



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

Distr.: General
8 March 2011

Original: English

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

Fiftieth session

3 – 21 October 2011

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

Côte d'Ivoire

1. The pre-session working group considered the combined initial, second and third periodic reports of Côte d'Ivoire (CEDAW/CIV/1-3). It welcomed the substance and the objectivity of the report.

General

2. Please specify the extent of consultation and participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparation of the report (para. 9) and indicate whether the report was submitted to Parliament.

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

3. Côte d'Ivoire is not a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and has not accepted amendment to article 20, paragraph 1 of the Convention. Please indicate whether the State party is considering accessing to the above-mentioned international instruments and accepting amendment to article 20, paragraph 1 of the Convention.

4. The report refers to the ongoing legislative reforms to redress inequalities between women and men, including a bill on marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption, parentage and minority; a bill on persons living with HIV/AIDS; and the revision of the electoral law, the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure (para. 95 ff). The report also refers in paragraph 704 to a study of legislation that discriminates against women or men and indicates that a new legislation will be submitted to Parliament as soon as the socio-political situation of the country allows. Please provide information on the progress made in adopting the above-mentioned laws and explain whether it will bring the whole legislation in line with the Convention (para. 95 ff). Please also indicate how the State party envisages, at the end of the current crisis, to apply the provisions of the Convention, through, inter alia, the integration of gender aspects in peace building projects.

5. The report refers in paragraph 100 to a mechanism, established under Decree No. 61-157 of 18 May 1961, to monitor the implementation of international instruments,

particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to which Côte d'Ivoire is a party. Please provide information on the functioning of this mechanism, whether it provides findings and recommendations for a better implementation of the Convention, and on the progress made in monitoring the implementation of international instruments.

Visibility of the Convention and Optional Protocol

6. The report indicates in paragraph 58 that despite its direct applicability in the courts, judges, lawyers and the general public rarely make reference to the Convention. The report further states that this is due to widespread ignorance of the Convention despite some measures taken by the Ministry for Women and Social Affairs. Please specify these measures and provide information as to how the State party is planning to raise awareness about the rights of women under the Convention.

Access to justice

7. According to paragraph 272 of the report, the Courts and tribunals rarely deal with or register gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination against women, in the absence of complaints lodged by victims and their families. In addition, the report refers to underreporting of cases and their non-referral to the courts (para. 86). Information before the Committee further refers to the failure of the judiciary system and indicates that cases related to sexual violence are only filed without being investigated. Please indicate whether the State party is considering elaborating a policy for effective access of women to courts and tribunals, including for cases of gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination against women.

National Machinery for the advancement of women

8. The report indicates in paragraph 115 that the budget of the Ministry of the Family, Women and Social Affairs is less than 1 per cent of the national budget. Please explain whether the State party is envisaging increasing the Ministry's budget and in which sectors.

Temporary special measures

9. The report indicates in paragraphs 155 and 159 that the 2007 Solemn Declaration for a national gender policy and a 30 per cent quota, as well as the National Action Plan for Women (2003-2007), have not been implemented. The report also indicates in paragraph 165 that the budget of the National Plan of Action for the Implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women and Peace and Security, approved by the Council of Ministers, has not yet been adopted by Parliament and that no coordination, follow-up and evaluation mechanisms have been set up so far. Please indicate the time frame for the implementation of the above-mentioned measures, including the implementation of quotas. Please also explain whether the State party envisages establishing a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the above-mentioned strategies and to coordinate the related activities, in particular with NGOs. Please also provide information on existing or coming coordination mechanisms between national and international activities aimed at combating discrimination against women.

10. Please also provide information on measures taken to improve the situation of women in poverty and to elaborate or accelerate the elaboration of a strategy to combat poverty with clear objectives, measurable targets and obligations for delivering results.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

11. In paragraphs 234 and 237, the report indicates that certain customary, traditional and religious practices tend to place women in a position of inferiority compared to men and that women in rural areas experience difficulties in overcoming traditional stereotypes. In particular, the report refers to practices related to widowhood, keeping girls out of school, forced marriages, limited participation in public meetings on community development and the ineligibility of women for traditional chieftom status. Stereotypes are reflected in the media, but also in the law, such as in the Marriage Act which attributes parental authority exclusively to the father and confers all decision-making powers to him (para. 253). The report further indicates that measures have been taken to eliminate stereotypes among the general public (para. 256 ff). Please describe the scale, impact and the funding allocated to such measures, and provide information on the intermediaries, such as women organizations and other NGOs, expected to implement these measures. Please also indicate whether the State party envisages elaborating a comprehensive plan to eliminate stereotypes.

Violence against women

12. Information before the Committee refers to the 2007 Ordinance providing amnesty for most crimes committed during the conflict, including for systematic acts of sexual violence against women. Please provide information on measures taken to provide assistance to victims of sexual violence during the conflict and to combat impunity during the current crisis.

13. The report indicates in paragraphs 70 and 265 that despite the existence of Act No 98-757 of 23 December 1998 which prohibits female genital mutilation, FGM remains a widespread practice in Côte d'Ivoire. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its concluding observations of 9 July 2001, urged the State party to continue its efforts to end the practice of female genital mutilation, inter alia, through implementation of programmes sensitizing the population about its harmful effects. Please indicate whether there is a policy to effectively implement the Law of 1998 and to change these harmful traditional practices.

