



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
14 March 2019

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Angola*

1. The Committee considered the seventh periodic report of Angola (CEDAW/C/AGO/7) at its 1673rd and 1674th meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.1673 and CEDAW/C/SR.1674), held on 27 February 2019. The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/AGO/Q/7, and the responses of the State party are contained in CEDAW/C/AGO/Q/7/Add.1.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State party of its seventh periodic report. It also appreciates the State party's follow-up report to the previous concluding observations of the Committee (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6/Add.1) and its written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group, as well as the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party on its multisectoral delegation, which was headed by the Secretary of the Family and of the Promotion of Women's Rights, Ruth M. Mixinge. The delegation also included representatives of the Ministry of Social Action, the Family and the Advancement of Women, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Public Administration, Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of the Environment, the Civil Office of the Presidency of the Republic, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-second session (18 February–8 March 2019).



B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2013 of the State party's previous report in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of Presidential Decree No. 155/16 of 9 August 2016 establishing a legal and social protection framework for domestic workers.

5. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, such as the adoption of the following:

(a) Presidential Decree 143/17 of 26 June 2017 approving the national plan of action for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security;

(b) Presidential Decree No. 222/13 of 24 September 2013 approving the national policy on gender equality and equity;

(c) Presidential Decree No. 26/13 of 8 May 2013 approving the executive plan to combat domestic violence and establishing the Multisectoral Council for the implementation of the plan and its timetable of activities.

6. The Committee welcomes the fact that, in the period since the consideration of the previous report, the State party has ratified or acceded to the following international and regional instruments:

(a) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, on 19 September 2014;

(b) Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, on 19 September 2014;

(c) African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, on 14 June 2013;

(d) United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, on 1 April 2013.

C. Sustainable Development Goals

7. The Committee welcomes the international support for the Sustainable Development Goals and calls for the realization of de jure (legal) and de facto (substantive) gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Committee recalls the importance of Goal 5 and of the mainstreaming of the principles of equality and non-discrimination throughout all 17 Goals. It urges the State party to recognize women as the driving force of the sustainable development of the State party and to adopt relevant policies and strategies to that effect.

D. Parliament

8. The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see [A/65/38](#), part two, annex VI). It invites the National Assembly, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations

between now and the submission of the next periodic report under the Convention.

E. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations

9. The Committee welcomes the publication and dissemination of a Portuguese translation of the Convention. It also welcomes the plans made and initiatives taken to build the human rights capacity of current and future members of the judiciary and the security and police forces. The Committee remains concerned, however, that women, in particular women in rural and remote areas and women belonging to minority groups, remain unaware of their rights under the Convention and lack the information on the procedures necessary to claim their rights under national legislation and the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto.

10. The Committee recalls its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 8) and recommends that the State party:

(a) **Translate the Convention into Chokwe, Kikongo, Kimbundu, Ovambo and Umbundu and ensure its wide dissemination;**

(b) **Reinforce targeted awareness-raising among women, communal and municipal officials and traditional, religious and community leaders of women's rights under the Convention and the procedures under the Optional Protocol, including through strengthened cooperation with civil society organizations in that regard.**

Legal framework for equality and discriminatory laws

11. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party that the continuing revision of a number of laws will not result in gender-specific legal provisions. It is concerned that:

(a) Gender-neutral legislation might lead to the inadequate protection of women from direct and indirect discrimination and consequently hinder the achievement of substantive equality between women and men;

(b) The definitions of equal rights and non-discrimination in articles 21 (h), 22 (3) (b) and 23 of the Constitution of the State party do not comprise a comprehensive definition of discrimination in line with article 1 of the Convention.

12. In line with its general recommendation No. 28 (2010) on the core obligations of States parties under article 2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Introduce a gender-sensitive approach to its legislation, policies and programmes;**

(b) **Adopt a comprehensive definition of discrimination against women, covering all prohibited grounds of discrimination, including direct and indirect discrimination in the public and private spheres and intersecting forms of discrimination, in line with article 1 of the Convention and target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals.**

Access to justice

13. The Committee welcomes the initiation of the decentralization of the courts through the adoption, on 2 February 2015, of Act No. 2/15, on the principles and rules for the organization and operations of the courts of ordinary jurisdiction. It takes note of the efforts to establish alternative conflict resolution mechanisms, including through the creation and regulation of out-of-court dispute settlement centres, as well as the adoption of Dispute Mediation and Conciliation Act No. 12/16 and Executive Decree 290/17, on arbitration. The Committee is concerned, however, that women continue to face multiple barriers to obtaining access to justice, owing to the following:

(a) The limited availability of courts and out-of-court dispute settlement centres, in particular in rural areas;

(b) The lack of capacity-building programmes for actors involved in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and the limited oversight over their functions, which heightens the risk of such institutions perpetuating discriminatory gender stereotypes and harmful practices;

(c) The remaining provisions of customary law that are not in line with the Convention.

