



Advocacy & Accountability Survey Results: Law 103-13 on combating violence against women in Morocco

10 September 2018

Summary

Law 103-13 on combating violence against women in Morocco will go into effect this week.¹ MRA Mobilising for Rights Associates conducted an initial online survey of NGOs and activists across the country to stimulate reflections on their recent experiences conducting legislative advocacy to parliamentarians for amendments to the draft law.

Among the main findings from responses to this initial survey:

- The vast majority (82.35%) of respondents had contacted a parliamentarian directly about Draft Law 103-13;
- 50% of respondents reported that they did not receive a response from parliamentarians they contacted;
- 67% of respondents expressed their opinion that the parliamentarians were seldom to not at all available;
- 62.5% of respondents expressed their opinion that the parliamentarians were not very or not at all receptive to issues of violence against women;
- 83.3% of respondents reported that it was not easy or not at all easy to obtain the contact information for parliamentarians in order to get in touch with them;
- 62.5% of respondents reported that it was not easy or not at all easy to obtain information on the timing of the review and vote on the Draft Law to follow it and intervene in a timely manner;
- 57% of respondents felt that it was not at all easy to obtain information on opportunities for NGOs to participate in the legislative process.

These responses suggest the need for several measures to improve the accountability and responsiveness of parliamentarians, and to promote real citizen-centered advocacy for the future, including:

- Advocacy efforts by NGOs that are ongoing and sustained;
- Publication and sharing in a timely manner of detailed reports of votes, including the names of absentees and the voting record of each Parliamentarian;
- Public availability of a list of professional contact information for all individual parliamentarians;
- Timely public dissemination of information throughout all stages of the legislative process;
- Known and accessible mechanisms for all NGOs to participate in direct dialogues with parliamentarians.

Background and Rationale

Law 103-13 on violence against women was promulgated on February 22, 2018, after two years of review in the two Houses of Parliament.

¹ As provided in article 18 of the law, 6 months after its publication in the Official Bulletin on March 12, 2018.

The Moroccan Government Council approved a second version of Draft Law 103-13 on violence against women in March 2016. The House of Representatives then made some 28 minor amendments to the text before voting on it in July 2016, with only ¼ of the representatives present for the plenary vote. After 18 months, the House of Councilors passed Law 103-13 in plenary on January 30, 2018, with a quasi-absence of amendments to the Draft Law and only 1/3 of the councilors present for the vote.

It is worth recalling that one of the legislative functions of Parliamentary representatives is to make amendments to Draft Laws.²

Throughout this process, given the numerous shortcomings of Draft Law 103-13, Moroccan civil society had advocated for many proposals to improve it. The constitutional framework³ ensures the rights of NGOs to contribute to the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of decisions and projects of elected institutions and public authorities, and of citizens to submit motions in legislative matters.

In this context, MRA Mobilising for Rights Associates conducted an initial online survey among NGOs and activists across Morocco to encourage assessments of the legislative advocacy process around Law 103-13 on Violence against Women.

Objectives

This initial online survey⁴ aimed to gather reflections and assessments of legislative advocacy experiences with Law 103-13 on violence against women in Morocco, from NGOs' points of view, with the goal of improving and enhancing future citizen-centered advocacy efforts.

Specifically, this survey focused on:

- Advocacy on Draft Law 103-13 to *national parliamentarians* throughout the review, to evaluate efforts to make amendments to the original draft law as prepared by the government;⁵
- *Direct advocacy* efforts - i.e., outreach to and communication with a parliamentarian directly (not more general or diffuse activities such as awareness campaigns, conferences, roundtables, etc.).

We hope to encourage a deliberate learning process in order to:

- Learn from advocacy efforts following the enactment of the law, to "close the loop," in a continuous feedback process;
- Recognize that advocacy is not a one-off exercise, and improve ongoing efforts for future reforms to Law 103-13;
- Identify areas of transformation to be encouraged in relationships and dialogue between parliament and civil society;
- Encourage true citizen-centered advocacy and responsiveness and accountability of elected representatives;
- Suggest areas of inquiry for future, more in-depth analysis.

² Article 83 of the 2011 Moroccan Constitution.

³ Articles 12, 13 and 14 of the 2011 Moroccan Constitution.

⁴ The survey was created online at <https://en.surveymonkey.com>, an online free and multilingual survey software, available to all.

⁵ In other words, once the government had transferred the Draft Law to Parliament.

Methodology

This short initial online survey was comprised of 10 questions of different types - open, closed, and ranking. Participation was strictly anonymous and respondents could skip any question they did not want to answer. The average time to complete the survey was a little over 9 minutes.

