



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

List of issues in relation to the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Sao Tome and Principe*

1. The State party is requested to submit in writing additional, updated information (10,700 words maximum), if possible before 15 February 2023. The Committee may take up all aspects of children's rights set out in the Convention during the dialogue with the State party.

Part I

2. Please specify the measures taken to:
 - (a) Ensure the protection of children's rights in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and to mitigate the pandemic's adverse impact;
 - (b) Align legislation fully with the Convention;
 - (c) Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on children involved in armed conflict, the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure;
 - (d) Develop a multisectoral national strategy and action plans covering all areas of the Convention, in particular child protection, with sufficient human, technical and financial resources dedicated for their implementation and with specific time frames specified for each, and please explain their correlation with the draft child protection action plan, 2022–2023, and indicate the timeline for the latter's adoption.
3. Please specify the body responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Convention. Please clarify the mandates of, and relationship between, the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation and Tracking of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the National Commission on the Rights of the Child. Please describe how civil society and children are involved in the work of those bodies and in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, policies, plans and programmes relating to children's rights. Please also indicate how the media are involved in promoting children's rights.
4. Please indicate the measures taken and progress made with regard to:
 - (a) Strengthening planning and budgeting processes and monitoring and increase allocations to social protection;
 - (b) Developing child rights budgeting, with monitoring and evaluation systems, for assessing and tracking the impact of resource allocations on children's rights;
 - (c) Strengthening protections from poverty for children;

* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group on 30 September 2022.



(d) Establishing an independent mechanism for monitoring human rights, including children's rights, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), a comprehensive system to generate, collect and manage data on children's rights and a regulatory framework for business.

5. Please specify the impact of the training and awareness-raising initiatives on knowledge of the Convention on children, their parents and professionals working with and for children. Please provide information on the progress made in the following areas:

(a) Integrating and disseminating the principle of the best interests of the child, including in legislation, and developing guidelines on its application;

(b) Ensuring that all children, in accordance with their age and maturity, are heard in judicial and administrative proceedings that affect them;

(c) Strengthening child participation in issues that affect them, including in relation to the environment.

6. Please provide information on plans to address unregistered births and the lack of birth certificates, in particular with regard to rural and remote areas, poor families, children born outside marriage and unattended births, and specify the impact of the awareness-raising campaigns mentioned in paragraph 113 of the State party's report¹ in that regard. Please clarify whether the father's name is included on the birth certificate and whether fees for the birth registration of those 14 years of age or older have been abolished.

7. Please provide information on the measures taken to:

(a) Establish a legal and institutional framework, policy and strategy to prevent and address all forms of violence against children;

(b) Strengthen data collection to assess the prevalence of all forms of violence against children;

(c) Prohibit corporal punishment and promote positive and non-violent forms of discipline and to develop early intervention programmes for parents who abuse their children, as an alternative to imprisonment;

(d) Establish channels for reporting cases of violence, including a 24-hour Helpline with trained personnel and electronic complaints procedure accessible to children;

(e) Establish services for recovery and reintegration of child victims;

(f) Combat the stigmatization and re-victimization of child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure that they are not subject to any criminal sanctions;

(g) Address the phenomenon of *catorzinhas/papoite* (sexual abuse of schoolgirls in exchange for better grades) mentioned in paragraph 128 of the State party's report;

(h) Address social norms justifying child marriage, adolescent pregnancy, domestic and sexual violence and harmful practices, including through a comprehensive behaviour change strategy, involving relevant professionals, traditional leaders and the media, among others.

8. Please provide information on the following:

(a) Progress made towards establishing a national child protection system;

(b) Measures taken to promote the family structure and values and to prevent family separation and the unnecessary placement of children in alternative care and to reduce institutionalization;

(c) Authorities responsible for the coordination of matters relating to children left without parental care;

(d) Progress made towards establishing a foster care system;

¹ CRC/C/STP/5-6.

- (e) Mechanisms to review placements and to monitor the quality of care in institutions, including private shelters, and foster families, including complaint mechanisms;
- (f) Complaints of child abuse in alternative care and their outcome;
- (g) Support available to children leaving care;
- (h) Progress made towards establishing a legal framework for intercountry adoptions and ratifying the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption;
- (i) Children who are detained with their mothers and the measures taken to preserve the relationship between children and imprisoned parents.

9. Please provide information on the progress in:

- (a) Adopting a comprehensive policy and a strategy for children with disabilities;
- (b) Ensuring access to inclusive education, health care, including early identification and intervention, transportation, basic social services and other available services, and - access to information about such services;
- (c) Training experts on disability matters;
- (d) Combatting stigmatization based on disability and addressing cases of violence.

10. Please provide an update to the Committee on the progress made in the following areas:

- (a) Reducing maternal, neonatal and infant mortality rates and the mortality rate among children under 5 years of age;
- (b) Increasing vaccination coverage;
- (c) Introducing mandatory sexual and reproductive health education in schools;
- (d) Preventing and reducing the incidence of HIV, sexually-transmitted infections and adolescent pregnancy and ensuring access to treatment, contraceptives and safe abortion;
- (e) Ensuring access to basic social services for pregnant teenagers and adolescent mothers, without discrimination;
- (f) Preventing and reducing substance abuse, in particular alcohol, and information on the measures taken to prohibit the sale of narcotics and alcoholic beverages near schools and to establish a minimum age for alcohol consumption;
- (g) Promoting exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life and implementing the baby-friendly hospital initiative;
- (h) Preventing, detecting and treating malnutrition, including obesity and micronutrient deficiency;
- (i) Ensuring access to safe drinking water, sanitation and waste disposal;
- (j) Addressing mortality rates due to air pollution;
- (k) Addressing the impact of climate change, in particular with regard to flooding, droughts, temperature increase and water-borne diseases.