14. **The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 10) and recommends that the State party, in line with its general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice:**

(a) **Accelerate the process of the decentralization of the courts and the creation of out-of-court dispute settlement centres throughout the State party, in particular in rural areas, accompanying that process with the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, in order to ensure access for women to justice and better address the intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women, in particular women in rural areas, women with disabilities, women who are victims of gender-based violence and migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women, in line with commitments made in the context of the second review cycle of the State party under the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/28/11, para. 134.112);**

(b) **Provide targeted capacity-building on the Convention and women's rights to actors involved in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms to guarantee the adequate protection of the rights of women and girls and ensure that they are not compromised and strengthen the monitoring of those functions to ensure that their implementation is in line with the Convention;**

(c) **Expedite the completion of the continuing work to address inconsistencies between customary law and that of the Constitution of the State party, and ensure that all necessary safeguards are provided, including through legislative measures, to prevent violations of the rights enshrined in the Convention by customary judicial mechanisms.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

15. The Committee takes note of the creation, in 2017, of the Ministry of Social Action, the Family and the Advancement of Women and information provided by the State party that the Ministry is represented at the provincial and municipal levels. It is concerned, however, about the following:

(a) The pending approval of an action plan for the implementation of the national policy on gender equality and equity since the adoption of the policy in 2013,

resulting in a lack of baselines, strategies and targets for the realization of women's rights;

(b) The insufficient level of human, technical and financial resources, which prevents the newly created Ministry from effectively carrying out its work on the promotion and protection of women's rights;

(c) The insufficient number of initiatives aimed explicitly at promoting gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting;

(d) The lack of coordination of efforts to achieve gender mainstreaming throughout national, provincial and municipal bodies and among their agents.

16. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with its general recommendation No. 28 and target 5.c of the Sustainable Development Goals:

(a) **Expedite the adoption of the action plan for the implementation of the national policy on gender equality and equity and incorporate a results-oriented approach, based on specific indicators and targets to measure outcomes and progress achieved towards its implementation, ensuring systematic and regular monitoring and reporting;**

(b) **Provide the Ministry of Social Action, the Family and the Advancement of Women with adequate human, technical and financial resources to enable it to carry out its mandate effectively as the national machinery for the advancement of women;**

(c) **Reinforce the presence of the Multisectoral Gender Coordination Council at all levels of Government to ensure the effective coordination, monitoring and assessment of the impact of public policies and actions on the advancement of women;**

(d) **Revise Act No. 15/10 to integrate provisions on gender-related budgeting and provide support to the gender focal points in line ministries, government departments and agencies in order to ensure effective gender mainstreaming.**

National human rights institutions

17. The Committee takes note of the existence of the Office of the Ombudsman and the information provided by the State party that the process to allocate a separate budget to the Office is under way. It is concerned, however, that the Office does not comply with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and that women do not often seek the services of the Office owing to gaps in its mandate with regard to gender equality.

18. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Expedite the adoption of the legal framework necessary to enable the Office of the Ombudsman to comply effectively with the Paris Principles, in line with the commitments made in the context of the universal periodic review (A/HRC/28/11, para. 134.46);**

(b) **Provide the Office of the Ombudsman with a specific mandate on women's rights, as well as the human, technical and financial resources necessary to carry out the mandate;**

(c) **Encourage the Office of the Ombudsman to apply for accreditation by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.**

Women human rights defenders, journalists and members of civil society organizations

19. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party that the right of association is guaranteed by its Constitution (art. 48) and its national legislation (Act No. 6/12). It is concerned, however, about measures taken by the State party that restrict freedom of expression and association and peaceful protests, including through intimidation, harassment and violence on the part of the police force. The Committee takes note of the revocation of Presidential Decree No. 74/15 on the regulation of non-governmental organizations and welcomes the forum held with non-governmental organizations in November 2017. It is concerned, however, about the absence of any opportunity for direct interaction with representatives of civil society in the preparations for the interactive dialogue and that the State party does not avail itself fully of the contributions of non-governmental organizations to the advancement of women and social and economic development.

20. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt and implement, without delay, effective measures to protect women human rights defenders, journalists and members of civil society organizations, in particular those working in the area of women's rights, and to enable them to carry out their work freely and without fear of harassment, violence or intimidation, or the threat thereof, and ensure that perpetrators of such acts are brought to justice, as also recommended by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/AGO/CO/4-5, para. 18);**

(b) **Collaborate with civil society organizations, in particular women's associations, on the design, implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and measures aimed at the advancement of women in all areas covered by the Convention, as well as on the process of reporting to the Committee.**

Temporary special measures

21. The Committee notes with concern that, since the adoption, on 3 December 2010, of Act No. 22/10, on political parties, the State party has not taken further temporary special measures to accelerate the advancement of women who are underrepresented or disadvantaged, in particular women and girls with disabilities and rural women.

22. **In line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, the Committee recalls its previous observations (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 16) and recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Raise awareness among parliamentarians, government officials, employers and the general public of the necessity of temporary special measures to achieve substantive equality between women and men in all areas covered by the Convention, in particular those in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged;**

(b) **Take further legal measures, including quotas and other proactive measures, accompanied by time-bound targets, sufficient resources and sanctions for non-compliance, to accelerate the realization of the rights of all women under the Convention, in particular women and girls with disabilities and rural women and girls.**

Stereotypes and harmful practices

23. The Committee welcomes the criminalization of female genital mutilation through the adoption, on 23 January 2019, of the new Penal Code, as well as the creation of forums for the discussion of gender equality in communities, with the participation of traditional authorities (*sobas*), through the establishment of community monitoring centres. It is concerned, however, about the following:

(a) The persistent patriarchal norms that are discriminatory towards women, confine them to their reproductive role and legitimize harmful practices, including child and/or forced marriage, dowry (*lobolo*), polygamy, levirate marriage, female genital mutilation, the accusation of witchcraft and the social exclusion of women and girls accused of practicing witchcraft;

(b) The fact that, under article 24 of the Family Code, the child and/or forced marriage of girls as young as 15 years of age is legal and permissible on an exceptional basis;

(c) The absence of the investigation and prosecution of and sanctions for child and/or forced marriage;

(d) The lack of information on child and/or forced and polygamous marriage, as well as levirate unions celebrated under customary law.

24. **The Committee recalls its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 18 (a)), and, in line with joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2014) on harmful practices, as well as target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, recommends that the State party:**

(a) Prohibit all harmful practices, including child and/or forced marriage, dowry, polygamy, levirate marriage and the social exclusion of women and girls accused of practicing witchcraft, and reinforce public education programmes on the negative impact that those practices have on the enjoyment by women and girls of their rights, targeting customary and religious leaders and regions where harmful practices are endemic, in particular Malanje;

(b) Expedite the revision of the Family Code to ensure that the minimum age of marriage is set at 18 years for both girls and boys and criminalize all child and/or forced marriage, defined as marriage under the age of 18 years;

(c) Enforce legislation prohibiting child and/or forced marriage, polygamy, levirate marriage and female genital mutilation by investigating, prosecuting and punishing perpetrators;

(d) Provide data, in its next periodic report, on child and/or forced and polygamous marriage, as well as on levirate unions celebrated under customary law.

Gender-based violence against women

25. The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party that Act No. 25/11 against domestic violence is currently under review, in consultation with civil society. It is concerned, however, about the following:

(a) The failure to comprehensively prohibit all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres;

(b) The underreporting of gender-based violence against women and girls owing to the social legitimization of violence, a culture of silence and impunity, the

stigmatization of victims by health professionals and law enforcement officers, legal illiteracy and a lack of trust in law enforcement authorities;

- (c) The fact that the SOS domestic violence hotline is no longer functional;
- (d) The frequent resort to mediation in family councils in cases of domestic violence;
- (e) The inadequate assistance and remedies offered to women seeking to escape violent relationships, which is reflected in, inter alia, the insufficient number of shelters and the fact that women prefer to remain with their families despite being subjected to domestic violence;
- (f) The lack of disaggregated data on the number of reported, investigated and prosecuted cases of gender-based violence against women, including domestic violence, and on the sentences imposed.

26. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with its general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, and target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals:

- (a) **Adopt a comprehensive law, in consultation with civil society, to prevent, combat and punish all forms of violence against women, including economic, psychological and physical violence, sexual violence, marital rape and sexual harassment, in the public and private spheres;**
- (b) **Encourage women and girls who are victims of violence to report cases to the police, including by sensitizing them, health professionals and law enforcement officers to the criminal nature of such acts, prosecuting all acts of violence against women and adequately punishing perpetrators;**
- (c) **Expedite the allocation of adequate human, technical and financial resources for the optimal functioning and availability of the free, around the clock SOS domestic violence hotline throughout the State party;**
- (d) **Take all measures necessary, including legal measures, to ensure that cases of violence against women, including domestic violence, are not referred to alternative conflict resolution entities, including family councils, under any circumstances;**
- (e) **Allocate sufficient resources to, and expedite the implementation of, plans to expand the network of shelters and specialized units at police stations and hospitals throughout the State party, ensuring their accessibility, and expedite the creation of multisectoral victim assistance teams that are adequately trained to provide medical treatment, psychological counselling, legal assistance and other support services to allow victims to build an independent life;**
- (f) **Collect data, disaggregated by gender, age, rural or urban location, ethnicity, religion, disability, nationality and migration status, on all forms of gender-based violence, whether in the public or private sphere, including on the numbers of complaints, prosecutions and convictions, the sentences imposed on perpetrators and the number, capacity of and resources allocated to shelters and counselling and rehabilitation services (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 20 (e)).**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

27. The Committee welcomes the adoption, on 10 February 2014, of Act No. 3/14, on the criminalization of offences underlying money-laundering, and the establishment, on 2 December 2014, of a multisectoral commission to combat trafficking in persons. It is deeply concerned, however, that girls as young as 12 years

of age are trafficked from Brazil, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Viet Nam into and/or through the State party for purposes of sexual exploitation and criminal activity. The Committee is concerned in particular about the following:

(a) The protracted delay in the adoption of a plan of action to combat trafficking in persons, and the information provided during the dialogue that approval of such a plan is not a priority;

(b) The lack of a standardized early identification mechanism and referral system for victims of trafficking, in particular women and girls;

(c) The insufficient human, technical and financial resources, including shelters and legal, medical and psychological services, allocated for the protection of women and girls who are victims of trafficking;

(d) The low number of prosecutions and convictions of perpetrators of trafficking in persons, and reports of the complicity of law enforcement officials in trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution.

28. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals:

(a) **Prioritize and expedite the adoption of the national plan of action to combat trafficking in persons, ensuring that it is focused in particular on women and girls, and allocate adequate resources to its implementation;**

(b) **Implement plans to use the integrated system for the management of social action to identify the most vulnerable persons, and introduce mandatory capacity-building for law enforcement officials on standards for the early identification and referral of victims of trafficking to the appropriate services for their assistance and rehabilitation;**

(c) **Allocate adequate resources for the creation of easily accessible shelters in all provinces of the State party and for the provision of adequate legal, medical and psychosocial assistance in such shelters;**

(d) **Enforce anti-trafficking legislation by conducting gender-sensitive investigations, ensuring the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators, including public officials, who are complicit in trafficking and the exploitation of women and girls in prostitution.**

29. The Committee welcomes the decriminalization of prostitution. It is concerned, however, about the lack of data on women and girls in prostitution and measures to address the root causes of prostitution in the State party, and the absence of policies and programmes for women who wish to leave prostitution.

30. The Committee recommends that the State party analyse and address the root causes of prostitution, provide victims of trafficking and women in prostitution in particular with accessible shelters and crisis centres and provide women and girls who wish to leave prostitution with exit programmes and alternative income-generating opportunities.

Participation in political and public life

31. The Committee notes that the Political Parties Act No. 22/10 of 3 December 2010 provides for a minimum of 30 per cent representation of women on the lists of political parties taking part in general elections. It remains concerned, however, about the low representation of women in decision-making positions, illustrated by the 11.1 per cent representation of women among provincial governors, the negative trend in the representation of women in parliament and the lack of information available on good practices, such as the achievements of the Women's Caucus in parliament. The

Committee is concerned that the numbers reflect the ineffectiveness of the temporary special measures that are in place, which will, in turn, have a negative impact on the upcoming municipal elections.