The initial survey was posted on-line and open from June 4 to June 30, 2018. An announcement and invitation to participate in the survey was distributed through:

- An initial e-mail and two reminder e-mails, sent to a list of 399 e-mail contacts of NGOs and lawyers in Morocco;
- A Facebook post;
- An embedded link on our website.

19 respondents participated in the initial online survey.

There are several possible explanations for interpreting this lower than we would have liked response rate:

- The very broad initial mailing list included numerous contacts that do not engage in direct advocacy;
- A tendency to not participate, feel concerned or contribute to an initiative that is not "their" project, initiated by someone else;
- The lack of a culture of monitoring and evaluation of advocacy efforts.

Main Findings and Proposals

1. Survey Respondents

Of the 19 respondents, 15 (83.33%) identified themselves as NGOs and 3 (16.67%) as individual activists.⁶

The 19 survey respondents came from 17 very different locations across the country – large cities, small towns and villages, from the north and south, west and east, the two coasts as well as the interior of the country.

This suggests that initiatives to address violence against women and advocacy efforts are not limited to large cities or the Casablanca-Rabat corridor, but are indeed spread across the country.

2. Direct contact with Parliamentarians

82.35% of respondents answered "Yes" in response to the question:

During the 12-month period from February 2017 to February 2018, did you directly contact a national parliamentarian (deputy or councilor) to speak specifically about Draft Law 103-13?

A large percentage of respondents had made direct contact with a national parliamentarian to discuss Draft Law 103-13. Therefore, among the great diversity represented in the respondents, the vast majority had made direct advocacy efforts.

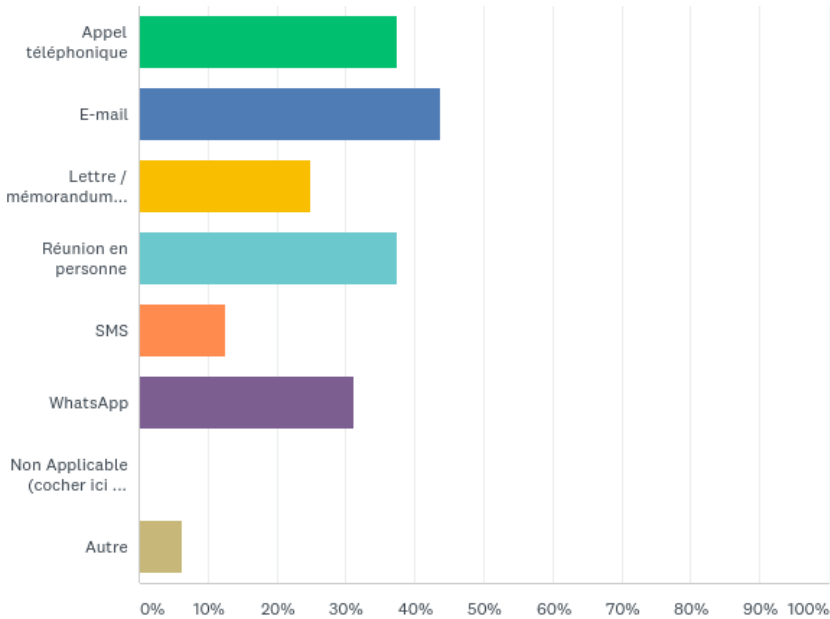
⁶ One respondent skipped the question.

However, the few negative responses to this question suggest that these respondents considered that membership in a network or national coordination had been interpreted by some as delegating responsibility for communication to this central coordination, and thus could serve as an obstacle to direct and organic communication between a larger number of NGOs and parliamentarians.

Proposal: This suggests the need to clarify and rethink the roles and missions of networks and coordinations, to facilitate advocacy by others rather than replacing them, to promote a more organic grassroots level mass movement, instead of channeling and narrowing advocacy.

