



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

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

**Consideration of reports submitted by States
parties under article 18 of the Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

**Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of States
parties**

Guinea*

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

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General description of Guinea

1. Guinea ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the Convention) on 17 July 1980. In 1998, Guinea prepared and presented its combined initial and second and third reports.

2. At the thirty-ninth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the Committee) held from 23 July to 10 August 2007, Guinea presented its combined fourth to sixth periodic reports.

3. Four years later, in accordance with article 18 of the Convention, Guinea was due to submit its combined seventh and eighth periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention for the period 2007–2011.

4. At the invitation of the Ministry of State for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs, various ministries, civil society organizations, consultants and development partners took part in the preparation of the reports.

5. The period under consideration saw great political, economic, social and cultural instability, including the following events:

- Strikes in January and February 2007;
- A takeover by a military junta in 2008;
- The crackdown on the demonstration of 28 September 2009;
- The attempted assassination of the president of the junta in 2009;
- Pre- and post-electoral unrest in 2010.

Despite the political instability, during which women played a prominent role in the quest for freedom and democracy, significant progress was achieved in the practical implementation of the Convention in Guinea.

1. Geography

6. Guinea is located on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. It is surrounded by Guinea-Bissau (385 km of common border), Senegal (330 km), Mali (858 km), Côte d'Ivoire (610 km), Liberia (563 km), Sierra Leone (652 km) and the Atlantic Ocean.

There are four geographical zones:

- Basse Guinée or Guinée maritime, the coastal zone;
- Moyenne Guinée, the mountainous zone which includes the Fouta Djallon highlands;
- Haute Guinée, the northern savannah;
- Guinée forestière, the forested zone in the south-east.

7. French is the official language. According to a 2006 report of the International Organization of la Francophonie, approximately 20 per cent of the population is French-speaking and 42 per cent is partially French-speaking.

2. The economy and development

8. Guinea is a resource-rich country. This abundance of resources, including mineral resources, has earned it the label "geological scandal".

9. Guinea ranks first in the world in proven reserves of bauxite and second in production, behind Australia. It also has gold, iron, diamonds, oil and uranium.

10. Most Guineans work in agriculture. Millet and fonio are the main crops in Haute Guinée, while peanut production dominates in the Koundâra region. Rice is grown in flood plains along rivers and streams, but local production is insufficient, obliging Guinea to import rice from Asia. Traditional food crops, such as cassava, continue to be widely grown around private dwellings. Guinea is dependent on external sources of energy and relies on imports for all of its hydrocarbon needs. The exploitation of offshore oil fields is under consideration.

11. There is considerable hydroelectric potential due to topography and rainfall. Existing dams fail to fully supply Conakry.

12. Very few foreign tourists visit the country, despite the wide variety of scenery and potential attractions.

I. Introduction

13. Poverty-reduction objectives, though laudable and irrefutable, can still be implemented in a way that not only fails to reach all people living in poverty, but also risks worsening their plight. The terms “feminization of poverty” and “feminization of HIV/AIDS” are increasingly used to describe the rise of poverty among women.

14. Economic factors are not the only causes. Rigid gender roles dictated by society and insufficient access of women to employment, income, basic infrastructure, health-care services, education, technical and vocational training, productive resources and positions of authority weaken their standing and the financial security of their families.

15. Gender analysis provides tools to react even-handedly to problems arising from poverty-reduction objectives and to foster the investing of resources to promote gender equality, in order for women to truly benefit from and participate in measures to reduce the poverty to which they are especially prone.

16. The Ministry for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children’s Affairs runs numerous seminars, workshops and training courses for planners, managers, developers and designers of development projects, programmes and budgets. The goal is to take account of how the situations of various population groups differ and, within those groups, between men and women.

17. Comparative gender analysis that explicitly identifies the differences between men and women in terms of access to and control over resources, participation in decision-making and the advantages and direct effects of policies, programmes and projects is key to identifying the measures needed to ensure that each group has access to development resources commensurate with its needs, situation and abilities.

18. The combined seventh and eighth periodic reports describe the state of the practical implementation of the Convention in the Republic of Guinea during the 2007–2011 period. In addition to the replies to the Committee’s questions, they illustrate progress made, obstacles encountered and the outlook for the implementation of the Convention.

II. Socioeconomic context

19. In recent years, Guinea has experienced sociopolitical turmoil that has exacerbated an already disquieting economic situation. Economic growth is weak, at approximately 3 per cent annually, and, in combination with over 2 per cent population growth and 30 per

cent inflation, gives very weak per capita growth – approximately 1 per cent, and highly unequal.

20. The economic structure is typical of that of most countries in the subregion of West Africa. More than 70 per cent of the population is employed in agriculture, but the sector accounts for only 20 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). The service sector accounts for approximately 40 per cent of GDP, while mining makes up 16 per cent, and is trending upwards. Bauxite, alumina, gold and diamonds constitute over 85 per cent of the country's exports. The economy is structured around mineral exports, with little local value added.

21. Official development assistance has fallen from around 10 per cent of GDP in 1990 to 7 per cent in 2005, reflecting donors' wait-and-see attitude towards Guinea. This represents US\$ 20 per capita per year, compared to US\$ 50 per capita in Mali and US\$ 60 per capita in Senegal, two of Guinea's neighbours. If Guinea improves its financial management and restores its development partners' trust, it should fairly rapidly be in a position to double, even treble, current levels of official development assistance.

22. The informal sector is omnipresent and the population young, vying for very limited job opportunities. High commodity prices have severely handicapped the poorest segments of the population. Regular shortages in the water and electricity supply adversely affect the conduct of activities in general, hampering opportunities for wealth and job creation.

23. In 2006, Guinea was ranked 160th out of 177 countries in the human development index, reflecting the country's poor socioeconomic performance. The adult literacy rate is particularly low, between 29.5 and 37 per cent according to sources, and life expectancy is 54 years. Per capita GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP) is US\$ 2,180, not outrageously low compared to others in the subregion. In sum, it is mainly the low literacy rate and life expectancy that are to blame for the low human development index.

24. As to the Millennium Development Goals, the situation remains preoccupying, except perhaps with respect to enrolment in primary education. The crude primary enrolment rate was 80 per cent in 2005, and appears to be the only Millennium goal that Guinea could reasonably achieve by 2015. Microeconomic mismanagement has stymied the authorities' ability to fight poverty. Inadequate mobilization of revenues, including in the mining sector, along with the drop in official development assistance, has severely limited the financing of anti-poverty measures. According to the findings of the basic integrated survey on assessing poverty, an estimated 49.2 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line in 2002–2003. The incidence of poverty appears to have worsened since then, according to projections of the Ministry of Planning, and stood at 53.6 per cent in 2005. Macroeconomic underperformance, characterized by low economic growth, is largely at fault for the deterioration.

III. Replies of the Republic of Guinea to the questions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

The Committee's questions to the Government regarding the justice, legislative, political and institutional systems, culture and education as well as its recommendations

(See Annex I)

IV. Effective implementation of the Convention in the Republic of Guinea

Article 1

Definition of discrimination

25. For the purposes of the present Convention, the term “discrimination against women” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

26. The Constitution of Guinea, as well as all legal texts, uses the word “distinction” to mean discrimination. Restriction and exclusion are not mentioned.

27. However, given that Guinea is a party to the Convention and that the Civil Code stipulates that conventions duly ratified by Guinea have primacy over national law, the definition of discrimination in article 1 of the Convention is applicable.

Article 2

Constitutional, legislative and other provisions on the elimination of discrimination

28. Equality between men and women and boys and girls is enshrined in the Constitution of Guinea, as well as in all legal texts, such as the Civil Code, the Labour Code, the Electoral Code, the Children’s Code, the Economic Activities Code, the Public Health Code and the Code on Decentralized Authorities.

29. Special texts have been drafted to bolster anti-discrimination efforts, including a law on reproductive health.

30. Despite all these texts guaranteeing equality of men and women before the law, discrimination persists. For this reason, the Guinean Government, in cooperation with civil society organizations, has taken specific action to address the problem.