11. Please provide information on the progress made in implementing the education policy charter, 2018–2022, and the education policy 2012–2022, and in particular in:

- (a) Improving enrolment and completion rates, including for preschool and secondary education, among girls, students in rural areas and low-income families, as well as how regional disparities have been addressed;
- (b) Strengthening the quality of education and teaching;
- (c) Increasing the number of teachers and strengthening their training, improving school infrastructure, including books and teaching materials, desks and water and sanitation services, and expanding the school feeding programme;

- (d) Ensuring the use of technology in education;
- (e) Developing and fostering access to tertiary education, including public higher education and vocational training.

12. Please specify the progress made in eradicating child labour by 2020, as announced in the national action plan against child labour mentioned in paragraph 268 of the State party's report, in aligning the minimum working age with international labour standards and in protecting children from work in hazardous conditions. Please provide updated information on the number and situation of children in street situations and on the measures taken to prevent and address the phenomenon and to provide children with support and reintegration.

13. Please clarify the age of criminal responsibility and whether children under 16 years of age can be held liable, and for which criminal offenses, and whether they can be detained. Please specify who orders detention, the maximum duration of pretrial detention, whether it can be extended, whether it is subject to appeal and judicial monitoring or control and whether children are released immediately after the expiry of the authorized detention term. Please specify the progress made in:

- (a) Establishing a child justice system in compliance with the Convention and in accordance with the Committee's general comment No. 24 (2019) on children's rights in the child justice system, including specialized judges and other relevant personnel, with adequate human, technical and financial resources;

- (b) Providing mandatory free legal assistance to children in conflict with the law, in accordance with Act No. 9/2012 on legal assistance and the code on guardianship for minors, and specify how many children benefited from qualified and free legal assistance during the reporting period;

- (c) Adopting the bill on special measures applicable to minors, as announced in paragraph 286 of the State party's report, and clarify its role in the child justice system;

- (d) Promoting diversion, community service and other alternatives to detention;

- (e) Ensuring that children are not detained together with adults and that detention conditions are compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and health care.

Part II

14. The Committee invites the State party to provide a brief update, of no more than three pages, on the information presented in its report with regard to:

- (a) New bills or laws and their respective regulations;
- (b) New institutions and their mandates or institutional reforms;
- (c) Recently introduced policies, programmes and action plans and their scope and the financing provided for their implementation;
- (d) Recent ratifications of human rights instruments.

Part III

Data, statistics and other information

15. Please provide consolidated information, for the past three years, on the budget lines regarding children and the social sectors, indicating the percentage of each budget line in terms of the total national budget and the gross national product. Please also provide information on the geographical allocation of those resources.

16. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data, disaggregated by age, sex, ethnic origin, national origin, geographical location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on the following:

(a) Deaths of children due to accidents, child abuse, suicide and the COVID-19 pandemic;

(b) Cases of abuse of, and violence perpetrated against, children, including torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, all forms of corporal punishment, sexual abuse in and outside the home, domestic violence, bullying and online sexual violence and abuse, also including information on prosecutions and the sentences handed down in such cases;

(c) Children living with HIV;

(d) Child marriage and adolescent pregnancy;

(e) Stateless children;

(f) Asylum-seeking, refugee, internally displaced and migrant children;

(g) Cases of child labour, including in hazardous conditions;

(h) Children in street situations;

(i) Children living in poverty.

17. Please provide data, disaggregated by age, sex, socioeconomic background, ethnic origin and geographical location, regarding the situation of children deprived of a family environment, for the past three years, on the number of children:

(a) Placed in public institutions;

(b) Placed in private institutions;

(c) Living with relatives or neighbours on the basis of an informal arrangement;

(d) Available for adoption;

(e) Adopted domestically and internationally, also including data on the receiving countries.

18. Please provide data, disaggregated by age, sex, type of disability, ethnic origin and geographical location, for the past three years, on the number of children with disabilities in the following situations:

(a) Living with their families;

(b) Living in institutions;

(c) Attending regular primary schools;

(d) Attending regular secondary schools;

(e) Attending special schools;

(f) Out of school;

(g) Abandoned by their families.

19. Please provide updated statistical data, disaggregated by age, sex, type of offence, ethnic origin, national origin, geographical location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on children in conflict with the law who have been:

(a) Arrested;

(b) Referred to diversion programmes;

(c) Provided with free legal aid;

(d) In pretrial detention, also including information on the average duration of pretrial detention and the number of children who spent longer than the authorized time in pretrial detention;

(e) Detained with adults;

(f) Convicted and serving a sentence in detention, also including information of the length of the sentence.

20. Please provide information on how a children's rights-based approach is integrated into the planning, implementation and monitoring of measures for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including with regard to the participation of children and data collection, and how those measures promote the realization of children's rights under the Convention.

21. Please provide the Committee with an update of any data in the report that may have been outdated by more recent data collected or other new developments.

22. In addition, the State party may list areas affecting children that it considers to be of priority with regard to the implementation of the Convention.