3. Forms of Direct Contact with Parliamentarians:

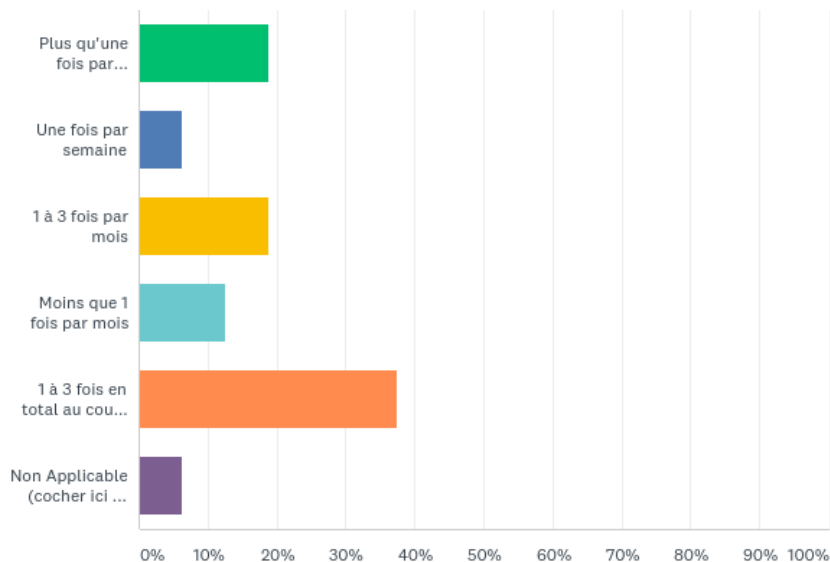
Respondents indicated using a variety of communication forms to contact parliamentarians:⁷



4. Frequency of Direct Contact with Parliamentarians:

In response to the question, *on average, how often did you contact a national parliamentarian?*, the answers suggest varying and periodic frequencies, both among the respondents as well as among the different respondents.

⁷ « Other » was Facebook.



It appears that advocacy efforts were frequently one-off events, limited to a specific activity or project, rather than being regular, ongoing and permanent over time. 37.5% of respondents indicated that they had contacted parliamentarians only 1-3 times during the year. This reflects a concept of advocacy as a one-off or occasional activity, preventing the creation of real pressure, or permanent relationships and dialogue with parliamentarians.

Proposal: Establish regular and continuous advocacy with on-going communications, information sharing, and concrete proposals, where advocacy becomes an integral part of all daily projects and efforts.

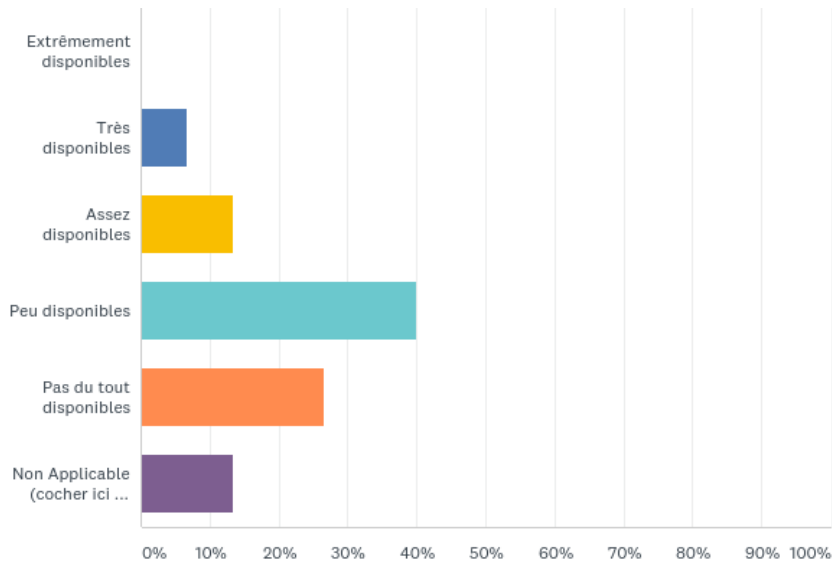
5. Responses from Parliamentarians

The response rate of parliamentarians remains quite low, with 50% of respondents reporting that they did not receive responses to their efforts to contact the parliamentarians.

Proposal: Develop a culture of and accountability mechanisms for parliamentarians to respond to citizen communications.