14. The report indicates in paragraph 166 that the national strategy against gender-based violence, prepared in December 2008, has not been approved. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, in its report of 4 January 2010, recommended that Côte d'Ivoire elaborate a national action plan aimed at addressing the prevalence of sexual violence and grant investigative competences to the National Committee to combat violence against women and children. Please provide information on the efforts undertaken to that end. Please also inform on the time frame for setting up a comprehensive care system for victims of gender-based violence (para. 292 of the report).

15. According to paragraph 63 of the report, Act No. 98-757 criminalizing certain forms of violence against women fails to take account of domestic violence, which is the most common form of violence against women and includes corporal punishment of girls. The report also indicates in paragraph 725 that marital rape is not criminalized. Please inform whether the upcoming legislative reform aimed at bringing the Law in line with the Convention will criminalize domestic violence and marital rape.

16. The report indicates that women and girls who have been subjected to sexual violence tend to suffer from stigmatization (para. 273 ff). Moreover, information before the Committee refers to the victims' difficulties to access medical services and the absence of appropriate psychological and medical support. Please provide information on measures to combat stigmatization of victims of sexual and domestic violence, and to provide them with medical and psychological support.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

17. The report indicates in paragraph 264 that there is no specific national legislation to prevent and punish trafficking in women and girls. In addition, information before the Committee refers to the trafficking of children, in particular girls who work as domestic servants and are subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment. Please indicate whether the State party is considering elaborating a law or amending its legislation in order to address trafficking and exploitation of women and girls.

Political participation and decision-making

18. The report states that women are underrepresented within State institutions. Please indicate what measures have been taken by the State party to encourage political parties to increase the percentage of women candidates. While noting the awareness-raising and capacity-building activities undertaken by the National Women's Coordination Committee to encourage the involvement of women in elections, please provide information on additional measures taken by the State party to significantly increase female political participation, specifically in the current political context.

Education

19. The report indicates that a high percentage of women are illiterate. Given that illiteracy is a factor of social inequality, please provide information on any measures, including special measures, envisaged to tackle this urgent situation.

20. The report indicates that schoolbooks are being revised to eliminate stereotypes, teachers are trained on applying a gender perspective, and measures have been taken with a view to achieving gender equality at school (paras. 240-247 and 435 ff). Please explain whether such measures have been implemented and provide information as to their impact on achieving de facto equality of girls and boys in the field of education.

21. The report indicates in paragraph 431 that sexist attitudes have a negative effect on girls' schooling. Please provide information on the measures taken to combat such attitudes.

22. The report also indicates in paragraph 442 that Koranic schools are enrolling a large number of children, including a high proportion of girls. Please provide details on measures taken to harmonize education between schools throughout the country, and between boys and girls in case of separate classes.

Employment

23. The report indicates in paragraph 321 that in the private sector, women account for only 11.5 per cent of all employees. Please provide information on measures taken in scholar and professional education to ensure that more women join the private sector.

Health

24. The report refers to an AIDS prevalence of 4.7 per cent and a disproportionately large number of infected women (para. 543). It further indicates in paragraph 546 that fewer than 10 per cent of pregnant women have access to health services aimed at preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Please provide information on efforts made to increase the accessibility to such services, on HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, and on treatments for women infected with HIV/AIDS, particularly pregnant women.

25. The report refers to a very high maternal mortality rate in the State party (para. 522), including as a result of abortion, and to a national programme on reproductive health and family planning aimed at addressing the high maternal mortality rate (para. 518). The report

also states in paragraph 535 that abortion is illegal, except when physicians consider that the mother's life is in danger. Please describe the impact of the national programme reducing maternal mortality rate and explain how the State party plans to significantly decrease the maternal mortality rate, particularly by legalizing abortion in cases other than when the mother's life is in danger.

26. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review on 4 January 2010 recommended that Côte d'Ivoire give priority to the establishment of sexual and reproductive health programmes for women and girls. Please indicate whether such measures have been taken and whether the State party envisages taking measures to strengthen health infrastructures.

Rural women

27. The report notes a low level of education among rural girls in comparison with boys, women's lack of awareness of their rights and their limited access to health services (para. 617 ff). Please explain whether the State party has adopted or envisages adopting a comprehensive and coordinated programme to address the unmet needs of rural women.

Internally displaced and refugee women

28. Information before the Committee refers to a large number of internally displaced persons as well as refugees in and outside of the country and to a number of exactions and acts of violence perpetrated against displaced and refugee women. Please provide information on measures taken to protect displaced and refugee persons, in particular women.

Marriage and family

29. The report indicates that many girls are forced into early marriage and that the laws prohibiting early and forced marriages are rarely being enforced (paras. 235 and 541). Please indicate the minimum age for marriage and provide information on the efforts undertaken to address this problem.

30. In paragraph 235, the report states that 35 per cent of married women live in polygamous marriages. Please provide details on the provisions against polygamy and their enforcement in practice.

31. According to paragraph 253 of the report, there is no law prohibiting customs attached to widowhood, such as the levirate and sororate. Moreover, the report indicates in paragraph 67 that payment of dowry, albeit a criminal offence, still occurs. Please indicate whether the ongoing legislative reform bans discriminating practices related to widowhood and whether the State party is taking steps to enforce the prohibition of dowry.
