

# ***RIGHT TO EDUCATION***

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

4<sup>th</sup> Cycle – 44<sup>th</sup> Session

## **Country Review: Djibouti**

March 2023  
by Belise Hirwa



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**Broken Chalk** is an Amsterdam-based NGO established in 2020 which focuses on monitoring and minimising human rights violations in education worldwide. We aim to promote universal and equal access to education for all.

We encourage and support achieving societal peace with our international sponsors and partners by advocating for intercultural tolerance, preventing radicalism and polarisation, and tackling educational inequalities.

**Content**

**Introduction**..... 3  
**Problems facing education in Djibouti**..... 3  
**Recommendations**..... 4  
**References**..... 5

## Introduction

1. The general education in Djibouti dictates that a child should enrol on education at the official age of six. The primary level typically takes five years of completion; then four years are spent in the lower secondary level as it extends with three more years in senior secondary. They were alternatively proceeding to either vocational training or tertiary institutions.

## Problems facing education in Djibouti

2. **Poverty:** This being the leading cause of low non-enrollment of students in schools, it has also been the reason for social problems, legal-status issues, disability and sociocultural issues, including child labour. Less than 50% of the population can read and write.
3. Non-compulsory preschool education, lack of services for disabled children, and lack of birth certificates have majorly affected most students' procession for higher education. Among these are significant barriers to access to education in Djibouti caused by poverty.
4. **Teacher quality:** In Djibouti, there is a high rate of low-quality teachers. Most training schools produce low numbers of teachers resulting in low recruitment of trained personnel. Most teachers' training institutions need more skilled facilities/equipment.
5. **Gender inequality:** In this context, females are under-represented in almost all levels of education. This is mainly caused by the cultural beliefs among communities in Djibouti where the girl's priorities are undermined, unlike the boys. Early marriages and teen pregnancies are among other leading factors experienced in Djibouti.
6. **Information Communication Technology:** Djibouti has yet to develop a sector-specific ICT for education policy in exceptionally high schools. In connection with the lack of functional materials in most schools, this has been a challenge primarily experienced in the Djibouti educational system. However, ICT has also been recognised as a critical tool in modernising the academic state in Djibouti tertiary education.
7. Educational institutions in Djibouti need higher levels of funding. Annual records have identified this as an urgent matter, as most educational institutions need modern equipment that corresponds to the latest achievements of science. This has resulted in an opposing force that has significantly affected the wages of academic workers.

8. Private schools in Djibouti serve 0.3% of children aged between 6 years. This is caused by high school fees ranging between 1000\$ annually, which can be afforded by fewer families due to poverty.
9. Many of the schools are in poor condition and need upgrading. Most secondary schools are in the larger centres, and the number of classrooms for secondary students needs to be improved, causing congestion, inferior educational methods, and, eventually, dropouts.
10. The nomadic people still need to be addressed with modern education and are setting Djibouti aback educational-wise. They have their minds set on traditional responsibilities, but ways are being sorted on how they can get as low as primary education.
11. With Djibouti's current deteriorated economic state, it hosts around 100,000 refugees, forcibly displaced people and illegal immigrants from the neighbouring countries Somalia and Ethiopia. With the increased number of people coming to Djibouti, they burden the already weak economic state of Djibouti.
12. Arabic, the primary language in schools, has been a challenge facing foreign and local students who need to practise Islam.

## Recommendations

13. Foreign assistance should be highly embraced in Djibouti. The Ministry of Education in Djibouti has cooperated with foreign aid assistance to broaden local knowledge with the World Bank. This leads to the donation of educational materials to some schools in Djibouti, which reduces the cases of students being unable to attend school.
14. European Union is among the Western donors that have invested in education matters in central Asia. Through this, gender equality has been established in different educational institutions.
15. Hiring qualified teachers, especially in primary schools, is a mode that the government of Djibouti has adopted to ensure high quality of education among these students.
16. The Education Action Programme 2017-19, initiated by MENFOP and supported by the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Education and UNICEF, seeks to address the pressing issues of over-enrollment and limited facilities.

17. The government has also committed itself to cultivating future leaders. In September 2017, authorities opened the designated School of Excellence aimed at identifying young talent at the primary-school level
18. Consult with UNHCR to create centres to help refugees and illegal migrants in the country.
19. Help teachers improve their knowledge and skills to provide children with better education.
20. The government under MENFOP is setting up a digital policy to effectively control the education system and optimal integration of new technologies in the learning-teaching process.

## References

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