



Submission to the Universal
Periodic Review of the United
Nations Human Rights Council

4th Cycle – 41st Session

Country Review: Algeria

March 2022

by Francisca Orrego Galarce



**BROKEN
CHALK**

Kingsfordweg 151, Amsterdam, 1043 GR, Netherlands

+31685639758 | info@brokenchalk.org | www.brokenchalk.org

Broken Chalk is an Amsterdam-based NGO established in 2020 and focused on raising awareness and minimizing human rights violations in the educational field.

Together with our international sponsors and partners, we encourage and support the following activities/projects: removing obstacles in education; contributing to the achievement of peace and tranquility in the society through adaptation studies in an environment of intercultural tolerance; preventing radicalism and polarization; and eliminating the opportunity gap in education for all. Our goal is to work together with global partners to remove barriers to access to education and to take concrete steps to ensure universal access to education.

Content

0. Introduction.....	3
I. Main issues to tackle in Education	3
Quality of Education	3
Promote vocational training	4
Access to Education from countryside	5
Economic disparities leading to inequality in Education	5
Access to Education by persons with disabilities	5
Access to Education by migrants, asylum seekers and their family members	6
II. Use Education to improve other aspects of society.....	6
Education to advocate for Human Rights	6
Education to fight stigmatization of persons with disabilities	7
Education to fight stigmatization of pregnant women and girls	7
Need of Education in reproductive and sex health	7
III. Recommendations.....	8
IV. References.....	9

0. Introduction

1. This report has been drafted by Broken Chalk to contribute to the fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Algeria. Since Broken Chalk is an organization aimed at fighting inequalities and improving the quality of Education worldwide, this report will focus on Education. First, the report brings attention to the main and most outstanding issues that Algeria faces regarding the Right to Education. Secondly, the report individuates some issues that should be tackled through Education. Lastly, in the view of the points raised, Broken Chalk would like to offer a few recommendations to Algeria to further improve in the field of Education.
2. In the last review of Algeria of 2017, the state received 235 recommendations, 9% of which were linked to the 4th goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)¹, namely ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.
3. Algeria has stated that it gives the outmost importance to Education, in fact the right to Education is a constitutional right and education is free of charge for all in Algeria². Furthermore, girls are given the same opportunities than boys in education, even more, data shows than female students perform better, are more likely to conclude their studies (especially with the increasing of the level of education) and to continue studying than male students³. However, there is still room for Algeria to improve in Education, especially when it comes to quality and accessibility.

I. Main issues to tackle in Education

Quality of Education

4. According to the Algerian National Office of Statistics, the number of students throughout all levels of education is constantly rising. From the academic year 2018/2019 to 2019/2020 there was a total increase of 3.8% (equal to 349,710 additional students), whereas the number of teachers has decreased of 1.2%⁴. Even if it is not a great decrease it is worrisome that the ratio of students per teacher keeps growing. This could lead to a worsening of the overcrowding problem in certain schools (some classrooms can reach up to 48 students)⁵.

¹ United Nations Human Rights Council. (2017, May). *Universal Periodic Review - Algeria*

² Algeria. (2017, February 20). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2* - Algeria*

³ UNESCO Institute for Statistics Technical Cooperation Group. (2021). *Data Resources*

⁴ Bazizi, Y. (2021). *Les principaux indicateurs du secteur de l'éducation nationale année scolaire 2019-2020*. Office National des Statistiques

⁵ Oxford Business Group. (2018). *Reforms to Algeria's education system to expand capacity and modernise curricula*

