



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Mozambique*

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Mozambique (CRC/C/MOZ/3-4) at its 2406th and 2407th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.2406 and 2407), held on 11 and 12 September 2019, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 2430th meeting, held on 27 September 2019.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined third and fourth periodic reports of the State party, which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party. The Committee expresses appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the delegation of the State party by videoconference.

II. Follow-up measures taken and progress achieved by the State party

3. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. The Committee notes with appreciation the various legislative, institutional and policy measures taken to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the adoption of the national action plan for children 2013–2019, the National Plan of Action for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour 2017–2022 and the National Basic Social Security Strategy 2016–2024 and the revision of the Penal Code in 2014. It also welcomes the progress achieved in increasing the birth registration rate, in improving access to water and sanitation and in reducing rates of child malnutrition and infant mortality.

III. Main areas of concern and recommendations

4. The Committee reminds the State party of the indivisibility and interdependence of all the rights enshrined in the Convention and emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. The Committee would like to draw the State party's attention to the recommendations concerning the following areas, in respect of which urgent measures must be taken: allocation of resources (para. 10), birth registration (para. 21), violence against children (paras. 25–29), health and health services (para. 33), standard of living (para. 39) and education (para. 41).

5. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the realization of children's rights in accordance with the Convention and its Optional Protocols on the**

* Adopted by the Committee at its eighty-second session (9–27 September 2019).



involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also urges the State party to ensure the meaningful participation of children in the design and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals as far as they concern children.

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6))

Legislation

6. The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 10) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all measures necessary for the effective implementation of existing legislative measures in compliance with the Convention, including by adopting the regulation on the Law on the Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights;

(b) Ensure that the Convention prevails whenever there is a conflict with domestic legislation or common practice.

Comprehensive policy and strategy

7. While welcoming the adoption of the national action plan for children 2013–2019, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Evaluate the action plan and use the findings of the assessment to formulate future policies;

(b) Ensure that the next action plan for children is results-oriented and regularly monitored and evaluated in accordance with human rights indicators based on the Convention.

Coordination

8. Noting with concern the insufficient coordination of all activities relating to the implementation of the Convention at cross-sectoral, national and local levels, the Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 12) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen the role of the national council for social welfare to effectively coordinate the implementation of the Convention, and minimize overlap in mandates between the various national-level coordination mechanisms addressing issues related to children's rights;

(b) Ensure that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare has sufficient resources and authority to effectively implement and coordinate comprehensive, coherent and consistent policies to promote the rights of the child at all levels and to assess the impact of such policies and programmes on children's rights.

Allocation of resources

9. While welcoming the criteria introduced by the national council for social welfare to target beneficiaries of public resources in a more equitable manner, the Committee remains seriously concerned about insufficient funds being allocated for the enjoyment of children's rights, the inequitable allocation of resources among provinces and the pervasiveness of corruption, which continues to divert resources that are necessary for ensuring the rights of the child. It is also concerned about the impact of austerity measures on children's rights.

10. Recalling its general comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 18) and urges the State party:

(a) To allocate adequate human, financial and technical resources for the implementation of all policies, plans, programmes and legislative measures directed at children, as well as for entities working on children's rights, including the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare and the National Human Rights Commission;

(b) To introduce a child-rights perspective into the budgeting process, including through the citizen budget, that specifies clear allocations for children in the relevant sectors and agencies and includes specific indicators and a tracking system to monitor and evaluate the adequacy, efficacy and equitability of the distribution of resources allocated for implementation of the Convention;

(c) To regularly conduct child-rights impact assessments of budget and economic decision-making processes and outcomes, including austerity measures, in areas that are directly or indirectly related to children's rights;

(d) To intensify its efforts to combat corruption and strengthen institutional capacities to effectively detect and investigate cases involving corruption and prosecute those responsible, taking note of target 16.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Data collection

11. The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 24) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Develop a comprehensive data-collection system that covers all areas of the Convention and that it collects data disaggregated by age, sex, disability, nationality, geographic location, ethnic origin and socioeconomic background in order to facilitate analyses of the situation of all children, including asylum-seeking and refugee children and children in street situations, especially in the areas of health, violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking and justice;

(b) Allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources to the National Institute of Statistics to guarantee continuous data collection and regularly publish reports;

(c) Take into account the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) entitled *Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation* when defining, collecting and disseminating statistical information.

Independent monitoring

12. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and the appointment of a Commissioner on Gender, Children and Social Affairs, and recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that the Commissioner has a mandate to receive, investigate and address complaints from children in a child-sensitive manner;

(b) Provide continuous capacity-building and training for staff of the National Human Rights Commission on issues related to children's rights;

(c) Apply to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions for accreditation as compliant with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

Dissemination, awareness-raising and training

13. The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 26) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, in cooperation with civil society organizations, to ensure that the Convention is widely known by the general public, including parents, caregivers and children themselves, paying particular attention to children in rural areas;

(b) Intensify efforts to provide adequate and systematic training to parliamentarians, law enforcement officials, teachers, social workers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, health professionals and community leaders and other professionals working with and for children;

(c) Continue to promote the active involvement of children in public outreach activities and encourage the media to ensure sensitivity to children's rights and the inclusion of children in the development of programmes.

