



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of the Dominican Republic*

1. The Committee considered the eighth periodic report of the Dominican Republic (CEDAW/C/DOM/8) at its 1867th and 1869th meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.1867 and CEDAW/C/SR.1869), held on 17 and 18 February 2022.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State party of its eighth periodic report, which was prepared in response to the list of issues and questions prior to reporting (CEDAW/C/DOM/QPR/8). It also appreciates the State party's follow-up report to the previous periodic report (CEDAW/C/DOM/CO/6-7/Add.1). It welcomes the oral presentation, made virtually, by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party on its high-level delegation, which was headed by the Minister of Women's Affairs, Mayra Jimenez, and included representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Presidency, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, the Ministry of Public Administration, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the Ministry of Defence, the National Institute of Migration, the General Directorate of Migration, the Central Electoral Board, Office of the Attorney General, the National Statistics Office, the National Police, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities and the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2013 of the State party's combined sixth and seventh periodic reports (CEDAW/C/DOM/6-7) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of Law No. 1-21, which prohibits child marriage and sets the minimum age for marriage at 18 years for both women and men.

* Adopted by the Committee at its eighty-first session (7–25 February 2022).



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

- (a) Third national equality and equity plan (2020–2030);
- (b) Strategic plan for a life free from violence;
- (c) National plan for the prevention of, assistance to, protection of and political advocacy for the eradication of child marriage and early unions.

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

- (a) Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;
- (b) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

C. Sustainable Development Goals

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

D. Parliament

8. **The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see the statement by the Committee on its relationship with parliamentarians, E/CN.6/2010/CRP.2, annex VI). It invites the Congress of the Dominican Republic, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the submission of the next periodic report under the Convention.**

E. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Definition of equality and non-discrimination

9. The Committee notes that the principle of non-discrimination, including on the basis of sex, is enshrined in article 39 of the Constitution. The article provides for measures to prevent and combat sex-based discrimination. However, the Committee remains concerned about the persistence of intersecting forms of discrimination against disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women in the State party, in particular women of Haitian origin.

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

(a) **Adopt legislation to prohibit all forms of discrimination against women that covers direct and indirect discrimination in the public and private spheres, as well as intersecting forms of discrimination, in accordance with article 1 of the Convention;**

(b) **Ensure the effective application of the constitutional prohibition of sex-based discrimination;**

(c) **Devise a comprehensive system to collect data on discrimination, disaggregated by sex, and other indicators relevant for women;**

(d) **Adopt the draft law on equality and non-discrimination.**

Women of Haitian origin

11. The Committee is deeply concerned at the recent mass deportations of Haitian persons and people of Haitian descent, particularly pregnant and postpartum women, as well as at reports of gender-based violence and discrimination against them, as well as their separation from their children born and raised in the State party.

12. **The Committee recommends that the State party suspend immediately the deportations of pregnant or postpartum Haitian women and women of Haitian origin, ensure their protection from gender-based violence and discrimination and issue permanent residence permits to Haitian women whose children were born and raised in the State party, so as to uphold their right to family life in accordance with international conventions and standards.**

Women's access to justice

13. The Committee notes the mechanisms put in place by the State party to increase women's access to justice, particularly with regard to young women, women with disabilities, women of Haitian origin and older women, such as by having available free legal aid, psychological assistance, and interpreters for sign language and Creole. It also notes the adoption of the strategic institutional plan of the judiciary for the period 2020–2024, which includes provisions to increase accessibility of justice for women with disabilities. However, the Committee is concerned that women with disabilities face barriers to accessing justice in the form of physical and behavioural barriers and the limited knowledge of women with disabilities of their rights and of the remedies available to claim them. The Committee is further concerned that the mandate of the National Public Defence Office does not include the provision of legal aid to victims of discrimination who wish to initiate civil, labour and administrative proceedings.