5. Pre-school education should be promoted. Pre-school helps children to gradually integrate in the school system, providing them with age-appropriate exercises to start learning how to read, write and count. It especially helps children to learn how to interact with other people other than their families and how to communicate. Promoting pre-school will therefore also improve the quality of primary education.
6. Broken Chalk raises its worries regarding the fixed school system. Students are tested at the end of primary school (5 years) and later at the end of lower secondary education (4 years) if they pass they obtain the Certificate of Basic Education (BEM). Failing to pass BEM results in students not admitted to upper secondary education (3 years), they can either join vocational training or start working if they have reached the mandatory age of 16⁶. In 2018, 56.9% of students passed the BEM, which leaves out little under half of the students to repeat school years or to be obliged to change path⁷.
7. Furthermore, students' grades determine their field of studies, therefore some (around 30%) may not be able to pursue their first choice of career path⁸.
8. According to UNESCO, 4.4% of students enrolled in primary education are at least 2 years over-age for their current grade, whereas the figure rises to 19.3% at the lower secondary level⁹. Considering that there might be some students that do not apply themselves in school, certainly some students find themselves repeating school years due to the quality of education and the teacher's methodology. Algeria should continue to pay attention to this data and put effort into continuously diminishing the number of students overage for their current grade.
9. Having quality in higher education also means giving students the required skills to be competitive in the work environment. Broken Chalk congratulates Algeria and their former Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Tahar Hadjar, for implementing instruments aimed at the better integration of students in the economy¹⁰.
10. An additional point of pride for Algeria is that it has understood that universities must train not just employees but job creators¹¹. We expect that strategies are put in place to teach both technical and management skills to students to give them the tools to plasm their own future.

Promote vocational training

11. To fight unemployment and help the economic and social development of Algeria, Broken Chalk points to further improving and promoting vocational training in the country.
12. Vocational training can fulfil the need for skilled labour and the demand for technical specialists while at the same time tackling the issue of skill mismatching¹².

⁶ Arab, S. (2017, December). *The Algerian Education System*

⁷ Oxford Business Group. (2018). Reforms to Algeria's education system to expand capacity and modernise curricula

⁸ Oxford Business Group. (2018). Reforms to Algeria's education system to expand capacity and modernise curricula

⁹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics Technical Cooperation Group. (2021). *Data Resources*

¹⁰ Oxford Business Group. (2018). Tahar Hadjar, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research: Interview. In *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*

¹¹ Oxford Business Group. (2018). Tahar Hadjar, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research: Interview. In *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*

¹² Oxford Business Group. (2018). Technical and vocational training improve employment. In Oxford Business Group, *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*

13. Vocational training, to be effective, should include both public and private sector. The training should be targeted at fulfilling the actual needs of society and adapt to developing economy. Partnership between the educational training sector and the business sector can enrich both¹³.
14. Vocational training needs to be of quality. Recurring updating of skills (with a special focus on technological skills) is essential to remain competitive in this fast-changing world¹⁴.

Access to Education from countryside

15. The number of school infrastructures is concentrated in the coastline, particularly in the capital Algiers, whereas they start diminishing towards the desert¹⁵. This is logical since the population is concentrated in the coastline. However, is it also concerning if, due to this, students living in rural areas are deprived of access to school. Algeria needs to make sure that no student is left out of school due to their living location. Adequate means of transport or additional school infrastructures in rural areas can be a solution.
16. Due to poor coordination in infrastructure staffing distribution issues have arisen, particularly affecting the countryside¹⁶. Algeria must address this pressing issue to avoid increasing inequalities.

Economic disparities leading to inequality in Education

17. According to Save the Children, 9.48% of children in Algeria are out of school, notwithstanding the obligation for all children between age 6-16 to go to school. The data varies considerably when looking at the out of school children among poorest and among richest, respectively 16.14% and 4.36%.
18. A small minority of Algerians holds the 42.6% of the state's wealth, enjoying higher quality of education¹⁷. The right of education of children cannot be hampered by an exceptional gap in distribution of wealth.

Access to Education by persons with disabilities

19. Algeria should introduce legislation and policy measures to ensure that persons with disabilities effectively enjoy their right to equality and non-discrimination¹⁸, this of course includes the enjoyment of this right within the education system. Algeria does have a legal provision guaranteeing the right to education of persons with disabilities without discrimination, but the implementation of these is insufficient¹⁹.
20. With the purpose of guaranteeing the right to education of persons with disabilities, Algeria should guarantee the adequate access to education facilities, including the adequate means of transport so that schools are effectively accessible.