Cooperation with civil society

14. Noting with appreciation the efforts of the State party to cooperate with civil society, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Systematically involve civil society organizations working in the field of children's rights in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, policies and programmes related to children;

(b) Provide such organizations with the support necessary to implement their activities in all areas relating to the promotion and protection of children's rights.

Children's rights and the business sector

15. Recalling its general comment No. 16 (2013) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework, the Committee recommends that the State party establish and implement regulations to ensure that the business sector, in particular the extractive, agricultural, forestry and fishery industries, complies with international and national human rights, labour, environment and other standards, particularly with regard to children's rights.

B. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12)

Non-discrimination

16. Noting with concern the persistent patterns of discrimination against children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 30) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to eliminate discrimination against groups of children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, especially girls, children with disabilities, children with albinism, children in street situations, children living in rural areas, children of unmarried parents and asylum-seeking and refugee children;

(b) Conduct comprehensive public education and awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, to combat and prevent stigmatization and discrimination against these groups of children and to promote a positive image of them.

Best interests of the child

17. Recalling its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee is concerned that this right is not implemented in decisions affecting children and recommends that the State party:

(a) Develop procedures and criteria to provide guidance and training to all relevant persons in authority and to professionals working with and for children for determining the best interests of the child in every area and for giving them due weight as a primary consideration;

(b) Evaluate, on the basis of the procedures and criteria described above, practices, policies and services that may not be in the best interests of the child.

Right to life, survival and development

18. While welcoming the progress in clearing landmines and reducing the under-5 mortality rate, the Committee remains concerned about the large number of children who are victims of traffic accidents and the high rate of child mortality due to preventable diseases. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) To strengthen measures to eliminate preventable infant and under-5 mortality and apply the OHCHR technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age (A/HRC/27/31);

(b) To develop additional measures to prevent traffic accidents, including additional educational programmes on road safety and accident prevention in all school curricula, public campaigns to increase traffic awareness among children, parents, teachers and the public in general and strict enforcement of relevant traffic laws;

(c) To allocate sufficient resources to the integrated early childhood development strategy to ensure its effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Respect for the views of the child

19. In view of the fact that children's views are not adequately taken into account in decision-making processes that affect them and given the persistence of traditional societal attitudes towards children, in particular towards girls, which limit their right to freely express their views, the Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 36) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that children's views are given due consideration in courts, in schools, in relevant administrative and other processes concerning children and in the family through, inter alia, the training of professionals working with and for children and the development of operational procedures or protocols to ensure respect for the views of children in administrative and judicial proceedings;

(b) Strengthen the children's parliament as an independent, democratic and adequately resourced body with the participation of children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations and ensure that its outcomes are systematically fed into public decision-making;

(c) Conduct awareness-raising activities to promote the meaningful and empowered participation of all children in the family, the community and schools, including within school councils and child protection community committees, paying particular attention to girls, children with disabilities and children living in rural or remote areas.

C. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8 and 13–17)

Birth registration and nationality

20. The Committee welcomes the introduction of the electronic civil registry system, the elimination of geographical restrictions for registration and the expansion of registration centres. Nevertheless, the Committee remains concerned about the significant number of children who are not registered; limited access to civil registration services in rural areas; fees imposed on registrations that occur after 120 days from the date of a child's birth, on notification papers and on copies of certificates; the lack of effective measures to ensure the birth registration of girls and children of unmarried parents; the low level of public

awareness of the importance of birth registration; and the absence of adequate data and measures on statelessness in the State party.

21. Taking note of target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) **To continue efforts to promote the timely registration of births, including through the introduction of registration facilities in all health-care centres, of mobile registration units in rural and remote areas and of administrative measures to ensure retroactive birth registration and the issuance of documents for children who are not registered;**

(b) **To abolish all birth registration fees and ensure that all children, including children of unmarried parents, are properly registered at birth, including by raising awareness among the population to eliminate the stigmatization faced by children of unmarried parents and their mothers;**

(c) **To intensify its efforts to raise awareness among the general public, and among mothers and pregnant women in particular, of the importance of birth registration, including through community health programmes and campaigns in health-care centres;**

(d) **To take measures to determine the number of stateless children in the State party and, for example, the kinds of children who are stateless, why they are stateless and what legislation and policies prevent them from acquiring a nationality.**

Freedom of association and peaceful assembly

22. Recalling its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 40), the Committee recommends that the State party guarantee the full implementation of the right to freedom of association and ensure that children are supported and encouraged to form their own associations and initiatives, including by adopting regulations governing the establishment of child-led associations and ensuring that they safeguard the best interests of children.