Action taken by the Government

31. The Ministry of State for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children’s Affairs, in cooperation with technical and financial partners, namely, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has set up three major programmes to effect recommendations made by the Committee at its thirty-ninth session, namely, a UNDP project on gender promotion, a UNFPA project to support the women’s movement and a joint UNFPA-UNICEF project on female genital mutilation and circumcision. Other outcomes are:

- A national survey on gender-based violence was conducted in 2009;
- A national strategy paper on gender-based violence was prepared and disseminated in 2009;
- Five interministerial implementation orders were drafted and signed regarding Act No. L/010/AN/2000, on reproductive health;
- Regional committees on gender-based violence were set up;

- 520 members and officers of the defence and security forces were trained in the Convention and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009), on women and peace and security;
- 230 judges, lawyers and legal support staff were trained regarding violence against women, the concept of gender and existing legal instruments prohibiting violence;
- A workshop on devising strategies for the swift adoption of the revised Civil Code was held, and the ratification instruments for the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa were deposited;
- A joint decision prohibiting female genital mutilation in public and private health-care facilities was adopted by the Ministry of National Solidarity, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Security and Civil Protection, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs;
- Broadcasts to raise awareness of the ill effects of female circumcision and gender-based violence were aired on public and private radio and television stations;
- A joint order to introduce teaching modules on female genital mutilation in educational institutions was issued by the Ministry of Pre-University Education and Civic Instruction, the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research;
- An order was issued by the Minister of Communications prohibiting the dissemination of notices, announcements or advertisements for female genital mutilation ceremonies;
- An order was issued by the Minister of Security and Civil Protection to monitor the effective implementation of laws suppressing female genital mutilation;
- An order was issued by the ministers for national solidarity and the advancement of women and children's affairs to monitor the effective implementation of the joint order prohibiting female genital mutilation in public and private health-care facilities;
- Community information centres for women were set up;
- The Guinean Women's Council was established across the country to promote women's initiatives by increasing the involvement and empowerment of women at all levels;
- All four departments responsible for education were lobbied, resulting in statements by each department head that gender would be incorporated in curricula at the various levels of education;
- The departments of national defence, the police and the paramilitary corps were lobbied, resulting in a statement that gender-based violence would be incorporated in training and staff development programmes;
- A national thematic group on gender, including a wide array of official and civil society organizations and United Nations bodies, was established to integrate a gender perspective in development efforts;
- A protection cluster on vulnerable groups such as women in times of crisis and victims of gender-based violence, was set up in cooperation with United Nations bodies;

- A round table was held, resulting in the establishment of a network and steering committee for United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security;
- 240 members of the five committees responsible for implementation of the Convention and the national thematic group on gender received training in gender-sensitive budgeting;
- Regional operational action plans were devised in follow-up to the recommendations of the Committee at its thirty-ninth session;
- Four pilot shelters were established in those areas with a high prevalence of gender-based violence (Conakry, Nzérékoré and Boké);
- Eight workshops were held in 2011 to disseminate the recommendations of the Committee at its thirty-ninth session and the recommendations of the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+15) at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women;
- A strategic plan on African Women's Decade (2010–2015) was designed;
- A national policy on the family was formulated in 2010 and a travelling information campaign was carried out using modern and traditional media;
- A travelling campaign was also carried out using modern and traditional media to inform the population of the law punishing female genital mutilation/circumcision;
- In 2009, regional workshops were held in Faranah and Nzérékoré on medical care for complications of female genital mutilation/circumcision;
- In 2011, community health promoters in Kindia received training regarding the social norms around female genital mutilation/circumcision, thanks to funding from the UNFPA-UNICEF joint programme;
- A study of girls employed as domestic workers was conducted in 2011.

Action taken by civil society

- Dissemination of women's rights;
- Training of political and religious leaders regarding women's rights;
- Training of legal professionals and members of defence and security forces regarding the Convention and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009);
- Establishment of counselling and legal assistance centres;
- Training of media professionals regarding women's rights;
- Establishment of a large number of federated structures in the form of NGO coalitions to boost the safeguarding of women's rights, such as Fédération guinéenne des réseaux de femmes pour la paix et le développement (Guinean Federation of Women's Networks for Peace and Development, FEGUIREF), Réseau Africain des Femmes de la Pêche (African Network of Women in Fisheries, RAFEP Guinée), CEFÉ, Coalition nationale guinéenne de l'éducation pour tous (National Education for All Coalition, CNGEPT); and relaunch of others, such as Réseau des femmes africaines ministres et parlementaires (Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians, REFAMP), Coalition nationale Guinée pour les droits et la citoyenneté de la femme (National coalition for women's rights and citizenship CONAG-DCF), Réseau des Femmes du Fleuve Mano pour la Paix

(Mano River Women's Network for Peace, REFMAP) and Christian and Muslim networks.

Article 3

Full development of women

32. States parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

33. The full development of women is guaranteed by an efficient institutional mechanism, grounded in realistic policies and buttressed by an active and accountable civil society.

Institutional mechanism

34. The advancement and protection of women, girls and children are ensured by the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs and the junior ministry.

35. However, it should be noted that all ministerial departments, institutions of the Republic, the independent human rights institution and civil society are involved in the advancement of women.

36. The Ministry now includes the following national divisions and departments:

- Divisions for the promotion of women, gender issues and the family and the National Women's Self-help Service;
- Gender units in all State departments and institutions of the Republic with the rank of administrative division;
- The social development and solidarity fund;
- The national observatory on gender-based violence;
- The protection cluster for vulnerable groups in times of crisis.

37. Major policies for the advancement of women are as follows.

A. The national policy on gender

38. The strategic focuses of the policy are:

- Access to basic social services: education, health care, HIV/AIDS treatment, water and sanitation;
- Observance of human rights and the eradication of violence: fundamental rights, girls, violence and trafficking in persons;
- Access to, control of and equitable division of income: economy, poverty and the environment;
- Improved governance and equal access to decision-making bodies: power, media, institutional mechanisms, armed conflict and new information and communications technology;

- Integration of gender in the macroeconomic framework: national development policies and programmes, national planning and budgeting and the African Gender and Development Index for generating gender-disaggregated data.

B. The national policy for the advancement of women (revised in 2006)

39. The national policy for the advancement of women is based on four strategic focuses which incorporate the 12 priority areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, namely:

1. Improving the legal framework for the advancement and protection of women;
2. Promoting the economic empowerment of women;
3. Improving the social, cultural and political status of women and emphasizing their role within the family;
4. Strengthening the institutional framework for the advancement of women.

40. The main objectives of the second policy focus (promoting the economic empowerment of women) are to:

- Promote women in economic matters;
- Enable women to play a greater economic role in agriculture, herding, fisheries, crafts, the informal sector and mining;
- Ease women's access to credit;
- Lessen the work burden of women, especially in rural and peri-urban areas;
- Promote female entrepreneurship;
- Increase women's income through greater access to production inputs;
- Increase women's technical, technological and business skills;
- Improve organization;
- Build technical capacity for the management of development programmes and projects.

C. The national policy on family

41. The aim of the national policy on family is to promote a family environment conducive to the mental and social development of individuals and the enhancement of their ability to take part in nation-building.

42. The policy is based on improving intrafamily relationships and the education of future generations as well as ensuring that family well-being is shared by all members.

43. The policy reaffirms equality between men and women and addresses:

- Marriage and protection of the family;
- Education and health for all;
- Job creation and preservation;
- Youth protection and advancement;

- Protection of children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.
44. The principles of the policy are:
- Family education should be integrated into the overall nation-building effort;
 - Families should observe national cultural traditions but be resolutely forward-looking;
 - Families should remain united within the context of integrating ethnicities and geographic cultural areas.

D. The national strategy on gender-based violence

45. The national strategy on gender-based violence has three fundamental objectives:
- Formulating a national strategy on gender-based violence;
 - Designing an operational action plan for the national strategy on gender-based violence;
 - Defining the mandate of the national observatory on gender-based violence.