¹³ MERIC-Net. (2019). *The Higher Education system in Algeria*. National Report

¹⁴ Oxford Business Group. (2018). Technical and vocational training improve employment. In Oxford Business Group, *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*

¹⁵ Bazizi, Y. (2021). *Les principaux indicateurs du secteur de l'éducation nationale année scolaire 2019-2020*. Office National des Statistiques

¹⁶ Oxford Business Group. (2017). Algeria overhauls teaching methods and increases education funding. In *THE REPORT Algeria 2017*

¹⁷ Abdou, N. (2019, February 09). *Top 10 Facts about Living Conditions in Algeria*. Retrieved from The Borgen Project

¹⁸ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2019, June 27). *Concluding observations on the initial report of Algeria*, para. 13 (a)

¹⁹ Rachid, B. (2018). Access to schooling for people with special needs in Algeria. *Sociology International Journal*, 371

21. Furthermore, an adequate number of teachers, appropriately distributed among all educational infrastructures, should receive suitable training.
22. Broken Chalk raises its concerns that the education of persons with disabilities, in Algeria, falls under the competences of the Minister of National Solidarity, the Family and Women rather than under the Ministry of National Education²⁰. This is already a demonstration that there is not remotely sufficient inclusion of persons with disabilities within the school system.
23. Since there is a need for different and various policies to be implemented, Algeria should also put in place measures to monitor the improvement, assess and tackle the difficulties resulting from the implementation of the policies.

Access to Education by migrants, asylum seekers and their family members

24. Broken Chalk appreciates the efforts of Algeria to promote and protect the rights of migrants and their families regarding access to education²¹.
25. However, migrants and asylum seekers' children still face some difficulties in accessing education, especially when they are in an irregular position²². This is due to the condition imposed that require to present a birth and residence certificate to be enrolled in public schools.
26. Broken Chalk recommends Algeria to adopt adequate policies specific to migrants and asylum seekers' children for them to freely access education, as is their right.
27. Broken Chalk is worrisome that migrants and asylum seekers' children suffer discrimination, even in the school system²³. Although Algeria has legal provisions in place that prohibit discrimination, it still takes place. In this sense, there is a need for further implementation.
28. Sahrawi refugees are particularly affected and continue to rely almost entirely on humanitarian aid²⁴. Algeria should concentrate in assuring that Sahrawi children access the school system, education can be pivotal in gaining one own independence.
29. Awareness raising and education can play a key role in putting an end to discrimination and racist actions.

II. Use Education to improve other aspects of society

Education to advocate for Human Rights

30. Broken Chalk admires the efforts of Algeria in raising awareness of human rights. It further recommends Algeria to keep using education as one of the most effective tools for human rights advocacy.

²⁰ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2019, June 27). *Concluding observations on the initial report of Algeria*, para. 40-41

²¹ Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. (2018, May 25). *Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Algeria*, para.47

²² Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. (2018, May 25). *Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Algeria*, para. 47

²³ Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. (2018, May 25). *Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Algeria*, para. 29-30

²⁴ Valladares, G. (2021, April 26). *Sahrawi Refugees living in Algeria: the Forgotten Crisis*

31. Human rights teaching should be part of all school curricula and at all levels. One cannot demand the rights they do not know to have. In Algeria, civic education and environmental subjects are gaining momentum in public schooling²⁵.
32. Whenever Algeria ratifies a new treaty on human rights, appropriate training and sharing of information should follow. Training should be targeted both at specific stakeholders and at the entire society.

Education to fight stigmatization of persons with disabilities

33. Education should be used as a tool to raise awareness and achieve integration of persons with disabilities; therefore, awareness-raising education should be targeted at the entire society. To do this in the best way possible, it is necessary to include persons with disabilities' organisations.
34. Algeria should raise awareness among all stakeholders including persons with disabilities themselves of the right to equality and non-discrimination²⁶ and the right to education of persons with disabilities.
35. Broken Chalk would like to reiterate that persons with disabilities should not only enjoy their right to non-discrimination and their right to education, but they should also be fully and adequately included in society. Algeria should be actively engaged in achieving this.