14. **In line with the recommendations contained in its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/DOM/CO/6-7, para. 17), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Strengthen human and financial resources to ensure that women with disabilities have access to justice, including through the use of sign language and braille in judicial proceedings;**

(b) **Allocate adequate resources to facilitate access to legal aid and legal literacy and enable women without sufficient means to claim their rights in all areas of law, including in civil, labour and administrative law disputes;**

(c) **Provide systematic training to judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officers on women's rights and ensure that the Convention, the Committee's general recommendations and its jurisprudence under the Optional Protocol are sufficiently known and applied by the judiciary and that they are an integral part of all capacity-building programmes.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

15. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the third national equality and equity plan and the inclusion of specific budget lines to promote gender equality in the national budget. The Committee welcomes the increased budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the establishment of 56 provincial and municipal offices. The Committee further notes the establishment of 50 gender equity and development offices in State institutions and gender commissions in the Central Electoral Board, the Supreme Court of Justice, the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate and the Directorate for Families, Adolescents and Gender of the Office of the Public Prosecution Service. However, the Committee remains concerned about a possible merger of the Ministry of Women's Affairs with other ministries to form a new Ministry of Family Affairs, which would negatively affect the visibility of women in national governance and, by extension, the capacity of the State party to coordinate and implement public policies for the advancement of women.

16. **In line with its general recommendation No. 6 (1988) on effective national machinery and publicity and the recommendations contained in its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/DOM/CO/6-7, para. 19), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Strengthen the Ministry of Women's Affairs by providing it with adequate human, technical and financial resources and ensure that its mandate to coordinate the implementation of public policies for the advancement of women is not weakened by restructuring;**

(b) **Systematically implement gender-responsive budgeting in all programming relevant for achieving substantive equality of women and men.**

National human rights institution

17. The Committee notes the establishment by law of the Office of the Ombudsman and its enshrinement in articles 190 and 191 of the Constitution of the State party. It is nevertheless concerned about reports indicating that the Office of the Ombudsman lacks independence and takes insufficient action to investigate and report on allegations of human rights violations, including violations of women's rights, as well as about its lack of engagement in the reporting process to the Committee for the review of the State party.

18. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the full independence of the Office of the Ombudsman in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles, annexed to General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993), and strengthen its capacity to investigate and report on human rights violations, including violations of women's rights, and to actively engage with the United Nations human rights mechanisms, including the Committee.**

Discriminatory stereotypes and harmful practices

19. The Committee appreciates the results of research and communication campaigns carried out by the State party to eliminate discriminatory stereotypes, including by addressing stereotypical portrayals of women in the media, promoting positive and non-violent masculinities, and recognizing the value of unpaid work by women and their contribution in all spheres of society. It is nevertheless concerned at the persistence of discriminatory stereotypes of the roles of women and men in the family and in society, including in education. The Committee is further concerned at multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women of Haitian origin.

While welcoming the adoption, in 2021, of Law No. 1-21, which prohibits marriage under the age of 18 for both girls and boys, without exception, and of the national plan for prevention, assistance, protection and political advocacy with regard to the eradication of child marriage and early unions, as well as the establishment of the Cabinet for Childhood and Adolescence to coordinate the implementation of the national plan, the Committee remains concerned at the high numbers of child and/or forced marriages and de facto unions, which jeopardize girls' and women's sexual and reproductive health rights and limit their educational and professional opportunities, putting them at risk of gender-based violence against women.

20. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to combat discriminatory stereotypes in all sectors including education and labour and through objectification and gender-stereotypical portrayals of women in the media through revision of textbooks, teacher training and professional training for media workers on women's rights and gender equality;

(b) Develop awareness-raising campaigns with a view to combat discriminatory stereotypes, including against women of Haitian origin, promote positive images of women as active agents of development and positive and non-violent masculinities;

(c) Allocate adequate human and financial resources to the implementation of the national plan for prevention, assistance, protection and political advocacy with regard to the eradication of child marriage and early unions, including raising public awareness on the minimum age of marriage.

Gender-based violence against women

21. The Committee notes the measures in place in the State party to respond to gender-based violence against women, including increased victim support services such as temporary shelters, medical treatment and psychological and legal assistance. It also notes the adoption, in 2020, of the first economic reparations programme for women victims of domestic violence and fostering families of girls and boys orphaned by femicide and the Strategic Plan for a Life Free from Violence for Women. However, the Committee is concerned about the high incidence of gender-based violence against women in the State party and about the delay in adopting the draft law on violence against women, which would specifically criminalize femicide and other forms of gender-based violence against women. It also notes with concern the absence of a unified system and procedure for recording reports of gender-based violence against women, the limited number of prosecutions and convictions and the lenient sentences imposed on perpetrators of gender-based violence against women.