Emergence of an effective civil society

46. There are around 100 women's and mixed NGOs that work in a variety of sectors. They are an integral part of national mechanisms for the advancement of women.

Article 4 Temporary special measures for women

47. The following sections will highlight measures taken in education, health and employment.

Education

48. The main measures are:

Education

- The repeal of measures excluding pregnant girls from education; allowing them to take leave of absence from their studies;
- The establishment of equality committees in the ministries responsible for education;
- Training of education officials with regard to integrating gender in the education system;
- Awareness-raising about gender issues;
- The establishment of a technical secretariat for equality;
- The revitalization of the Chair on Gender Issues at the Gamal Abdel Nasser University in Conakry;
- The introduction of co-education;
- The establishment of observatories on violence against girls in schools and universities;

- The establishment of a department solely for promoting literacy and the national languages.

Health

- Free caesareans through the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA);
- The establishment of a women's health cooperative for costs associated with pregnancy and childbirth (MURIGA) as part of the "Risk-free Maternity" programme;
- The training of staff in some health centres and hospitals in providing medical care for injuries resulting from gender-based violence and complications of female genital mutilation/circumcision;
- Awareness-raising among various groups on the benefits of assisted childbirth, prenatal care and HIV/AIDS counselling;
- The training of a surgeon, a gynaecologist, 13 nurses and 72 village midwives in the treatment of fistulas;
- The successful treatment of 192 out of 232 women with obstetric fistulas (i.e. an 83 per cent success rate);
- The adoption of a presidential measure on free caesareans.

Employment

49. Despite the establishment of specific measures, there is no real action plan or policy for the employment of women. Most Guinean women work in the informal sector; for example, as market vendors and in dyeing. It is impossible to quantify the percentage of women in the informal economy, but there is no doubt that their involvement is significant. The measures include the prohibition of:

- The termination of women on the grounds of pregnancy or childbirth;
- Night-time work for women.

Article 5

Sex role stereotyping: changing behaviours related to the division of social roles and combating negative stereotyping

50. Guinea is a patriarchal society that extols the primacy of men over women and of boys over girls.

51. As a result, social roles are unequally divided. Menial tasks such as fetching water, cooking and sweeping are given to women and girls and certain occupations, such as secretarial work, are largely reserved for women.

52. Negative preconceived notions about women are at the root of many forms of violence against them. For example, widows can be considered responsible for the death of their husbands and are subjected to often humiliating widowhood practices.

53. In an effort to combat negative stereotyping of women and bring the population as a whole to change its behaviour, the Government, in cooperation with civil society organizations and development partners, has launched awareness-raising campaigns to abolish several practices.

Article 6

Trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution

54. States parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

55. Under the Criminal Code, trafficking is either a lesser offence or a felony depending on the circumstances of the act. Several cases are pending judgement before the Assize Courts, which regrettably do not sit regularly, owing to insufficient means. Regarding exploitation of prostitution, steps are being taken by the Ministry for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs and the Ministry of Security and Civil Protection to regulate the industry, which has now been taken over by Chinese, Nigerian and Lebanese rings.

56. The same applies to procuring.

Article 7

Women in political and public life

57. States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right to:

- Vote in all elections and public referendums and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;
- Participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof;
- Hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- Participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

58. Article 8 of the Constitution stipulates that: "All human beings are equal before the law. Men and women have the same rights. No one can be favoured or disadvantaged on account of their sex, birth, race or political, philosophical or religious opinions."

59. The Constitution puts no limits on the right of women to hold political or public office.

60. In order to enhance women's ability to hold political office, including at the local level, article 103 of the new Electoral Code stipulates that: "Every district or neighbourhood council must reserve at least one third of its membership for women."

61. Under article 115 of the Code, quotas apply to elections to municipal councils, where candidate lists must include at least 30 per cent women.

62. Article 129 of the Code extends the concept of quotas to the election of members of the National Assembly.

63. No provisions of either the General Civil Service Regulations or of specific statutes hinder women's access to decision-making positions in Government.

64. Notwithstanding this equality in law, the situation is much different in practice, as demonstrated in the table below:

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. National Transition Council	119	40	159
Percentage	77%	23%	100%
2. Supreme Court	13	5	18
Percentage	72%	28%	100%
3. Independent National Electoral Commission	23	2	25
Percentage	92%	8%	100%
4. Economic and Social Council	34	11	45
Percentage	76%	24%	100%
5. National Communications Council	7	2	9
Percentage	78%	22%	100%

65. There are currently one female regional governor and three female prefects.

66. Only 8 subprefects are women, compared to 296 men, and only 1 out of 301 assistant subprefects is a woman.

67. In other words, gender equality in the decision-making process is far from established. Statistical indicators are useful for measuring inequality.

68. Seven out of 36 government ministers and 3 out of 38 mayors are women.

69. The low representation of women in decision-making bodies does not stem from a legal problem, given that there are laws on the matter, but from the fact that these laws are not well known and are not applied in practice.

Article 8

International representation and participation

70. States parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

71. Although no legal texts discriminate against women in this area, Guinean women take very little part in international public life.

72. There is currently only one female head of a subregional organization, namely, the Mano River Union, and no women ambassadors.

73. As a rule, Guinean delegations on missions abroad are headed by men.

74. Only men have been appointed for Guinea's various peacekeeping or good offices missions abroad, except in Haiti where female police officers were dispatched.

Article 9

Nationality

75. Article 9 of the Convention stipulates that:

1. States parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically

change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.

2. States parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

76. However, the provisions of the Nationality Code conflict with the Convention. Men transmit their nationality to their children *ipso facto*, unlike women (except in specified cases, such as when the father is stateless or of unknown nationality).

77. As to transmission of nationality through marriage, men transmit their nationality to their wives and children.

78. As part of the reform of family law, provisions on transmission of nationality to children will likely be amended to reflect the provisions of the Convention. Regarding the rights of women married to foreign nationals, the revised Civil Code gives men and women equal rights.

79. Religious marriages not recognized by the State are commonplace. Problems can arise; for example, in polygamous marriages where wives do not enjoy the same rights depending on whether the union is religious or civil.

80. Equal nationality rights for men and women entail the same rights with regard to acquisition, holding, transmission and withdrawal of nationality.

81. Articles 50 to 55 of the Civil Code, which address acquisition of nationality through marriage, provide for the possibility of a Guinean man to transmit his nationality to a foreign wife upon celebration of the marriage.

82. However, the same is not true for Guinean women who marry foreign men.

Article 10

Equality in education

83. Article 10 of the Convention enshrines the principle of equality in education and training.

84. Education is the key to success. According to the third Demographic and Health Survey of Guinea, 72 per cent of females aged 6 or older are not enrolled in school, compared to 55 per cent of males.

85. The sectoral education policy does not discriminate between girls and boys. This equality is conveyed in “Education for All”, a programme that focuses on the participation of girls at all levels of education.

86. The Guinean education system is singular in that it is divided into two components which fall under either formal education or non-formal education, regardless of whether it is provided publicly or privately. There are five levels under the formal category:

- (a) Preschool education;
- (b) Pre-university education and civic instruction;
- (c) Technical and vocational training;
- (d) Higher education and scientific research;
- (e) Literacy and national languages.

87. Non-formal education mostly encompasses adult literacy courses provided by specialized training centres or women’s centres.

88. Gender equality goals for education have been clearly identified and strategies put forward. This dimension is an important part of planning and implementation of programmes and projects.

89. Diagnostic studies have been conducted which examined the problems and selected gender-specific indicators among other performance benchmarks.

90. The statistics generated by ministries are now disaggregated by gender; therefore it is possible to look at the access of girls and women to formal and non-formal education.

91. Gender equality goals have been clearly identified and strategies put forward as part of "Education for All".

92. In addition to action taken to increase the enrolment of girls and keep them in school, other actions have been directed at the elimination of stereotypes in textbooks.

93. In that connection, the National Educational Research and Teaching Institute reviewed the content of textbooks to remove images and messages that perpetuate negative perceptions of women.

