, Thai, Tetum, Turkish, Turkmen, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek and Vietnamese.