



Justice for Iran (JFI) is an UK-based human rights organisation focussed on eradication of the culture of impunity, prevalent throughout the Islamic Republic of Iran, leading to widespread human rights violations against women, sexual, ideological, ethnic and religious minorities.

During the first cycle of UPR on Iran, the Islamic Republic accepted at least ten recommendations that address the need to guarantee gender equality and protect women's right to health, including reproductive health.¹ Despite its response, the Islamic Republic has failed in its commitment to implement the relevant recommendations.

FACTS

Using Rights to do Wrong: Women's Reproductive and Domestic Labour at the Service of Nation-Building, Submission to the United Nations Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice², a shadow report by JFI highlights a range of new policies that reinforce Islamic Republic's highest authorities' stance regarding population policies and **family planning** that endorse infringements on dignity and autonomy of women and girls, as well as their right to health, education and work:

- Bill 315 on Comprehensive Population and Family Excellence Plan places restrictions on access to contraceptives and criminalises delivery of abortion-related medical services, measures that place greater restrictions on women's freedom to choose in cases of forced, unhealthy or unwanted pregnancies.
- Bill 446 on Increase Birth Rate and Prevent the Fall in Fertility Rate criminalises voluntary sterilisation procedures and vaguely prohibits family planning, violating Article 12 of the ICESCR.
- Both Bills enforce direct and de jure discrimination against women that restrict single women's access to educational opportunities by tripling student and home loans for married couples, access to employment by gender and marital status as well as offering selective welfare aids such as monetary incentives and housing benefits that favor marriage and multiple childbearing, and that encourage women to stay at home as mothers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the Islamic Republic is party to and duty bound by the International Bill of Rights, JFI recommends that the Islamic Republic:

- Withdraw in their entirety both Bill 466, which criminalizes the promotion, supply and use of tubectomy, vasectomy and other forms of contraception and voluntary sterilization, and Bill 315, which replaces the family planning programme currently in place with a scheme of intrusive and discriminatory provisions.
- Take all necessary measures to ensure women enter and remain in marriage on the basis of their free choice and full agreement, including by raising the age of marriage for girls to an age at which they can be expected to give free and informed consent, prohibiting the practice of polygamy, and giving men and women an equal right to divorce.
- Ensure equal treatment of women and girls in law by abolishing all policies that limit women's access to higher education through gender-based quotas and segregation on women or certain academic fields, limit access to employment through strategies and policies that perpetuate stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, or limit access to health through withholding or misrepresenting sexual and reproductive health education and services such as abortion, vasectomy, tubectomy or other forms of contraception.

¹ Recommendations by Chile, Estonia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Viet Nam, Austria, Bangladesh and Ireland

² <http://justice4iran.org/english/publication/submissions/using-rights-to-do-wrong-womens/>