94. Giving dropouts a second chance at an education is another issue broached in relation to the education of girls.

95. In that connection, the Government, through the Ministry of Pre-University Education and Civic Instruction, has set up second chance learning facilities called "NAFA centres".

96. In addition to the NAFA centres, each of the country's 38 urban municipalities has a women's self-help centre.

97. The centres were established to allow girl school dropouts to learn a trade, so that they could be independent in the future.

98. The following tables provide an overview of the enrolment of girls.

Table 1
Main variables (2000/01 to 2009/10)

Year	Schools	Classrooms	Teachers			Students			Parity
			Women	Men	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	
2000/01	4 602	20 043	4 813	14 431	19 244	350 446	503 177	853 623	0.70
2001/02	5 278	23 655	4 979	16 146	21 125	417 556	580 089	997 645	0.72
2002/03	5 765	24 491	5 729	18 130	23 859	458 116	615 342	1 073 458	0.74
2003/04	6 140	25 863	6 119	19 242	25 361	497 122	650 266	1 147 388	0.76
2004/05	6 429	27 018	6 540	20 357	26 897	531 987	674 756	1 206 743	0.79
2005/06	6 815	28 783	7 104	21 192	28 296	563 805	694 233	1 258 038	0.81
2006/07	7 124	30 486	7 579	21 470	29 049	596 015	721 776	1 317 791	0.83
2007/08	7 391	32 073	8 551	22 382	30 933	616 135	748 356	1 364 491	0.82
2008/09	7 598	32 721	8 770	23 040	31 810	629 024	760 661	1 389 685	0.83
2009/10	7 815	33 755	9 913	24 538	34 451	650 455	802 900	1 453 355	0.81
AAGR	7.8%	7.6%	11.8%	7.8%	8.8%	9.5%	6.6%	7.8%	1.8%

Table 2
Crude enrolment rates by gender, 2000/01 to 2009/10

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Years</i>									
	<i>2000/01</i>	<i>2001/02</i>	<i>2002/03</i>	<i>2003/04</i>	<i>2004/05</i>	<i>2005/06</i>	<i>2006/07</i>	<i>2007/08</i>	<i>2008/09</i>	<i>2009/10</i>
Girls	51.1%	58.9%	62.6%	65.7%	68.0%	69.6%	71.2%	71.1%	70.2%	70.1%
Boys	73.2%	81.7%	83.8%	85.7%	86.0%	85.6%	86.0%	86.2%	84.7%	86.4%
Total	62.2%	70.31%	73.2%	75.7%	77.0%	77.6%	78.6%	78.7%	77.5%	78.3%

Table 3
Crude enrolment rates by region and gender, 2009/10

<i>Region</i>	<i>Students</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	
Boké	61.1%	75.2%	68.2%
Conakry	128.6%	140.3%	134.4%
Faranah	72.8%	98.8%	86.0%
Kankan	54.1%	78.3%	66.3%
Kindia	63.8%	83.0%	73.4%
Labé	69.3%	76.4%	72.8%
Mamou	68.3%	84.4%	76.5%
Nzérékoré	48.2%	63.4%	55.8%
Guinea	70.1%	86.4%	78.3%

Article 11 Equality in employment, work and social security

99. The principle of equality in employment is defined in article 20 of the Constitution, which stipulates that “the right to work is recognized for all. The State shall create the necessary conditions for the enjoyment of that right. No one shall suffer prejudice at work on account of their sex, race, ethnicity, etc.”.

100. Equality is further guaranteed in the Labour Code, which puts no gender-related restrictions on recruitment.

101. The Labour Code also protects maternity by establishing a 14-week maternity leave, which can be extended up to 16 weeks for multiple births.

- Termination on grounds of pregnancy or maternity is prohibited;
- Women may take nine months’ unpaid leave at the end of their maternity leave.

102. The Social Security Code provides for social benefits for women if they are paid employees or married to one.

103. There are no discriminatory provisions regarding remuneration, except the General Civil Service Regulations, which do not permit family allowances for female civil servants with dependent children.

104. In order to enable women to combine professional and family responsibilities, childcare facilities have been set up, especially in rural areas.

105. Despite this glowing employment picture, deficiencies remain.
106. Few women hold senior positions within Government.
107. Moreover, although equal treatment is guaranteed on paper, there is a gender pay gap.
108. The situation of female employment in Guinea is the following.
109. As the tables below show, women mostly work as subsistence farmers, agricultural workers and vendors.

Table 4

Employment rate for women aged 10 to 69: 62 per cent

<i>Number</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Urban	34%
2	Rural	75%

Table 5

Employment rate for women, by sector and area

<i>Number</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Urban	
	Primary	11%
	Secondary	1%
2	Rural	
	Primary	94%
	Secondary	2%
	Tertiary	88%
	Tertiary	6%

110. As shown in the following table, women mostly work as subsistence farmers, agricultural workers and vendors.

Table 6

Occupational breakdown of the employed female population (10 to 69 years of age)

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Nurses/midwives	1 487	0.1%
Secondary schoolteachers	1 161	0.1%
Primary schoolteachers	4 139	0.3%
Managers	2 165	0.2%
Secretaries/typists	3 390	0.2%
Restaurant staff	2 976	0.2%
Domestic workers	2 962	0.2%
Vendors	162 258	11.5%
Farmers/farm labourers	128 435	9.1%
Livestock farmers	9 909	0.7%

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Subsistence farmers	1 002 818	71.1%
Mine and quarry workers	5 535	0.4%
Craft workers/manual workers	44 613	3.2%
Street vendors	15 063	1.1%
Laundry workers	3 324	0.2%

Source: Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service.

Table 7
Urban active population, by occupational group (except agriculture)

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
Professional/technical/administrative	10%	52%
Sales and services	75%	14%
Unskilled manual labour	15%	34%

Source: Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service.

111. Regardless of where they live, women are mainly concentrated in the retail and services sectors, while men are mostly either in professional and administrative positions or in unskilled jobs, depending on whether they live in rural or urban areas.

112. Based on the breakdown of the employed female population by educational attainment, it is evident that illiteracy does not correlate with unemployment. The situation is as follows.

Table 8
Employed female population by educational attainment

<i>Educational attainment</i>	<i>Employment rate</i>
Illiterate	93%
Primary education	2%
Secondary education	3%
Vocational education	1%
Higher education	1%

Source: Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service.

113. Despite their number, women make up only 10 per cent of the economically active population in the modern sector. In urban areas, women's lack of training partially explains their difficulty finding jobs. However, it does not mean that they are inactive: most women are in an income-generating activity. Therefore their potential as a labour force is significant if anti-poverty measures are properly targeted.

The private formal sector

114. The Guinean Agency for Employment Promotion (AGUIPE) has catalogued the private businesses, establishments and companies with at least 5 and up to 1,000+ employees.

Table 9
Businesses and declared workers, by industry, nationality and sex

Industry	Number of businesses	Guinean			Foreign			Total
		Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	
B1	32	268	2 554	2 822	1	33	34	2 856
B2	14	276	4 712	4 988	14	137	151	5 139
B3	28	77	1 345	1 422		59	59	1 481
B4	7	184	1 586	1 770	3	31	34	1 804
B5	32	33	1 004	1 037	170	69	1	107
B6	101	216	831	1 047	1	97	98	1 145
B7	17	135	633	768	10	28	38	806
B8	10	195	589	784	1	18	19	803
B9	93	198	2 047	2 245	70	185	255	2 500
Total	334	1 582	15 251	16 883	101	657	758	17 641

Source: AGUIPE, 2000.

Key

- B1 Agriculture, livestock farming, forestry, hunting, fishing
- B2 Extractive industry
- B3 Manufacturing
- B4 Electricity, gas, water
- B5 Construction, public works
- B6 Retail, catering, hospitality
- B7 Transport, communications
- B8 Banking, insurance, business, real estate
- B9 Services

115. The data clearly show that women mainly work in agriculture, the extractive industry, retail and the catering and hospitality sector. There are very few in construction and manufacturing. In the private formal sector, women account for only 11 per cent of paid employees in the tertiary sector and 2 per cent in the secondary sector.

