



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Fifty-first session

13 February – 2 March 2012

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

Zimbabwe

General

1. Please indicate if the State party is taking steps to establish regular collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data to capture the real situation of women, including those belonging to disadvantaged groups.

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

2. Discrimination against women is not defined in the legal framework of Zimbabwe in line with article 1 of the Convention. Please indicate whether the State party is considering including such a definition of discrimination against women in its legislative framework.

3. The State party report explains (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, para. 34) that the Supreme Court negated the provision of the Administration of Estate Act by according inheritance rights to only a male heir. Please provide information on the measures taken by the State party to ensure effective implementation of the Administration of Estate Act referred to in paragraphs 31 to 35 of the report.

National machinery for the advancement of women

4. The State party report explains (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 18-19) that the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission will have the power to investigate the conduct of any authority or person implicated in the violation of any of the rights enshrined in the Declaration of Rights under the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Please explain how the Commission will ensure that cases of discrimination against women are investigated, since the Declaration of Rights under the Constitution does not include an explicit reference to discrimination against women. Please indicate detailed information about the composition of the Commission and its investigative powers, in particular information relating to the enforcement of its decisions, the remedies/redress offered and its budgetary provisions. Does the State party intend to establish a gender equality commission dealing only with gender issues?

5. The State party report (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 63-66) refers to the continued implementation of the National Gender policy launched on 8 March 2004 and the Draft National Gender-Based Violence Strategy developed in 2005. Please provide information on the assessment of this policy and Action Plan as well as their impact, respectively, on the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment in all areas covered by the Convention.

Temporary special measures

6. The State party's report indicates at paragraph 76 that the temporary special measures that have been taken benefit only a small proportion of women, such as urban-based, educated, professional women. Please provide more information and data regarding the impact of the measures so far undertaken, and indicate what further measures are intended to ensure that more women, particularly the rural, disadvantaged women in the informal sector, are reached.

Stereotypes and cultural practices

7. According to the report (paras. 86-88), the State party has put in place mechanisms and processes to enhance the elimination of gender stereotypes. The State party acknowledges that the level of gender stereotyping is very high in society in general, mainly because of cultural and religious beliefs that relegate women to subordinate positions. Please provide details on the measures taken to change social and cultural patterns that lead to gender stereotyping.

Violence against women

8. Please provide further information on prevention, service provision, research, documentation and advocacy in the area of gender-based violence. Please provide more information and data on the violence and abuses resulting from cultural norms and discriminatory customary rites or practices (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, para. 43). Please inform the Committee on the results of the awareness campaigns and capacity development initiated to promote the understanding and effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act. Please elaborate further on the concrete measures taken by the Anti-Domestic Violence Council to ensure and promote effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 41-46). Please provide information on steps taken to provide government shelters for victims of domestic violence.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

9. According to paragraph 96 of the report, the State party is a transit and source country for the trafficking of women and children to other countries for purposes of forced labour and exploitation of prostitution. Please provide statistics on the number of women and girls who are victims of trafficking for purposes of sexual and economic exploitation. Please indicate if the State party is considering conducting research on the nature, extent, causes and consequences of trafficking with the aim of developing policies and strategies to combat such practices.

10. Please provide information on the results and effects of the massive campaign against prostitution carried out in 2004 under the name "No to Prostitution" (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 102-103). Please indicate if measures are being taken to combat discriminatory practices of the police as explained in paragraph 105 of the report. Please provide information on a women's empowerment programme that also targets women involved in prostitution, as noted in paragraph 107 of the State party report.

Political Participation and participation in public life

11. According to the State party report (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 81 and 117), the Women in Politics and Decision-Making Project ran from 1997 to 2000 and aimed at building capacity among women already in positions of power as well as attaining 50 per cent representation of females in political and decision-making structures. Please provide information on the subsequent developments of the project and other measures taken to increase women's participation in public and political life. Please indicate if the State party is considering the establishment of a quota system as a temporary special measure, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to strengthen promotion of women to positions of power in the public service whether at the national level or local level, especially that both major political parties have indicated willingness to implement such a quota system. (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 114-144).

Education

12. Please provide information on the impact of the measures taken as outlined in paragraphs 170 to 172 of the report, in order to address the issue of the high dropout rate among girls and sex segregation of technical vocational education. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that perpetrators of sexual harassment are reported to the police directly instead of being dealt with administratively, as stated in para.169 of the State party report.

Employment

13. The State report acknowledges that sexual harassment has significantly increased over the past 10 years. Please indicate what concrete measures are being taken to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the workplace (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 29-30).

Health

14. The report indicates (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, para. 198) that maternal mortality continues to be a major problem throughout Zimbabwe. Please elaborate on the measures taken to reduce the maternal mortality rate.

15. According to the State party report (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, para. 206), the National Aids Council was established to design and implement the national responses to HIV and AIDS. Please provide more information on its composition and on the impact of its activities, in particular those described in paragraphs 207 to 215.

Economic empowerment

16. Please provide details, including a timeline, content, specific measures and results on the women's economic empowerment programme referred to in paragraph 107 of the State party report. Please provide data on the number of loans provided by the Government to viable women's projects (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, para. 227). Please further elaborate on the measures taken or planned by the State party to improve women's access to entrepreneurial opportunities and micro-credit, as well as to develop their skills in business management.

Disadvantaged groups of women

17. The report is silent on the situation of older women, women with disabilities, and refugee women. Please provide information on the economic and social situation of these groups of women and the measures in place to support them. Please also elaborate on their access to education, employment, safe water and health services as well as protection from violence.

Rural women

18. Please provide information and statistical data on the impact of measures taken in paragraphs 235 to 256 of the report, as 65 per cent of women live in rural areas.

Marriage and family relations

19. The State party report indicates that there is a dual system of statutory and customary law concerning marriage and family relations and that a majority of customary practices are not in line with the Convention (CEDAW/C/ZWE/2-5, paras. 52-61). Please provide more information on measures taken or envisaged by the State party, including awareness-raising and training, in order to bring all customary-law provisions with regard to marriage in line with the Convention. What specific measures are being taken by the State party to combat early marriages and to prohibit polygamy? Please provide information on the timeline for the enactment of the proposed amendments to the Marriage Act, as stated in paragraphs 52 to 59 of the State party report.

Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20, paragraph 1

20. Please indicate if the State party is considering ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Please also indicate if the State party is considering the acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention pertaining to the Committee's meeting time.