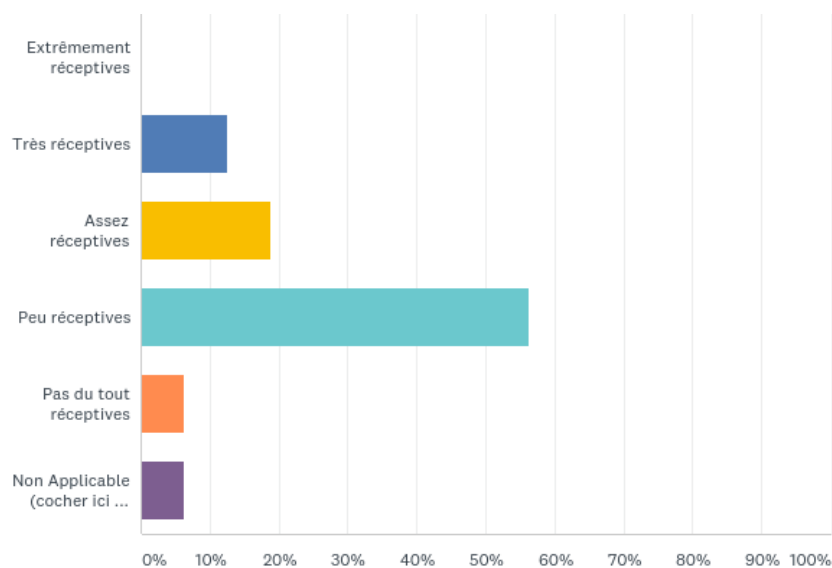
6. Availability of Parliamentarians

In response to the question, *based on these experiences, how would you rate the availability of parliamentarians?* 67% of respondents expressed their opinion that parliamentarians were not very to not at all available.



7. Receptiveness of Parliamentarians

In response to the question, *based on these experiences, how would you rate the receptiveness of parliamentarians to your views on violence against women?*, 62.5% of respondents expressed their opinion that parliamentarians were not very or not at all receptive.



8. Follow-up on Commitments

In response to the question, *based on these experiences, to what extent do you think that Parliamentarians followed up on the commitments made in direct contacts?*, 60% of respondents felt that parliamentarians did not follow up very much or at all on commitments made.

9. Access to Information

Respondents were asked to rate how easy it was for them to obtain official information on four key elements of legislative advocacy:

	PAS DU TOUT FACILE	PEU FACILE	ASSEZ FACILE	TRÈS FACILE	EXTRÊMEMENT FACILE	N.A.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Coordonnées des parlementaires	33.33% 4	50.00% 6	8.33% 1	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	0.00% 0	12	2.00
Le calendrier de l'examen et le vote du projet de loi 103-13	12.50% 1	50.00% 4	25.00% 2	12.50% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8	2.38
Le contenu du projet de loi 103-13 et des amendements proposés	14.29% 1	14.29% 1	57.14% 4	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7	2.71
Des opportunités pour les ONG de participer dans le processus législatif	50.00% 7	7.14% 1	14.29% 2	7.14% 1	7.14% 1	14.29% 2	14	2.00

- *Parliamentarians' contact information:* 83.3% of respondents felt that it was not easy or not at all easy to obtain parliamentarians' contact information in order to get in touch with them.
- *The timing of the review and vote on Draft Law 103-13:* 62.5% of respondents felt that it was not easy or not at all easy to obtain information on the timing of the review and vote on the Draft Law in order to follow it and participate in a timely manner.

It should be noted that the respondents who found it easy indicated that this was due to the fact that the information was shared with them by another NGO (and not from official sources). This highlights the importance of NGOs disseminating and widely sharing information among themselves.

- *The content of Draft Law 103-13 and proposed amendments:* 57% of respondents felt that it was somewhat easy to receive information about the law's content of the law. However, given the time the Draft Law took in the legislative process, it is a concern that 28.6% still felt that it was not easy or not at all easy.
- *Opportunities for NGOs to participate in the legislative process:* 57% of respondents felt it was not easy or not at all easy to obtain information on opportunities for NGOs to participate in the legislative process.

Proposals

- The need for a publicly available list of contact information for all individual parliamentarians (not just groups or commissions), with all professional contact details (phone, fax, email and other).
Some responses raise the issue of whether or not local authorities (political parties, local elected representatives, other local public actors) are playing their role of facilitating contact between their constituents and national representatives, of transmitting proposals, or of serving as relay between their community and the national level.

- The need for public information in a timely manner throughout all stages of the legislative calendar.
- The need to establish functional, accessible, publicly known mechanisms open to all NGOs for dialogue and direct advocacy with parliamentarians.

10. Key Challenges to Direct Advocacy to Parliamentarians

In response to the question, *what was the main challenge to engage directly with parliamentarians in advocating for Draft Law 103-13?*, two main themes emerge, highlighting a lack of accountability and the non responsiveness of parliamentarians to citizen concerns. According to respondents, these challenges are:

- The lack of commitment by and will of parliamentarians to address issues of violence against women;
- The unavailability of and inaccessibility to parliamentarians.

Proposal:

- The need for publicly available, accessible and widely-known mechanisms to ensure the transparency, responsiveness and accountability of parliamentarians, including:
 - The publication and sharing in a timely manner of reports from votes, in committees as well as in plenary, including details such as the names of all absentees as well as the voting record of each representative.

MRA/Mobilising for Rights Associates
3, rue Oued Zem - Rabat, Morocco
T: + (212) 537.70.99.96/98 F: + (212) 537.70.99.97
mra@mrawomen.ma www.mrawomen.ma