116. The table below compares the proportions of women in the private formal sector by region.

Table 10
Women in the private formal sector by region

Region	Paid female employees	Total paid employees	Percentage of women
Conakry	670	4 953	13%
Labé	152	961	15%
Kindia	475*	6 548	7%
Nzérékoré	509	3 114	16%
Kankan	117	2 065	5%
Total	1 923	17 641	

Source: AGUIPE.

* 241 women work in the mining sector.

117. Although the total number of jobs is highest in the Kindia region, it is also where women are the least represented. Given that the biggest employer is the extractive industry, it can be expected that fewer women would be employed there than men. Nevertheless, out of 475 paid female employees, 241, or 50 per cent, are employed in that sector.

118. As to the overall employment of women, the rate of female paid employees in the public sector is very low, as shown in the following table.

Table 11
Employed female population (15 to 69 years of age) by employment status

<i>Status</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Employer	0.1%
Paid employee, public sector	1.2%
Paid employee, semi-public company	0.2%
Paid employee, private sector	0.5%
Self-employed	51.1%
Apprentice	1.8%
Domestic worker	45.1%
Cooperative	0.1%

Source: Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service.

119. Out of nearly 60,000 public servants, barely 15,000 are women. In the public sector, as in the private sector, Guinean women constitute a small proportion of paid employees and are mainly found among middle management and administrative staff, as shown in the table below.

120. The employment structure of the public sector reveals that women make up only 22 per cent of personnel, distributed as follows: contractual (20 per cent), administrative staff (37 per cent), middle management (24 per cent) and executive staff (14 per cent).

Table 12
Public-sector employment by grade and sex

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
A (32%)	86%	14%
B (40%)	76%	24%
C (17%)	63%	37%
Contractual positions	79%	20%

Source: Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service.

Table 13
Ministerial departments

<i>Senior positions</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
Secretaries-general	35	2	37
Chefs de cabinet	33	5	38
Counsellors	56	13	69
National directors	88	8	96

<i>Senior positions</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
Directors-general	66	8	74

Source: Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service.

Table 14

Territorial administration

<i>Positions</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
Governors	7	1	8
Prefects	30	3	33
Regional directors	238	10	248
Prefectural directors	1 000	3	1 003
Municipal directors	144	11	155

Source: Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service.

Article 12

Health

121. The right to health is enshrined in article 15 of the Constitution, which stipulates that “every one has the right to health and physical well-being; the State shall promote these, and combat epidemics and social problems”.

122. The Public Health Code contains all the necessary provisions for the entire population to enjoy the right to health.

123. One of the general principles of the health policy is that all Guineans should receive timely and affordable promotional, preventive and curative care suited to their condition.

124. The health policy is premised on the Bamako Initiative, the goal of which is to provide the entire population with low-cost essential health care, with a view to reducing morbidity and mortality.

125. Concrete measures have been taken to promote women’s health and, above all, to lower maternal mortality.

126. These measures are:

- “Health for All”, a programme providing women a greater array of local pregnancy, childbirth and post-childbirth services;
- This programme has led to more pre- and postnatal visits;
- Various actions on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS through the programme to prevent mother-to-child transmission;
- Free caesareans;
- Efforts to combat practices harmful to women’s emotional and physical well-being, such as female circumcision and gender-based violence, through the establishment of local information centres in the five municipalities of Conakry and the 33 municipalities of the interior;
- The revitalization of women’s health cooperatives (MURIGA).

127. Issues related to childbirth are addressed by a project entitled “Risk-free Maternity”:

- Support for the National AIDS Committee in disseminating the rights of women in general, and those of women living with HIV/AIDS in particular;
- An awareness-raising campaign in Haute Guinée among women who practise female circumcision and their retraining for alternative employment.

128. Despite considerable and targeted efforts, outcomes in Guinea are mediocre, partly due to the political and economic situation and governance problems. The situation has been further worsened by conflicts in neighbouring countries (i.e. Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone) and their impact on the country's economy (national strategic repositioning plan for the advancement of women 2010). Maternal health is characterized by:

- High maternal mortality;
- Inadequate prenatal care and too few assisted childbirths;
- Poorly accessible and low-quality obstetric care;
- Early, insufficiently spaced and unwanted pregnancies;
- Ongoing risky behaviour.

Policies, programmes and services

129. With the support of its partners, the Government has taken significant measures regarding reproductive and maternal health through the implementation of numerous policies and programmes, including:

Expanded immunization/primary health care/essential medicines

Despite fairly satisfactory geographical coverage, only:

- 60 per cent of the population has access to basic health care;
- 69 per cent of children are vaccinated;
- 65 per cent of pregnant women receive prenatal care;
- 25 per cent of births are attended by a professional.

National AIDS programme

In theory, the objectives of the programme are to:

- Reduce the spread of HIV infections;
- Assist persons living with HIV;
- Reduce the socioeconomic impact of HIV/AIDS;
- Promote research into sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.

Programme against iodine deficiency disorders

130. The goal of the programme is to reduce the prevalence of such disorders by training health officials, distributing iodine pills to children aged 0 to 15 and women of child-bearing age and providing iodized salt to over 80 per cent of the population, in addition to carrying out information, training and communication programmes. Since its implementation, the prevalence of iodine deficiency disorders has dropped from 63.6 to 45 per cent and the consumption of iodized salt has risen from 0 to 12 per cent.

Reproductive health project

131. The objective is to increase the use of and improve reproductive health services by boosting institutional capacity, providing quality services and raising awareness. The project is mainly financed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), and forms part of the population policy.

132. It helps control population growth and protect the health of women and vulnerable groups and as yet has been rolled out only in Guinée Maritime, Moyenne Guinée and Conakry.

Gender and Development Framework Programme

133. The programme will be implemented countrywide.

134. Targets include:

- 75 per cent of leaders and decision makers are to be educated;
- 25 per cent of births outside health facilities are to be attended by a professional;
- 65 per cent of health districts are to have a monitoring system.

135. As part of the Population and Reproductive Health Project, a Population Support Fund has been set up to finance activities that communities consider as priorities for meeting the reproductive health needs of the most vulnerable, including women and adolescents. The programme has not yet been evaluated.

136. The policy and national programme on reproductive health contain sectoral programmes for maternal health, child and adolescent health and men and women's health, including:

- The drafting and adoption of Act No. L/2000/010/AN of 10 July 2000, on reproductive health;
- "Risk-free Maternity" programme 2001–2010;
- The Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses Programme;
- The National Health Development Plan;
- The Strategic Plan for the Health and Development of Children and Adolescents 2008–2012, with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), UNFPA and Plan.

137. A national road map has been adopted for 2006–2015 to hasten the reduction of maternal, neonatal, infant and child mortality. It includes:

- The national strategic repositioning plan for the advancement of women (2010);
- The adaptation of standards to child and adolescent health, with WHO support (2010);
- The definition of standards and procedures of reproductive health municipal component, mother-child health, mother-child unit, youth and women's health, support component (2010).

138. A healthy lifestyle initiative for youth began in 2009, with the support of UNFPA.

Findings and analysis

139. Despite progress in geographical health coverage and the availability of basic health care, women continue to face specific problems, especially with regard to their reproductive role. The main issues are maternal mortality, malnutrition and, increasingly, HIV/AIDS.

140. The maternal mortality rate underscores the obstetrical risks of pregnancy and maternity. According to the Demographic and Health Survey, the rate in Guinea is 528 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.

141. The age bracket most affected is 25 to 29-year-olds, which corresponds to the period of high fertility. One out of every two deaths is due to maternity problems. Among the factors directly linked to maternal mortality, three are major and can be categorized as immediate causes: haemorrhaging, infection and induced abortion. Childbirth-related haemorrhaging accounts for 40 per cent of maternal deaths and usually occurs in women already compromised by anaemia and infection.

142. Infections account for approximately 31 per cent of deaths, while induced abortions under unhygienic conditions account for 20 per cent.