22. In line with its general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women updating general recommendation No 19 (1992), and with the recommendations contained in its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/DOM/CO/6-7, para. 25), the Committee urges the State party to:

(a) Adopt a comprehensive law on gender-based violence against women that provides for risk assessments for victims, protection orders and adequate sanctions for non-compliance, effective reparations and adequately funded and accessible victim support services;

(b) Raise awareness of the criminal nature of gender-based violence against women and its different forms, bearing in mind special needs in terms of accessibility of information for disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women, including women with disabilities;

(c) **Adopt gender-responsive protocols to unify procedures for reporting cases of gender-based violence against women and create a database to compile and periodically update data on such violence;**

(d) **Ensure that women and girls, including women with disabilities, refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women, lesbian, bisexual, transgender women and intersex persons, who are victims of gender-based violence against women, have adequate access to medical, psychosocial and legal assistance and to victim and witness protection programmes;**

(e) **Ensure that those officiating at wedding ceremonies for child and/or forced marriages and/or those instigating and facilitating forced early unions are prosecuted and adequately punished.**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

23. The Committee notes the efforts by the State party to combat trafficking in women and girls, including the establishment of the Inter-Agency Committee for the Protection of Migrant Women and the Office of the Special Prosecutor to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, the increase in the number of convictions of perpetrators for trafficking offences, and capacity-building for public officials, including judicial officers. It also notes the disaggregated data on investigations, prosecutions and convictions contained in the annual reports of the Inter-Institutional Commission against Trafficking in Persons and the Illicit Smuggling of Migrants. It further notes that in 2020, only 22 cases of trafficking were prosecuted before the courts. The Committee notes that the State party is a destination country for sex tourism and child trafficking. The Committee is also concerned about the large number of Dominican adolescent girls being sexually exploited while not having the protection of the law. The Committee is therefore very concerned about the delay in adopting the draft law to amend Law No. 137-03 on the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons to expand the definition of trafficking with regard to minors. The Committee is further concerned about reports of trafficking in Dominican women outside the country for exploitation in prostitution. It also notes with concern that migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women are at a higher risk of trafficking, especially those who are undocumented or in an irregular situation, most of them women of Haitian origin.

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

(a) **Ensure the adoption of the draft law to amend Law No. 137-03 on the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons, to bring it in line with the definition of trafficking of minors in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, removing the requirement of force, fraud and coercion to consider sexual exploitation of minors as trafficking;**

(b) **Raise awareness among the public, especially women, about the dangers of being exploited abroad, mainly for sexual purposes;**

(c) **Address situations of vulnerability contributing to the exploitation of prostitution of women and prostitution of girls in order to eliminate their vulnerability to sexual exploitation, offer exit programmes, including alternative income opportunities for women who wish to leave prostitution, and ensure their rehabilitation and facilitate their social reintegration.**

Participation in political and public life

25. The Committee is concerned about the decrease in women's participation in political life following the 2020 elections. It is further concerned that the denial of identity documents precludes many migrant women from participating in political and public life.

26. **In line with its general recommendation No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Pursue sustained policies aimed at achieving women's full and equal participation in political and public life, in particular at decision-making levels;**

(b) **Conduct awareness-raising campaigns aimed at politicians, members of the Central Electoral Board, judges of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, and members of the media and the general public to enhance the understanding that the full, equal, free and democratic participation of women on an equal basis with men in political and public life is a requirement for the full implementation of the human rights of women and for achieving political stability and economic development in the State party;**

(c) **Amend Law No. 33-18 on Political Parties, Groupings and Political Movements and Law No. 15-19 on the Electoral System to expand the mandatory application of gender quota to elected positions and to provide financial incentives to political parties that allow for training and investment in campaign-funding for female candidates;**

(d) **Adopt effective mechanisms to monitor and control compliance with the electoral gender quota, including sanctions for non-compliance by political parties and electoral bodies;**

(e) **Pursue parity in appointed public positions, including positions in public administration and in the composition of high courts.**

Women and peace and security

27. The Committee notes the measures taken by the State party to implement Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security, particularly within the armed forces. The Committee also notes the plan in place in the State party to ensure that women are included in all operational structures. However, the Committee is concerned that the national action plan has not yet been adopted.