Education to fight stigmatization of pregnant women and girls

36. Broken Chalk urges Algeria to immediately stop punishing women and girls that are believed to have had sexual relationships outside of marriage²⁷.
37. Additionally, Algeria should develop policies to sensibly, respectfully, and humanely treat girls that have become pregnant during their school years. It is inadmissible that their right to education is hampered by the pregnancy if this is not the direct result of their free and informed choice.
38. Excluding pregnant girls from school greatly discredits the gender equality within the school system in Algeria. Even if girls are not directly excluded from the school the social stigma surrounding teenage pregnancies can lead them to be forced to drop out. Rejection, isolation, judgement, discrimination, and lack of support from society, family and schools can lead to economic hardship, abuse, and violence. Boys and men do not suffer the same difficulties, gender equality is not yet achieved.
39. Education should be used to fight the social stigma around sex, sexuality, teenage pregnancies, and sexual relationships out of marriage. There is a need for understanding, awareness, and support; education can fulfil this need.

Need of Education in reproductive and sex health

40. Education can play a huge role in the achievement of the right to health, which includes reproductive and sex health. Broken Chalk is worried that Algeria does not pay sufficient attention to this, and that especially young women and girls pay its price.

²⁵ Oxford Business Group. (2018). Algeria overhauls teaching methods and increases education funding. In *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*

²⁶ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2019, June 27). *Concluding observations on the initial report of Algeria*, para 13 (b)

²⁷ Human Rights Watch. (2018). *Leave No Girl Behind in Africa. Discrimination in Education against Pregnant Girls and Adolescents Mothers*

41. Education should provide all students with knowledge and tools to understand their changing bodies, sexuality, and reproduction. Tampons, sanitary pads, and external contraceptives should be freely provided both in health and educational institutions²⁸.

III. Recommendations

42. Broken Chalk suggests Algeria to continue improving teachers' training, which must include the assessment of the knowledge of the subject they are teaching and, perhaps even more important, pedagogical training. The goal of teachers should be that students are able to effectively learn from their teaching. Increasing the wages of teachers and their pension plans can also help in improving the overall quality of education²⁹.
43. Broken Chalk recommends Algeria to participate in qualified and renown gathering of data on quality of education and international assessment of students (eg. PISA, TIMSS). Algeria has taken part in PISA only in 2015 with scarce results and has not participated to later assessments³⁰. Taking part in this kind of assessments will allow for comparison with every other state taking part and it will show, hopefully, the improvements in the quality of education that Algeria is trying to achieve.
44. Broken Chalk recommends that Algeria continues to tackle economic inequality within the school system. If the poorest out of school live in a rural area this can further contribute to the issue, additionally Algeria should pay attention that the quality of education is improved not only in big cities but in the entirety of its school system.
45. Persons with disabilities are part of a vulnerable group and as such should receive additional financial and psychological assistance³¹.
46. Algeria should continue to and improve support of civil society, which plays a key role in the achievement of human rights.
47. Broken Chalk recommends and incentivises Algeria to include in their national school curricula sexual and reproductive health and rights; scientifically accurate and free from cultural and social misconceptions. Education on the matter should start at primary level and continue to the secondary one by tailoring the content to the age of the students³².
48. Education should be accessible, inclusive, of high-quality, and free for all children, including children with disabilities.

²⁸ Save the Children. (2020). *Save our Education. Protect every child's right to learn in the COVID-19 response and recovery*

²⁹ Oxford Business Group. (2018). *Reforms to Algeria's education system to expand capacity and modernise curricula*

³⁰ Roser, M., Nagdy, M., & Ortiz-Ospina, E. (2015). *Quality of Education - Results from the PISA study*

³¹ Handicap International. (2021). *Country card Algeria 2020*

³² Human Rights Watch. (2018). *Leave No Girl Behind in Africa. Discrimination in Education against Pregnant Girls and Adolescents Mothers*