32. In line with its general recommendation No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life and target 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Pursue sustained policies to promote the full and equal participation of women in decision-making at the national and local levels, including by raising awareness among politicians, the media, traditional leaders and the general public that the full, equal, free and democratic participation of women on an equal basis with men in political and public life is a requirement for the effective implementation of the Convention and for achieving political stability and economic development in the State party;**

(b) **Designate a mechanism to monitor the implementation of article 20 (m) of the Political Parties Act No. 22/10 of 3 December 2010, which provides for a minimum of 30 per cent representation of women on the lists of political parties and impose sanctions for non-compliance;**

(c) **Take further legislative, policy-related and institutional measures, including temporary special measures, such as a quota of 50 per cent, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, to increase the meaningful participation of women at decision-making levels, including at the provincial level.**

Nationality

33. The Committee takes note of the legislative and policy-related measures taken by the State party to expedite the process of acquiring identity documents. It is concerned, however, about the following:

(a) Many women, in particular rural women, face barriers to obtaining identity documents, which restricts their access to, inter alia, education, health care, employment opportunities, bank loans and property;

(b) The requirement that both parents be present during birth registration, which is a hindrance to timely registration.

34. In line with its general recommendation No. 32 (2014) on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Strengthen efforts to ensure the issuance of identity documents free of charge throughout its territory, including by increasing effective coordination among relevant ministries and connecting birth registration with social protection, health, education and social services;**

(b) **Remove the requirement that both parents be present for birth registration.**

Education

35. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party that its national strategy for combating poverty is aimed at ensuring universal access to primary education and eliminating illiteracy. It is concerned, however, about the following:

(a) The disproportionately high levels of illiteracy among women, in particular in rural areas;

(b) The inadequate and decreasing budget allocations to the education sector, which results in shortages of qualified teachers, poor learning environments and suspension of the construction of new schools, forcing girls to walk long distances to school and depriving them of adequate sanitary facilities;

(c) Delays in the completion of the revision of school textbooks and curricula and teacher training materials to remove discriminatory gender stereotypes of the roles and responsibilities of women and men;

(d) The lack of comprehensive age-appropriate school curricula on sexual and reproductive health and rights;

(e) The underrepresentation of girls and women in traditionally male-dominated areas of education, including technical and vocational education.

36. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with its general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education, as well as target 4.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, promote the importance of the education of girls at all levels as a basis for their empowerment and:

(a) **Strengthen inclusive and targeted adult literacy programmes for women, in rural areas in particular;**

(b) **Increase the budget allocated to the construction of additional schools, in rural areas in particular, and increase the accessibility of schools and strengthen efforts to improve the quality of education, including by ensuring that an expansion in enrolment is accompanied by an increase in the number of qualified teachers and learning facilities, including schools with adequate sanitary facilities (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 28 (c));**

(c) **Complete the revision of educational curricula, textbooks and teaching materials to eliminate gender stereotypes that perpetuate and reinforce gender-based discrimination against girls and women;**

(d) **Introduce, without delay, a mandatory and age-appropriate curriculum on sexual and reproductive health and rights, including issues such as gender relations and responsible sexual behaviour, at all educational levels, and ensure that it is offered as an intact subject by instructors who are adequately trained to teach it (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 32 (f));**

(e) **Encourage women and girls to choose non-traditional fields of education and careers, including in traditionally male-dominated areas, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and ensure their access to technical and vocational education and training.**

Employment and economic and social life

37. The Committee welcomes the approval of General Labour Act No. 7/15 on 15 June 2015, which provides for maternity leave and the availability of microcredits for women, and the plans to start issuing cash transfers to vulnerable families. It is concerned, however, about the following:

(a) The continuing horizontal and vertical occupational segregation and the concentration of women in the informal labour market and in low-paying jobs;

(b) The fact that access to food subsidies, maternity allowances and credits is conditional on engagement in the formal employment sector;

(c) The information provided by the State party that only 25 per cent of the labour inspections conducted between 2015 and 2017 were targeted to women;

(d) The slow progress made in registering women domestic workers for the mandatory social protection system.

38. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals:

(a) **Adopt a gender-sensitive and adequately resourced employment policy that includes temporary special measures, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, such as incentives for public- and private-sector employers to recruit women in traditionally male-dominated fields, the intensification of technical and vocational training for women in those fields and the introduction of flexible work arrangements;**

(b) **Provide women in the informal sector with access to food subsidies, maternity allowances, credits and loans;**

(c) **Conduct regular labour inspections in all employment sectors, focusing on compliance with provisions of General Labour Act No. 7/15 with regard to maternity leave, and impose sanctions for non-compliance;**

(d) **Raise awareness among domestic workers of their right to legal and social protection under Presidential Decree No. 155/16 of 9 August 2016 and provide them with free legal advice;**

(e) **Consider ratifying the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the International Labour Organization.**

Health

39. The Committee welcomes the continuing "municipalization" of health services, which is aimed at increasing access to basic health care, as well as recent and projected increases in the budget allocated to the sector. It is concerned, however, about:

(a) The criminalization of abortion in certain cases, subjecting both the woman having an abortion and any person assisting her to criminal liability;

(b) Barriers to access to abortion in the limited cases in which abortion is not criminalized, such as that of the pregnancy gravely endangering the pregnant woman's physical or psychological integrity or life, the fetus being certified to be non-viable and the pregnancy resulting from rape or incest;

(c) The persistently high rate of maternal mortality, which may be attributed to, inter alia, unsafe abortion, the fact that 22.8 per cent of deliveries occur at home and the high incidence of malaria, which is reportedly the cause of 25 per cent of maternal deaths;

(d) The overall high fertility rates, in particular among adolescent girls, and the high degrees of variance between rural and urban areas with regard to awareness and use of methods of contraception.

40. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with general recommendation No. 24 (1999) on women and health and targets of 3.1 and 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals:

(a) **Amend the Penal Code to decriminalize abortion in all cases and to legalize it, at a minimum, in cases of rape, incest, severe fetal impairment and risk to the health or life of the pregnant woman;**

(b) **Remove all barriers to access to abortion in the limited cases in which it is not criminalized and guarantee access to high-quality post-abortion care, in particular in cases in which complications arise from unsafe abortion, and provide data on all forms of abortion in its next periodic report;**

(c) **Strengthen efforts to enhance access for women to inclusive health-care services and affordable medical assistance provided by trained personnel, in particular in rural areas, including by accelerating the continuing municipalization of health services and by rolling out the integrated package of health care for mothers and children;**

(d) **Ensure that all women and girls, in particular those in rural areas, have access to affordable and modern forms of contraception intensify efforts to raise awareness of contraceptives and sexual and reproductive health and rights, targeting women and men (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 32 (e)) and expedite the adoption and implementation of a national strategy for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy and marriage.**

Rural women and internally displaced women

41. The Committee welcomes the holding, on 7 August 2014, of the national forum to canvass the views of rural women. It is concerned, however, about the high rate of poverty among rural women and the limited availability of services for them. Moreover, it expresses its concern about the absence of effective consultation and benefit-sharing mechanisms for rural women, as well as for migrant women, who have been internally displaced owing to large-scale projects involving the exploitation of natural resources, including agro-industrial projects and the activities of extractive industries, upon the projects' closure.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with its general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women:**

(a) **Ensure that all women, including rural women, migrant women and women with disabilities, are consulted in the development and implementation of national policies and programmes relating to agriculture, the extractive industries, food security, climate change and disaster response and risk reduction;**

(b) **Strengthen efforts towards the economic empowerment of all rural women, including reinforcing the provision of microcredits and enhancing skills development, training and income-generating opportunities and ensuring access to education, health services, including family planning services, safe water, housing and infrastructure and land ownership;**

(c) **Ensure the prior, free and informed consent of all women living in areas affected before the approval of any acquisition of land or the implementation of resource exploitation projects on rural land, including projects relating to the lease and sale of land, land expropriation and resettlement, and guarantee that they are adequately compensated.**

Women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination

43. The Committee welcomes the criminalization of acts of discrimination based on sexual orientation, including in employment, through the adoption of the new Penal Code. It takes note of the information provided by the State party during the interactive dialogue that General Labour Act No. 7/15 promotes the inclusion of persons with disabilities. It is concerned, however, that:

(a) Rural women and girls and women and girls with disabilities, with albinism, living with HIV/AIDS and in prostitution, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, restricting in particular their access to health services, employment, education, housing and justice and their participation in public and political life;

(b) There are no policies addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as policies promoting the rights of women and girls with disabilities.

44. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with general recommendation No. 18 (1991) on disabled women:

(a) **Undertake awareness-raising activities to change negative attitudes towards women and girls with disabilities, with albinism, living with HIV/AIDS and in prostitution, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons, ensuring that strict penalties are imposed on the perpetrators of violations against them;**

(b) **Develop, and allocate adequate human, technical and financial resources for the adoption and implementation of a strategy that promotes access for women and girls with disabilities to inclusive and appropriate health services, employment, education, housing and justice and the participation of those women and girls in public and political life, including by granting them legal capacity.**

Migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls

45. The Committee welcomes the collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees through the State party's National Council for Refugees and takes note of the adoption, on 17 June 2015, of Asylum Act No. 10/15, which guarantees the right to asylum. It is concerned, however, that migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls with irregular migration status, most of whom are from the Democratic Republic of the Congo:

(a) Face obstacles in registering for and requesting a determination on refugee status;

(b) Are subject to mass expulsion, regardless of whether they are in need of international protection;

(c) Continue to be subject to the excessive use of force (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 19 (e)) and sexual violence perpetrated with impunity by the State party's security forces;

(d) Are subject to sexual exploitation, including being compelled to engage in so-called "transactional sex" in exchange for food and other items necessary for survival, in settlement camps for refugees such as in Lóvua and Kamako.

46. The Committee reminds the State party of its obligation of non-refoulement under international law, and in line with its general recommendation No. 32, and that all persons who have entered its territory have a right to obtain access to refugee status determination procedures. It recalls its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6, para. 20 (f)) and recommends that the State party:

(a) **Ensure that all asylum-seeking women and girls have access to registration and gender-sensitive, fair and speedy refugee status determination processes, as well as to legal representation and legal remedies;**

(b) Cease the extradition, deportation, expulsion or other forms of removal of asylum-seeking and migrant women and girls from the territory of the State party to the territory of another State when there are substantial grounds to believe that there is a real risk of irreparable harm and protect those women from such practices;

(c) Protect migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls from all forms of violence, including gender-based and sexual violence, investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of such acts, including members of the State party's security forces, and establish mechanisms for redress and rehabilitation;

(d) Enhance efforts to guarantee access for migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls to employment, accommodations, education, health-care services and other support, including food, clothing and the necessary social services, appropriate to their particular needs.

Marriage and family relations

47. The Committee welcomes the adoption, in 2015, of Presidential Decree No. [36/15](#), which approves the legal regime for the recognition of domestic partnerships by mutual consent and the dissolution of recognized domestic partnerships. It takes note of the information provided by the State party that its legislation does not discriminate against women in matters of inheritance and of the State party's goal that 30 per cent of women should own land by 2063. The Committee remains concerned, however, that, in matters of inheritance, customary law continues to be discriminatory towards women and girls, as it divests them of their land titles.

48. In line with its general recommendation No. 21 (1994) on equality in marriage and family relations, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure equality in land acquisition and retention, including through succession, in customary and statutory law and that it facilitate access for women to justice to contest cases of unequal distribution of land.

Data collection and analysis

49. The Committee welcomes the issuance of the report on gender statistics and takes note of the information provided by the State party that it is planning to complete the drafting of a second such report by the end of 2019. It remains concerned, however, about the limited availability, dissemination and analysis of those data, which are necessary for assessing the impact and effectiveness of policies in all areas of the Convention, in particular regarding harmful practices and gender stereotypes, violence against women, trafficking, education, employment, economic empowerment and health.

50. The Committee recalls its previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6](#), para. 40) and recommends that the State party systematically collect, publish, disseminate and make use of data on all areas covered by the Convention, disaggregated by, inter alia, gender, age, rural and or urban location, ethnicity, religion, disability, nationality and migration status, and use those data as a basis for designing policies to implement the Convention and assessing progress achieved towards that objective.

Amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention

51. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

52. The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in its efforts to implement the provisions of the Convention.

Dissemination

53. The Committee requests the State party to ensure the timely dissemination of the present concluding observations, in the official language of the State party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the Government, the ministries, the National Assembly and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation.

Technical assistance

54. The Committee recommends that the State party link the implementation of the Convention to its development efforts and that it avail itself of regional or international technical assistance in this respect.

Ratification of other treaties

55. The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments¹ would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which it is not yet a party.

Follow-up to the concluding observations

56. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 14 (a), 16 (a), 42 (c) and 46 (b) above.

Preparation of the next report

57. The Committee requests the State party to submit its eighth periodic report, which is due in March 2023. The report should be submitted on time and cover the entire period up to the time of its submission.

58. The Committee requests the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (see [HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#), chap. I).

¹ The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.