28. **The Committee recommends that the State party establish a clear timeframe to finalize the adoption of the draft national action plan to implement Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security, in cooperation with women's organizations, and ensure that it takes into consideration the full spectrum women and peace and security agenda of the Security Council as reflected in those resolutions.**

Nationality

29. The Committee notes with concern the obstacles faced to registering the birth of children born to a Dominican father and a woman who is a non-national, who is of Haitian origin and is undocumented, or who is in an irregular migration situation. It notes that in 2020, there was a 62 per cent decrease in the number of births registered, particularly in cases where the children had been born to women who were non-nationals or to girls under 15 years of age, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee is also concerned about the impact of the 2014 denationalization

process that affected thousands of women and men, including Haitian workers recruited through special labour contracts and arrangements, and their descendants, who had, in some cases, lived and worked in the State party for generations. It notes with concern the continuing adverse effects of Constitutional Court ruling No. 168-13 in that regard.

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

(a) **Review its nationality legislation (in particular arts. 3 and 4 of the Naturalization Act of 1948) and the General Migration Act of 2004 to eliminate discriminatory provisions and ensure that every child born in the Dominican Republic to a Dominican man and a woman who is not a Dominican national, including a woman of Haitian origin, is entitled to Dominican nationality;**

(b) **Take steps to ensure that any child born in the Dominican Republic from a woman who is not a Dominican national, including a woman of Haitian origin, is not made stateless;**

(c) **Address the backlog in registration and ensure that all children born in the State party are registered immediately after birth and at no cost, and ensure their right to a nationality;**

(d) **Remove all barriers, in law and in practice, to registering descendants of Dominican men and women who are non-nationals or affected by Constitutional Court ruling No. 168-13, in the ordinary birth register for Dominicans, and ensure that they have access to the Dominican nationality regardless of the nationality or migration status of the mother;**

(e) **Promote the approval of the draft law to amend Law No. 659 on Records of Civil Status aimed at extending the deadlines for the timely registration of births to 180 days, and cover the costs related to DNA tests required by the Central Electoral Board in order to ensure that all children born in the State party are registered in the ordinary birth register for Dominicans.**

Education

31. The Committee notes that the illiteracy rate among women is 13.5 per cent lower than among men. It also notes the introduction of extended school days, which is reaching 68 per cent of children and is resulting in a considerable increase in school enrolment rates and improved grades. It further notes the free meals policy. It welcomes the increased salaries, retirement pensions and health-care benefits for preschool, primary-level and secondary-level teachers, as well as the approval of the national plan for inclusive education (2019). However, the Committee remains concerned about gender stereotypes and discriminatory educational practices, including among teachers, gender-biased pedagogical resources and methodologies, and school culture, which have led to gender gaps in girls' performance in certain subjects, including mathematics. The Committee also notes with concern that the planned measures related to age-appropriate sexuality education in schools, such as the development of curricula for comprehensive sexuality education from the preschool to the lower secondary level, the design and implementation of protocols for detecting and managing adolescent pregnancies and of related guidelines and training for teachers and psychologists, have not been implemented. It is also concerned about discrimination in schools against pregnant girls and teenagers, teenage mothers and girls who do not possess birth certificates, as well as about discrimination against lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex students.

32. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education, the Committee recommends that the State party promote**

the importance of girls' education at all levels as a basis for their empowerment, and recommends that the State party:

- (a) Guarantee effective access to education for all girls, including migrant girls;**
- (b) Develop policies to end discrimination in schools against pregnant girls and teenagers, teenage mothers and girls who do not possess birth certificates, as well as discrimination against lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex students to ensure that they can successfully complete their education;**
- (c) Ensure adequate human and financial resources to promote women's and girls' representation in non-traditional fields of study and career paths, in particular science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and information and communications technology;**
- (d) Ensure the implementation of the planned measures to deliver curricula for age-appropriate sexuality education, including on the topic of responsible sexual behaviours, are implemented at all levels of education.**

Employment

33. The Committee notes the maternity leave and other benefits, such as medical benefits and the right to nursing breaks, afforded to women under the labour law of the State party. It nevertheless notes with concern the persistent gender pay gap in the State party and the fact that women are underrepresented in the formal economy and in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. The Committee is also concerned about the delays in harmonizing the legislation of the State party with the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), ratified by the State party in 2015, with regard to defining a minimum wage, benefits and adequate conditions for domestic workers. It also notes with concern that the unemployment rate among women (9.3 per cent) is significantly higher than among men (3.9 per cent), owing in part to the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's employment.

34. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Promote women's access to formal employment and review wages in all sectors, applying gender-sensitive analytical job classification and evaluation methods, and enforce the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, in order to narrow and ultimately close the gender pay gap;**
- (b) Establish temporary special measures in line with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, so as to accelerate women's representation in decision-making positions in the private and public employment sector;**
- (c) Harmonize existing legislation to ensure compliance with ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).**

Health

35. The Committee welcomes the measures in place in the State party to ensure that free contraceptive methods are available in public hospitals and included in the basic table of essential medicines. It also welcomes the adoption of the technical regulations for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care, which contains guidelines and procedures for the national health system. The Committee notes the development and implementation of guidelines for certification of professionals giving high-quality and compassionate maternal and neonatal care. It further notes a decrease of 59 per cent in maternal mortality rates from 2015 to 2019. The Committee is nevertheless

concerned about the fact that adolescent girls and boys have limited access to information on sexual and reproductive health and their rights in that regard. It is also concerned about the fact that access to safe abortion and post-abortion services is limited and that unsafe abortions are a leading cause of maternal mortality and morbidity in the State party. The Committee is further concerned about the criminal liability of women who procure abortions and their resulting imprisonment, noting that those women are often reported by health care providers when seeking medical attention for post-abortion complications and face conviction on the basis of testimonial evidence. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about the limited and even restricted access for migrant women in an irregular situation to hospitals and health-care centres, including with regard to sexual and reproductive health-care services and COVID-19 vaccines.

36. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Intensify the implementation of health-care programmes, including awareness-raising programmes, to ensure the availability, accessibility and use of modern contraceptives to all women, and specifically to adolescent girls, in line with general recommendation No. 24 (1999) on women and health;

(b) Recognizing that the criminalization of abortion is a form of gender-based violence against women, in line with general recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women updating general recommendation No 19, amend the Criminal Code to legalize abortion, at least in cases of rape, incest, threats to the life and/or health of the pregnant woman and severe foetal impairment, and decriminalize it in all other cases;

(c) Introduce a moratorium on the enforcement of the current law and review the detention of women for abortion-related offences to ensure their immediate release and the provision to them of adequate reparations;

(d) Provide all women with access to safe abortion and post-abortion services, in particular in cases where complications are the result of unsafe abortions;

(e) Ensure that migrant women in an irregular situation have effective access to hospitals and health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health-care services and COVID-19 vaccines.

37. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of integration of the programme for the reduction of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis at all levels of regular obstetric and paediatric care in health-care facilities;

(b) The limited number of HIV units in the country;

(c) The low adherence to HIV treatment, especially among pregnant women;

(d) The high out-of-pocket costs for anti-retroviral therapy;

(e) The disproportionately high prevalence of HIV among certain disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women, including uneducated Dominican women and young women, as well as among pregnant women.

38. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure access to health-care for women with HIV, including by increasing the number of HIV units in the country, maintaining regular follow-up to guarantee adherence by women to HIV treatment, and providing free anti-retroviral treatment to all women and girls living with HIV/AIDS;

(b) **Develop awareness-raising campaigns with a view to preventing HIV among certain disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women at high risk, including uneducated Dominican women and young women, as well as among pregnant women.**

Economic empowerment of women

39. The Committee notes the reduction in the poverty rate, as well as the efforts made in the State party to strengthen women's economic empowerment. It also notes that 65 per cent of loans awarded by the National Council for the Promotion of and Support for Micro-, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises were granted to women. It further notes that households headed by women were the primary beneficiaries of the solidarity pensions for persons affected by multidimensional poverty and the implementation of the National Housing Plan for Happy Families, which is aimed at facilitating access to adequate housing. However, the Committee is concerned about the low percentage in social spending compared with other countries in the region. It also notes with concern that women migrant workers employed in the informal economy who are in an irregular situations are unable to access the banking system, and that banks give priority to married women when authorizing loans. The Committee further notes with concern that official microcredit programmes fail to cover women with disabilities.