IV. References

- Abdou, N. (2019, February 09). *Top 10 Facts about Living Conditions in Algeria*. Retrieved from The Borgen Project: <https://borgenproject.org/top-10-facts-about-living-conditions-in-algeria/>
- Algeria. (2017, February 20). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/2* - Algeria*. United Nations Human Rights Council. Retrieved February 2022, from United Nations Human Rights Council: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/038/00/PDF/G1703800.pdf?OpenElement>
- Arab, S. (2017, December). *The Algerian Education System*. Retrieved February 2022, from About Algeria: <https://www.aboutalgeria.com/2017/12/the-algerian-education-system.html>
- Bazizi, Y. (2021). *Les principaux indicateurs du secteur de l'éducation nationale année scolaire 2019-2020*. Office National des Statistiques. Retrieved February 2022, from <https://www.ons.dz/spip.php?article2637>
- Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. (2018, May 25). *Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Algeria*. Retrieved February 2022, from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CMW/C/DZA/CO/2&Lang=En
- Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2019, June 27). *Concluding observations on the initial report of Algeria*. Retrieved February 2022, from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD/C/DZA/CO/1&Lang=En
- Handicap International. (2021). *Country card Algeria 2020*. Retrieved February 2022, from Handicap International - Humanity & Inclusion: <https://hi.org/en/country/algeria>
- Human Rights Watch. (2018). *Leave No Girl Behind in Africa. Discrimination in Education against Pregnant Girls and Adolescents Mothers*. Retrieved February 2022, from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/06/14/leave-no-girl-behind-africa/discrimination-education-against-pregnant-girls-and>
- MERIC-Net. (2019). *The Higher Education system in Algeria*. National Report. Retrieved February 2022, from http://www.meric-net.eu/files/fileusers/National_Report_template_MERIC-NET_Algeria_English.pdf
- Oxford Business Group. (2017). *Algeria overhauls teaching methods and increases education funding*. In *THE REPORT Algeria 2017*. Retrieved February 2022, from <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/knuckling-down-overhaul-teaching-methods-and-increased-funding-raise-standard-learning-all-schooling>

- Oxford Business Group. (2018). Reforms to Algeria's education system to expand capacity and modernise curricula. In *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*. Retrieved February 2022, from <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/contemporary-tutelage-transforming-education-system-expand-capacity-and-prepare-students-modern-age>
- Oxford Business Group. (2018). Tahar Hadjar, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research: Interview. In *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*. Retrieved February 2022, from <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/interview/encouraging-moves-tahar-hadjar-minister-higher-education-and-scientific-research-partnerships>
- Oxford Business Group. (2018). Technical and vocational training improve employment. In Oxford Business Group, *THE REPORT Algeria 2018*. Retrieved February 2022, from <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/job-development-and-promotion-technical-and-vocational-training-key-improving-employment-15>
- Rachid, B. (2018). Access to schooling for people with special needs in Algeria. *Sociology International Journal*, 371-375. Retrieved February 2022, from <http://medcraveonline.com/SIJ/SIJ-02-00071.pdf>
- Roser, M., Nagdy, M., & Ortiz-Ospina, E. (2015). *Quality of Education - Results from the PISA study*. Retrieved February 2022, from Our World in Data: <https://ourworldindata.org/quality-of-education#results-from-the-pisa-study>
- Save the Children. (2020). *Save our Education. Protect every child's right to learn in the COVID-19 response and recovery*. London: Save the Children. Retrieved February 2022, from <https://www.savethechildren.net/save-our-education-report/>
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics Technical Cooperation Group. (2021). *Data Resources*. Retrieved February 2022, from UNESCO Institute for Statistics Technical Cooperation Group: <https://tcg.uis.unesco.org/data-resources/>
- United Nations Human Rights Council. (2017, May). *Universal Periodic Review - Algeria*. Retrieved February 2022, from United Nations Human Rights Council: https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session27/DZ/ALGERIA_Infographic_27th.pdf
- Valladares, G. (2021, April 26). *Sahrawi Refugees living in Algeria: the Forgotten Crisis*. Retrieved February 2022, from The Borgen Project: <https://borgenproject.org/sahrawi-refugees-living-in-algeria/>
- Zeid Ra' Al Hussein, High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2017, October 23). *Letter by the High Commissioner to the Foreign Minister*. Retrieved February 2022, from United Nations Human Rights Council: <https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session27/DZ/AlgeriaHCLetter.pdf>



**BROKEN
CHALK**

Kingsfordweg 151, 1043 GR

Amsterdam, Netherlands

+31685639758 | info@brokenchalk.org | www.brokenchalk.org

[@brokenchalk](https://twitter.com/brokenchalk)

<https://www.youtube.com/brokenchalk>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/brokenchalk>

[@brokenchalk](https://www.facebook.com/brokenchalk)