Violent practices

143. The main forms of violence against women are assault, repudiation, levirate, sororate, early marriage, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, rape and the obligation to wear a veil or face covering.

144. In the specific case of domestic violence and rape, problems are compounded by limited access to health care and services. Even where services are available, women have to contend with the inability to afford them, poor quality of care or the burden of custom and tradition. Moreover, insufficient information further alienates women from adequate health care, leading them to neglect their health. For the past decade, Government bodies for the advancement of women and NGOs have been campaigning widely for the gradual eradication of all forms of violence.

Article 13

Economic and social benefits

145. Women constitute the most destitute segment of the Guinean population. Poverty affects rural women more than their urban counterparts, owing in part to trouble accessing factors of production (i.e. land, technology, inputs and credit).

146. Women's financial autonomy is guaranteed by the Civil Code, which stipulates that "married women have full legal capacity and may freely manage and dispose of the assets they purchase, open a bank account, deposit or withdraw money and obtain a bank loan".

147. However, women's access to credit is limited by their lack of sufficient collateral to satisfy creditors that they will recoup their investment.

148. The lack of collateral stems from the poverty in which Guinean women typically live.

149. Most women (70 per cent) live in rural areas where they mainly work in agriculture.

150. However, agriculture requires access to land, which is very difficult for women because land in rural areas is family-owned and women cannot inherit it.

151. In order to increase women's economic capacity, the Government has set up a women's economic activities support project. Actions have been taken with regard to

female entrepreneurship, resulting in the following: according to a survey, women in the mining sector work primarily in small-scale manufacturing.

152. To boost involvement by the private sector, the Government established the Agency for the Promotion of Private Investment, a one-stop resource for setting up a business. Some of its activities centre on female entrepreneurship.

153. In terms of credit, women most often receive microloans through programmes or projects run by microfinance institutions.

154. These include the Sustainable Social Development Programme for Haute and Moyenne Guinée and the financial services associations set up by the African Development Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Article 14

The situation of rural women

155. Women face a number of problems, including illiteracy, acute poverty, sociocultural burdens and trouble accessing basic social services, such as drinking water, health care and legal services should their rights be violated.

156. They also suffer from persistent violence, especially domestic violence and circumcision, the lack of education, information and means of production, the burden of family responsibilities and above all the want of decision-making power.

157. Nevertheless, there is a real determination to continue the decentralization process. Dialogue, at both the national and local levels, has been key to improving the credibility of local structures, especially that of the rural development community as promoter of development. Partnerships between actors at several levels (central government, development partners and local authorities) are an essential element of a sustainable local development process.

158. In an effort to address the problems facing rural inhabitants in general and women in particular, a results-based Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) (2009–2014) was adopted and tangible actions taken by the Government, NGOs and development partners.

159. The overarching goal of the country programme is to help lay the economic foundation for sustainable agricultural development and to strengthen the ability of rural poor to engage in better local governance.

160. The country programme has three specific objectives:

- Strategic objective 1: strengthen local governance and foster the socioeconomic autonomy of the rural population;
- Strategic objective 2: improve productivity and the competitiveness of the activities of the rural poor by making their organizations more professional and responsible for expanding agricultural growth sectors;
- Strategic objective 3: boost access of marginalized groups, especially women, to microloans tailored to their needs by consolidating the financial services associations.

161. In order to meet strategic objective 1, the fund will support the provision of goods and services to a rural development community through phase II of the Village Support Programme. Strategic objective 2, namely, the supply of goods and services from specific sectors, will be achieved through the National Agricultural Support Programme. Strategic

objective 1 is aligned with focus area 1 of the second poverty reduction strategy paper, while objectives 2 and 3 are aligned with both focus area 2 and the national policy on agricultural development.

162. In addition to this vital programme, the Government has set up multipurpose platforms in several towns to help irrigate fields and also provide power for literacy centres and for the transformation of local products by women.

163. The policy to train midwives and deploy them in health centres is ongoing.

164. A National Women's Literacy Programme has been set up and female circumcision is being tackled by punishing practitioners and parents.

165. Facilitators are being trained and deployed across the country.

166. Support, guidance and counselling centres have been established in rural parts of Haute Guinée and Guinée forestière.

167. A social development and solidarity fund has been set up, part of which is dedicated to women (120 billion Guinean francs).

168. A policy paper on women's financial security has been prepared.

169. A five-year strategic plan for the implementation of the Convention has been drafted, as well as eight regional action plans in follow-up to recommendations made by the Committee at its thirty-ninth session regarding implementation of the Convention at the local level. Members of the regional committees responsible for implementing the Convention are trained in gender-sensitive budgeting, in part to persuade local elected officials to include the gender perspective in the Local Government Code.

170. Rural women receive training in leadership and how to prevent and manage community conflicts.

171. Activities are carried out to involve women in the management of natural resources.

172. The Government has adopted a national policy on family, with women as a key component.

Article 15

Legal capacity of women

173. Equality of men and women before the law is enshrined in all Guinean legal texts, except the Civil Code.

174. However, the Civil Code has been revised to remove any articles that discriminate against women.

175. The draft revised Civil Code will be submitted to the National Transition Council for adoption.

176. Once the text is adopted, there will no longer be any national laws that discriminate against women.

177. Moreover, under the Civil Code women have full legal capacity, including the right to conclude contracts and take part in court proceedings.

Article 16

Equality within the family

178. Guinean law recognizes equality of men and women in respect of the conditions under which they enter into marriage.

179. However, local practices are such that forced or early marriages still occur.

180. The Civil Code also awards certain exclusive rights to husbands, such as the following.

181. Paternal authority, by which the husband is the sole head of the family, giving him the right to choose the marital home.

182. Fathers have guardianship of minor children as long as both parents are living. In the event of the father's death, a guardian is selected by a family council, which will also decide who has care of children aged over 7 in the event of divorce.

183. These inequalities have been reviewed and will be corrected if the draft revised Civil Code is adopted. A family policy was formulated and a national directorate established to implement it. Twenty-one officials have already received training to devise action plans for the implementation of the policy.

184. Under the Civil Code, civil marriages must be performed before any other type of marriage, and article 3 of Ordinance No. 010 of 2000 stipulates as follows.

185. "Individuals have the right to make decisions on reproductive health matters freely and at their own discretion, subject to the law, public order and morality.

186. They may decide the number and spacing of children. They have the right to adequate information with which to make such decisions and to achieve the highest level of reproductive health."

Article 18

Commitment of States parties

187. Pursuant to article 18 of the Convention, States parties undertake to prepare initial and periodic reports, in accordance with United Nations instructions, and submit them to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

188. Guinea has made considerable efforts in this area, in spite of the delay that has forced it to combine its reports.

189. Although reports should ideally be submitted on time, it should be recognized that effective implementation of the Convention requires considerable financial means and properly trained human resources and that the reporting period saw chronic instability that made it difficult for the Government to meet its targets. As the country returns to normal constitutional life, efforts will be undertaken on the ground with sufficient resources to correct the problems raised in the Committee's observations and to implement its recommendations.

Article 24

Measures for the full realization of the Convention

190. Since the election of a civilian as head of State, there has been the political determination for Guinea to not only achieve the Millennium Development Goals but also

to fulfil its commitments. Given that the major hindrance to the realization of the Convention is inadequate financial resources, the problem will be solved by the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy paper, the five-year plan (2011–2016) and other sectoral policies.

V. Violations of women’s rights

A. Female genital mutilation and other practices harmful to women’s health

191. Article 3 of the Convention stipulates that: “States parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.”

192. Practices such as clitoridectomy, excision and infibulation, which breach the provisions of the Convention because they cause injury to women and violate their privacy, do occur in Guinea. Around 9 out of 10 women are circumcised. Female circumcision is currently practised in all the regions and in urban and rural areas alike.

193. However, the State has adopted an array of legal measures to combat female genital mutilation and excision.

B. Domestic violence

194. The main forms of violence against women are assault, repudiation, levirate, sororate, early marriage, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, rape and, for some women, the obligation to wear a veil or face covering.

