



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**

**Pre-session working group**

**Forty-third session**

19 January-6 February 2009

**List of issues and questions with regard to the consideration  
of periodic reports**

**Rwanda**

The pre-session working group considered the combined fourth, fifth and sixth periodic report of Rwanda (CEDAW/C/RWA/6).

**General**

1. Please provide information on the process of preparation of the report. This information should indicate which Government departments and institutions were involved and the nature and extent of their participation, whether consultations were held with non-governmental organizations, particularly women's organizations and whether the report was adopted by the Government and presented to Parliament.
2. Kindly describe the manner in which the provisions of the Convention are reflected in national development strategies and in instruments such as the poverty reduction strategy papers and the Millennium Development Goals reports.
3. The report contains very limited statistical data disaggregated by sex on the situation of women in areas covered by the Convention. Please provide information on the status of data collection and analysis of data in the country in general, and to what extent such data collection takes place on a sex-disaggregated basis. Please indicate how the Government intends to improve the collection of data disaggregated by sex pertaining to the areas of the Convention so as to support policymaking and programme-development and measure progress towards implementation of the Convention.
4. Please provide information on whether the Government has sought, or received, technical and financial assistance to address the low female literacy rate, the high dropout of girls, maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS among women.



**Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework and status of the Convention**

5. The report mentions that conventions duly ratified or approved have higher authority than organic and ordinary laws. Please provide information on whether the Convention is directly applicable and whether there are instances of cases where the Convention has been cited in the courts and the outcome of such cases.

6. According to of the report, amendments to the Criminal Code, the Family Code and the Commercial Code are in preparation in order to eliminate discrimination against women. Please provide updated information on the status of these amendments, time-frame for their adoption and obstacles impeding their adoption if applicable.

7. Please provide statistical data on the number of cases involving discrimination against women that have been reported to the National Commission on Human Rights and the Office of the Ombudsman as well as outcome decisions of these cases.

8. Please describe whether, beside those in the participation of women in political and public life, the Government is taking any steps to adopt temporary special measures in line with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and with the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, to accelerate the de facto equality between women and men in other areas.

**Violence against women**

9. Bearing in mind the Committee's general recommendation No. 19 regarding violence against women, please describe steps taken to develop a comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of violence against women, including prosecution of perpetrators, provision of assistance (such as shelters, counselling and legal support) to victims and introduction of capacity-building and awareness-raising programmes for various sectors (such as the judiciary, the police, lawyers, health and social workers) and the general public.

10. Please provide information on the number of cases of rape during the genocide which have been prosecuted through either the regular court system or the recently instituted "gacaca" system. Please also indicate to which extent the laws governing genocide trials and the "gacaca" process give special attention to sexual violence and how victims and witnesses who wish to report or testify about sexual violence are protected.

11. Please provide data on the incidence of, and trends in, violence against women, including rape and domestic violence as well as information on the number of prosecutions and convictions in domestic violence cases during the last five years.

**Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution**

12. The report does not provide sufficient information on laws or measures to prevent and punish trafficking in women and girls, including information on the prevalence of this phenomenon. Please provide this information.

13. According to the report, poverty and inadequate education are among the main causes for prostitution among women and girls. The report also states that

“measures have been taken to educate women and girls who engage in this activity and make them aware that it is immoral and poses them a lethal threat, in particular the risk of HIV/AIDS”. Please give detailed information about those measures and indicate if programmes for the physical and psychological recovery and social rehabilitation for girls and women victims of sexual exploitation, which is a violation of their human rights, are available as well. Kindly indicate any other measures undertaken to limit the number of girls being driven into prostitution and to reintegrate them into education or employment.

### **Participation in political and public life and representation at the international level**

14. Please provide information, including statistical data, on the participation of women in the public sector, including at the decision-making level, the judiciary, the diplomatic and consular missions.

### **Education**

15. The report shows a high illiteracy rate among women and girls (43.5 per cent for women in 2002). Please provide information on measures taken to improve female literacy rates, in particular in rural areas, including detailed information about the results already achieved through the literacy campaign being implemented in Rwanda and which aims at achieving a literacy rate of 85 per cent by 2015. Kindly indicate what the latest available female literacy rate is.

16. The report notes a high dropout rate of girls, a relatively low success rate and a resulting imbalance between boys and girls in the public secondary level and in higher education, where there are fewer girls than boys. Please explain the reasons for the high dropout rate of girls and indicate how the Government plans to increase school attendance and the enrolment of girls. What support is offered to families in order to decrease dropout rates?

17. Please indicate whether the programme “Education for All” adopted by the Ministry of Education includes measures to combat gender stereotyping in the education system through the revision of school textbooks. Kindly provide information about measures taken and their impact.

### **Employment**

18. The statistical information provided in the report shows that women suffer from underemployment in both the private and the public sector. Please provide information on measures being implemented to address issues of underemployment in both sectors and provide figures for the unemployment of women.

19. Kindly provide information on the situation of women in the informal economy. This should include information about the percentage of women in this sector, as compared to men, and their areas of work, as well as information about social protection measures available to such workers, and the percentage of women who, in practice, have access to them.

20. Please provide information on measures undertaken to address sexual harassment and violence against women in the workplace.

21. According to the report, the Government plans to extend social insurance to employees in the private sector. Please provide information on the progress of this plan.

**Rural women, refugee women and other vulnerable groups of women**

22. Please describe the impact of measures carried out by the Government to improve the situation of rural women, including their access to education, health, land, social security and their participation in decision-making processes at all levels. Also indicate what efforts have been made to raise women's awareness and empower them to claim their rights, such as to property and inheritance.

23. In addition to the general information provided in the report about measures taken to address poverty among women, such as access to loans and microcredit, what measures have been adopted to specifically support women heads of households in the post-conflict period?

24. The report does not provide any information on the situation of women and girls refugees and those who are internally displaced in the country. Please provide such information, in particular the economic and social situation of women and girls refugees, and measures in place to support them. Has the Government received any assistance for such women from the United Nations system or other donors?

25. In its concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed its concern at the disparities in the enjoyments of rights experienced by girls and children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, such as abandoned and orphan children, children with disabilities, children born out of wedlock, children living in rural areas and Pygmy children (CRC/C/15/Add.234, para. 23). What measures has the Government taken to address these issues in response to the Committee on the Rights of the Child's recommendation?

26. In its concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed its concern that a large number of single-parent and child-headed families, notably families headed by girls, face financial and other kinds of difficulties (CRC/C/15/Add.234, para. 38). Please provide detailed information on programmes and policies established to enable girls to pursue education, instead of seeking employment to help younger siblings.

**Health**

27. The report shows that, although the maternal mortality rate has declined recently, it remains high. Please provide details of the Government's strategy to reduce the maternal mortality rate. In particular, indicate what concrete steps have been taken to increase the availability of prenatal and postnatal care services in both urban and rural settings.

28. The report indicates that the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is higher in women than men (3.6 per cent for women and 2.3 per cent for men). It also indicates that the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is higher among pregnant women than among the general female population. Please provide information on whether any existing programmes to combat HIV/AIDS integrate a gender perspective, including the availability of antiretroviral medication to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

29. The report notes that although there is a fairly high level of awareness of contraceptive methods, their use is not widespread. What programmes are in place or envisaged to provide women and men with access to modern contraceptives so that women do not have to resort to clandestine abortions and to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy? Are contraceptives available and affordable, including in rural areas?

**Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20, paragraph 1**

30. Please indicate any progress made with respect to the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Please also indicate what progress has been made towards acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention pertaining to the Committee's meeting time.

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