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

(a) **Continue to gradually and steadily increase the percentage of social spending;**

(b) **Increase access to credit for all women in a non-discriminatory manner, including to women employed in the informal economy, migrant women and women with disabilities;**

(c) **Strengthen systems of social security to reduce the precariousness of the existence of many employed and self-employed women in urban and rural areas.**

Rural women

41. The Committee notes the efforts made by the State party to develop rural development plans on the basis of the needs of rural women and to provide technical assistance to rural women in the area of self-sufficient farming. It also notes that under the land titling programme, 53,000 land titles have been issued, and that more than 50 per cent of the recipients are rural women. The Committee is concerned that the poverty rate, which has increased in rural areas in 2019 and 2020, has affected primarily women, despite a decrease in urban areas. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of disaggregated data, which impedes the inclusion of the needs of rural women in the design of public policies. The Committee is further concerned about the lack of adequate coverage in rural areas in the education, health and justice sectors.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party continue to implement targeted plans and policies to address the needs of rural women, including by ensuring rural women's access to land ownership and to basic services such as education and health-care.**

Asylum-seeking and refugee women

43. The Committee is concerned about the fact that refugee and asylum-seeking women have limited access to status determination and asylum application procedures in the State party, which denies them international protection and is not in compliance

with international standards. It notes with concern that there is a 15-day limit for lodging applications, that women asylum seekers are frequently not separated from abusive male family members during their interviews, and that the specific needs of women are not considered when collecting country of origin information.

44. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Guarantee effective access to international protection in compliance with the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto;**

(b) **Ensure that asylum and refugee status determination procedures are applied in a gender-sensitive manner;**

(c) **Repeal the unreasonable 15-day limit for lodging asylum applications;**

(d) **Ensure that the specific needs of women are duly considered in the refugee status determination process;**

(e) **At entry points and official border crossing points, improve screening capacities for women who require international protection, as well as make use of alternatives to detention, guarantee family unity, separate women from men in reception centres and provide women in detention with adequate access to health-care services.**

Women with disabilities

45. The Committee is concerned about the restrictions to legal capacity faced by women with disabilities, which limits or prevents them from taking their own decisions, exercising their parental rights and accessing justice. The Committee is also concerned about the fact that only 27.8 per cent of women with disabilities participate in the labour market. The Committee notes with concern that women with disabilities who are institutionalized or in detention do not receive appropriate attention and reasonable adjustments based on their needs. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned at the lack of disaggregated data on the situation of women with disabilities to substantiate the formulation of laws and policies in the State party, accelerate de facto equality and overcome the obstacles that prevent women with disabilities from exercising their rights.

46. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Eliminate all systems that partially or fully deprive women with disabilities of their legal capacity, thus enabling them to take their own decisions, exercise their parental rights and access justice on an equal footing with others;**

(b) **In line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 on temporary special measures, introduce temporary special measures focused on fostering vocational training and participation in the labour market for women with disabilities;**

(c) **Ensure that women with disabilities in institutions and in detention receive appropriate attention and reasonable adjustments based on their needs;**

(d) **Ensure that women with disabilities are not placed in institutions without having given their free, prior and informed consent, and that the existence of a disability shall in no case justify a deprivation of liberty;**

(e) **Establish a comprehensive system to gather data disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant factors concerning women with disabilities and to substantiate the formulation of laws and policies in the State party so as to**

accelerate substantive equality and overcome the obstacles that prevent women with disabilities from exercising their rights.

Marriage and family relations

47. The Committee notes the adoption of the law that prohibits child marriage and that sets the minimum age for marriage at 18 years for both women and men. It also notes the adoption of the national plan for prevention, assistance, protection and political advocacy with regard to the eradication of child marriage and early unions. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned that the practice of child marriage persists in the form of early unions.

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

(a) **Collect data, disaggregated by age, sex and region, to assess the dimensions of the phenomena of early unions;**

(b) **Take measures to raise awareness throughout the country of the harmful effects of child marriage and early unions on the health, education and life choices of girls.**

Amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention

49. **The Committee encourages the State party to accept the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

50. **The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to further evaluate the implementation of the Convention in the context of the 25-year review of the Declaration and Platform to achieve substantive equality of women and men.**

Dissemination

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

Technical assistance

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

Ratification of other treaties

53. **The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which it is not yet a party.**

Follow-up to concluding observations

54. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 12, 22 (a) and (c), and 30 (d) above.

Preparation of the next report

55. The Committee requests the State party to submit its ninth periodic report, which is due in February 2026. The report should be submitted on time and cover the entire period up to the time of its submission.

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