195. In the specific case of domestic violence and rape, problems are compounded by limited access to health care and services. Even where services are available, women have to contend with the inability to afford them, poor quality of care or the burden of custom and tradition. Moreover, insufficient information further alienates women from adequate health care, leading them to neglect their health. For the past decade, Government bodies for the advancement of women and NGOs have been campaigning widely for the progressive eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls.

C. Transmission of nationality to children

196. The provisions of the Nationality Code, in particular article 8 on Guinean nationality by birth, conflict with the Convention. Men transmit their nationality to their children ipso facto, unlike women (except in limited cases, such as when the father is stateless or of unknown nationality).

197. As to transmission of nationality through marriage, men can transmit their nationality to their wives and children.

D. Education

198. Article 10 of the Convention protects equality in education and training.

199. Statistical data reveal that a degree of inequality does exist between men and women in the area of education.

E. Employment, women's participation in political and public life and their representation at the international level

200. Despite the establishment of specific measures, there is no real action plan or policy for the employment of women. Most Guinean women work in the informal sector. It is impossible to quantify the percentage of women in the informal economy, but there is no doubt that their involvement is significant. For example, women work as market vendors and in dyeing.

F. Discrimination in all areas of economic and social life

201. Under the Convention, women have the opportunity to be involved in all areas of economic and social life. But women and girls are de facto victims of discrimination in these areas.

202. Women face de facto discrimination with regard to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit (Convention, art. 13 (b)).

203. Guinean women also suffer discrimination in matters of inheritance, insofar as there is no inheritance code. Moreover, the coexistence of Islamic, customary and civil law heightens inequalities between men and women.

VI. Limitations and outlook

204. Female genital mutilation and other practices harmful to women's health as well as violence, primarily domestic violence, remain common in Guinea and require the Committee's undivided attention.

205. They could of course be punished under the general provisions criminalizing experimental treatment and other practices harmful to health contained in article 213 of the Criminal Code. However, no complaints have ever been filed because victims fear that judges will not punish such acts.

206. The Government has put in place several measures to combat female circumcision. The practice is prohibited in medical centres, but the ban has little effect given that female circumcision is most often performed outside the formal medical system. In 2010, Guinea also set up a joint UNFPA/UNICEF programme against genital mutilation and excision, and adopted a law on reproductive health.

207. In 1999, the Government also undertook to raise the public's awareness of the harmful nature of certain practices through the establishment of a National Committee on Practices Harmful to the Health of Women and Children. Yet Decree No. 99-157/RM of 16 June 1999 does not say exactly what is meant by "harmful practices". The International Federation for Human Rights has found that awareness-raising efforts have not in any way helped eradicate these practices.

VII. Conclusion

208. In compliance with its international commitments, the Republic of Guinea has prepared its combined seventh and eighth reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

209. These reports, spanning the period 2007–2011, address all the areas of the Convention dealing with the protection and advancement of women.

210. They contain a description of progress made, obstacles and challenges encountered and the outlook for the implementation of the Convention.

211. Guinea has progressed on the legal front: the new Constitution is a veritable fount of human rights.

212. However, there has been little noteworthy progress during the period under consideration because of chronic political, economic, cultural and social instability.

Annexes

Annex I

The Committee's questions to the Government

1. Judicial and legislative framework

- (a) Speed up the ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the Convention:
- The ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the Convention is under way. The delay is due to the protracted period of political, economic, social and cultural instability that the country has experienced. Following the election of a civilian president, the document was transmitted to relevant bodies for consideration, including women's organizations, ministerial departments, institutions of the Republic and all actors involved in defending women's rights.
- (b) Speed up the process for ratifying and depositing the instruments of ratification of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa:
- Guinea ratified the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa on 10 November 2004. Since the Third Republic began, urgent measures have been taken to deposit the instruments of ratification with the President of the African Union.
- (c) Draft a special law on gender equality:
- A bill on equality between men and women has been drafted and is in the process of being adopted.
- (e) Speed up the promulgation process of the draft revised Civil Code and the Children's Code:
- The Children's Code was adopted via Act No. L/2008/011/AN of 19 August 2008, adopting and promulgating the Children's Code (Official Gazette of the Republic of Guinea, special edition, July 2009);
 - The grounds for submitting the draft revised Civil Code for consideration by the Government have already been drawn up by the law officers entrusted with that task and will be transmitted shortly to the National Transition Council for adoption.
- (f) Raise awareness of the Convention among all ministerial personnel, especially staff of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Security and Civil Protection and the Ministry of National Defence:
- Ministerial personnel, especially staff of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Security and Civil Protection and the Ministry of National Defence received training in the Convention through seminars and workshops run by the Ministry for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs;
 - Justice system: 230 judges, lawyers and legal support staff in the country's eight administrative regions received training in violence against women, gender issues, national, subregional, regional and international legal instruments against gender-based violence and the Convention;
 - Ministry of the Interior: 520 officials and officers of the defence and security forces received training in the Convention and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009);

- Ministry of Security and Civil Protection and Ministry of National Defence: 30 senior officers, instructors in military training centres and 520 officers, non-commissioned officers and privates received training in United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security; 1820 (2008), on preventing and punishing violence against women; 1888 (2009), on sexual violence in armed conflict; and 1898 (2009), on strengthening the post-conflict role of women. A team composed of judges, lawyers, legal support staff and military and paramilitary personnel is responsible for implementing the Convention and those Security Council resolutions across all eight administrative regions.
- (g) Provide gender training to senior officials at all levels of Government:
- Several officials at the various levels have been trained in gender issues through department projects run by the Government and technical and financial partners, namely: a UNDP project on gender promotion, a UNFPA project to support the women's movement and a joint UNFPA-UNICEF project on female genital mutilation and excision. Systems have been set up in ministerial departments to guarantee the process.
- (h) Design and adopt a national policy on gender:
- A national policy on gender was designed and adopted in January 2011;
 - A programme to disseminate the policy is under way across the administrative regions.
- (i) Carry out research and actions on the trafficking of women and girls in Guinea:
- Research and actions on the trafficking of women and girls are in progress under the supervision of the Ministry of State for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs and the national committee on trafficking in persons.
- (j) Set up mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the Convention (national committee, regional committees and legal assistance centres for women):
- Mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the Convention have been set up and are operating, while legal assistance centres for women are gradually being put in place.
- (k) Speed up the ratification process of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols supplementing it, on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and smuggling of migrants:
- Since September 2004, Guinea has acceded to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and both optional protocols.
- (l) Draft and promulgate a law on sexual harassment:
- No laws have been drafted regarding sexual harassment, but the matter is being discussed at the national level.
- (m) Ensure that criminal provisions punishing perpetrators of all forms of violence against women and girls are adopted and implemented:
- Criminal laws, especially the existing Children's Code, are becoming stricter with regard to perpetrators of all forms of violence against women and girls.
- (n) Ensure that labour laws and regulations are implemented:
- The Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service ensures that labour laws and regulations are properly implemented. Studies are being conducted to measure the employment rate of women. Moreover, the Ministry is working on the Decent Work

Country Programme, in which women and children are a central element of the focus areas.

The focus areas of the Decent Work Country Programme are:

- Enhancing social dialogue;
 - Promoting decent work for young men and women in rural and urban areas through building sustainable businesses;
 - Strengthening and expanding social protection.
- (o) Promote women's reproductive health rights:
- Women's reproductive health rights are strengthened on an ongoing basis through awareness-raising campaigns led by NGOs, civil society and the Government. Issues relating to family planning, treatment for fistulas and giving up female circumcision and other practices harmful to maternal and child health are broadly discussed;
 - In addition to Act No. L/010/AN/2000 of 10 July 2000, on reproductive health, the Children's Code sets out severe penalties for perpetrators of offences prejudicial to reproductive health.
- (p) Draft and adopt a specific law regarding trafficking in persons, especially women and children:
- A specific bill on trafficking in persons and other similar offences has been drafted and is in the process of being adopted.
- (q) Regulate prostitution:
- Measures are being taken to regulate prostitution through a presidential decree as well as orders and decisions of competent ministers.
- (r) Adopt and implement a specific law on persons with disabilities, including women and girls:
- Guinea ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008 and has adopted a specific law on persons with disabilities, including women and girls.

2. Political and institutional framework

- (a) Take "temporary special measures" for the advancement of women and give them at least 30 per cent of decision-making posts at the international, regional and national levels:
- The 2009 Constitution sets a 30 per cent quota of women in elected office and article 129 of the Electoral Code provides for a 30 per cent quota of women on parliamentary candidate lists.
- (b) Encourage women's participation in the activities of the various relevant institutions and bodies:
- There are women in local administrative bodies and their safety has been enhanced in all areas.
- (c) Enhance the safety of women and girls in all areas:
- The Ministry for National Solidarity, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs was raised to the rank of ministry of state, and given a new junior ministry;

- National directorates, including ones on the advancement of women, gender issues and family affairs and the National Women’s Self-help Service, were established, and gender units with divisional rank were created in all ministerial departments;
- A national observatory of gender-based violence with an advisory function was established;
- A national independent human rights institution was established;
- A national statistics institute was established at the Ministry of Planning;
- Two population and gender networks, a network for women living with HIV, an association for women suffering from fistulas and a national network of traditional communicators were established;
- Gender units were established in every ministerial department and institution of the Republic;
- A protection cluster was set up at the Ministry for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children’s Affairs;
- An interim poverty reduction strategy paper was designed for 2012–2013, taking into account gender.

3. Culture and education

- (a) Pursue and strengthen programmes for the enrolment, retention and academic success of girls in school and university:
- These include measures to strengthen programmes for the enrolment, retention and academic success of girls in school and university, and support is available for women’s education and literacy.
- (b) Promote women’s education and literacy:
- The Government of Guinea has set up a department responsible for literacy and the promotion of the national languages.
- (c) Support the establishment of the Chair on Gender Issues at Gamal Abdel Nasser University in Conakry:
- The Chair on Gender Issues at Gamal Abdel Nasser University is operational and has been strengthened;
 - A human rights observatory was established at Sonfonia University;
 - The National “Education for All” Coalition was established to align action by civil society in education;
 - Girls are given priority in all curricula and levels of education.

4. Social and economic life

- (a) Facilitate access to family allowances and survivor’s pensions for women whose husbands are not paid employees:
- Measures are being taken by the Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service to boost women’s access to family allowances and survivor’s pensions.
- (b) Better endow the National Women’s Economic Activities Support Fund and improve decentralization:

In addition to the National Women's and Youth Employment Support Fund, the Office of the President of the Republic set up a 120 billion Guinean franc social development and solidarity fund to support women's enterprise.

(c) Establish a network of organizations and a steering committee on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000):

A civil society network is closely involved in disseminating resolution 1325 (2000) as well as other Security Council resolutions and the Convention.

Core groups of members of the army and paramilitary corps have been trained in the Convention and Security Council resolutions with a view to training others on the ground.

(d) Pay special attention to article 14 of the Convention regarding rural women:

The concerns of rural women are taken into account in all development programmes and projects, in accordance with article 14 of the Convention, and some development projects focus solely on women.

(e) Promote the establishment and sustainability of women's mutual associations and cooperatives:

Agricultural producers associations are spreading quickly and are attempting to organize services for their members and defend their rights. There are nearly 6,000 such associations in Guinea, covered by Act No. L/2005/O14/AN, which governs quasi-cooperative economic associations, non-financial mutual associations and cooperatives. Some of the more active ones are behind the establishment of sectoral federations, for example, the Guinea confederation of farming organizations, an umbrella group that includes the Fouta Djallon federation of potato, onion and tomato farmers, the Basse Guinée federation of rice farming organizations and the regional federation of palm tree and para rubber tree growers; the Guinée forestière federation of coffee growers; the Guinea confederation of livestock farmers, which groups organizations of livestock farmers; and a number of federations, non-federated unions and associations of producers or processors. The maturity, drive and investment and advocacy capacity of the producers' organizations varies widely. Their main weaknesses are: (i) occasional lack of transparency in resource management, causing members to distrust those in charge; (ii) deficient pooling of internal resources; and (iii) a shortage of leaders with a clear vision of how to grow their organization.

(f) Enhance the participation of women in general, and of rural women and women in the informal sector in particular, in economic, social and cultural development programmes.

Rural development

Enhancing the participation of women in general, and rural women and women in the informal sector in particular, entails the strict implementation of a number of policies and programmes designed to address their concerns, such as the national policy on agricultural development, the national poverty reduction strategy, the Local Government Code, the national policy on gender and the country's commitment to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The national policy on agricultural development was adopted in 2007 and is anchored in the expansion of the farming and livestock industry. The objective for 2015 is for farming to be largely family-based yet intensive, sustainable and guaranteeing food self-sufficiency.

It sets out a strategy for ensuring the sustainability of progress achieved through development projects and programmes (State funding, human resource management) and for strengthening information systems and the agricultural council's research capacity.

It also provides for a long-term rural financing mechanism (agricultural development bank, expansion of the microfinance network) to exploit surface water, repair existing hydro-agricultural infrastructure, improve post-harvest techniques and make agricultural technology accessible to small producers.

It also plans for the mechanization of farming (animal and motor traction) and investment in the agro-foodstuffs industry through increased studies of growth sectors (bananas, mangoes, cashew nuts, etc.).

(g) Take into account the specific needs of women in the next general population and housing census slated for 2008:

Steps have been taken to address the specific needs of women in the next general population and housing census slated for 2012.

(h) Significantly increase the percentage of the national development budget allocated to the Ministry for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs:

The budget of the Ministry for Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs has increased significantly thanks to the priority given to women by Government.

B. Committee's recommendations

(a) To institutions of the Republic:

- No government institution has yet achieved the 50 per cent quota of women in decision-making positions. Although the new Electoral Code sets a 30 per cent quota of women on candidate lists, no political party has met that quota either.

(b) To civil society:

Answers to the Committee's questions regarding Guinean civil society can be found in the action this sector has taken.

These are:

- Dissemination of women's rights;
- Training of political and religious leaders regarding women's rights;
- Training of the judiciary and members of the defence and security forces regarding the Convention and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009);
- The establishment of counselling and legal assistance centres;
- Training of media professionals regarding women's rights;
- The establishment of a wide range of federated structures in the form of NGO coalitions to boost the safeguarding of women's rights, such as Fédération guinéenne des réseaux de femmes pour la paix et le développement (Guinean Federation of Women's Networks for Peace and Development, FEGUIREF), Réseau Africain des Femmes de la Pêche (African Network of Women in Fisheries, RAFEP GUINÉE), CEFE, Coalition nationale guinéenne de l'éducation pour tous (Guinea National Coalition for Education for All, CNGEPT), Réseau des femmes africaines ministres et parlementaires (Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians, REFAMP), Coalition nationale Guinée pour les droits et la citoyenneté de la femme (National coalition for women's rights and citizenship, CONAG-DCF), and the revitalization of others such as the Réseau des Femmes du

Fleuve Mano pour la Paix (Mano River Women's Network for Peace, REFMAP), and Christian and Muslim networks.

(c) To bi- and multilateral partners:

Although funding from bi- and multilateral partners for social projects, programmes and plans benefiting women and girls has been slow in coming, there is no doubt that these partners have fulfilled their commitments towards Guinea.

The setting up of all the key projects of the Ministry of State for the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs and its junior ministry was supported by technical and financial partners, namely the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The projects are: a UNDP project on gender promotion, a UNFPA project to support the women's movement and a joint UNFPA-UNICEF project on female genital mutilation and excision. Their support also made it possible to implement the recommendations of the Committee at its thirty-ninth session. Other international institutions also contribute, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which rigorously monitors the observance of human rights, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the International Organization of la Francophonie. All partners have fulfilled their commitments.

- A national survey on gender-based violence was conducted in 2009.

Technical partners supported the preparation and dissemination of the 2009 national strategy paper on gender-based violence.