Right to privacy

23. The Committee recommends that the State party take all the measures necessary to fully protect the right of the child to privacy, in particular from the media, by amending legislation to explicitly protect the right of the child to privacy; developing guidelines regarding the use of images of children and the disclosure of their identities in all forms of media; sensitizing media professionals on children's rights; and establishing child-friendly mechanisms for children to report breaches of their privacy.

Access to appropriate information

24. Recalling its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 44), the Committee recommends that the State party improve children's access to appropriate information from a variety of sources, in particular for children living in rural and remote areas, and ensure that children are adequately protected from information and material harmful to their well-being, particularly on the Internet and social media.

D. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 37 (a) and 39)

Corporal punishment

25. Noting with deep concern the extensive use of corporal punishment and the application of legal provisions that are interpreted as justification for such forms of discipline, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 48) and urges the State party:

(a) To prioritize the explicit prohibition, through legislative and administrative measures, of corporal punishment in all settings, including in the home, in schools and in day-care and alternative care settings;

(b) To repeal all legislative provisions, including article 24 of the Law on the Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights, article 51 of the Regulation on Basic Education and article 179 of the Penal Code, which are interpreted as justifications for the use of corporal punishment;

(c) To strengthen its efforts to train parents, teachers, professionals working with children and the public on positive, non-violent forms of discipline and respect for children's right to human dignity and physical integrity, with a view to eliminating the acceptance of the use of corporal punishment.

Abuse and neglect

26. The Committee is deeply concerned about the increased prevalence of violence against children, including domestic violence. Recalling its general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, it recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen mechanisms to prevent, monitor and address child abuse and neglect, including domestic violence, with the involvement of children and of existing mechanisms such as the community committees for the protection of children and school councils and raise awareness of their existence and related procedures;

(b) Provide systematic training to judges, prosecutors, police officers and child protection and social workers on how to prevent, monitor and address cases of child abuse and neglect, including domestic violence, in a child- and gender-sensitive manner;

(c) Establish a national database on all cases of violence against children, including domestic violence, abuse, neglect and sexual exploitation, and develop a monitoring and evaluation system to help determine how child protection systems can effectively address violence against children.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

27. Taking note of targets 5.2 and 16.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee expresses deep concern over the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including children with disabilities, and recommends that the State party:

(a) Conduct a comprehensive study on the scope and root causes of the vulnerability of children to sexual exploitation, abuse and prostitution and apply the findings to the development of a national action plan to prevent and combat the phenomenon;

(b) Establish accessible, confidential, child-friendly and effective channels for reporting cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse, in particular in schools and public institutions;

(c) Provide child victims with child-friendly and multisectoral remedies and comprehensive support, including psychological, recovery and social reintegration assistance, and encourage courts to make use of the child-friendly and multi-agency arrangements for obtaining testimony from children.

Harmful practices

28. Expressing deep concern about the extremely high rate of child marriage, including forced marriage, and the practice of initiation rites for girls, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Implement legislation explicitly prohibiting all traditional practices harmful to the physical and psychological well-being of children and take all

necessary measures to eliminate child marriage and the harmful aspects of initiation rites for girls;

(b) Ensure that the national strategy for preventing and combating child marriages 2016–2019 is adequately resourced, extended beyond 2019 and effectively implemented;

(c) Develop comprehensive awareness-raising campaigns, in cooperation with civil society organizations, on the harmful effects of child marriage and initiation rites on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls, targeting households, local authorities, teachers, religious, traditional and community leaders, judges and prosecutors.

Children with albinism

29. Expressing deep concern about reports of discrimination and violence experienced by children with albinism, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Address the root causes of the discrimination and violence they suffer and ensure that children with albinism can exercise their rights without discrimination;

(b) Prevent and address killings, mutilations, kidnappings and attacks targeting children with albinism, provide such children with medical and psychological support, redress, rehabilitation and legal assistance and punish those responsible for such crimes;

(c) Conduct awareness-raising campaigns against superstitious beliefs concerning children with albinism.

E. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18 (1) and (2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))

Children deprived of a family environment

30. Drawing the State party's attention to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (see General Assembly resolution 64/142, annex), the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Implement, enforce and raise awareness of the regulation on alternative care (decree No. 33/2015) and expedite the establishment of a national registry of alternative care;

(b) Address the reasons why children are separated from their families through programmes that support and strengthen families in their caregiving role;

(c) Direct efforts towards enabling children to remain in or return to the care of their parents or, when appropriate, other family members, by ensuring that parents and other family members have access to support in their caregiving role and are able to provide safe, stable and nurturing care for their children, including through child-sensitive social protection policies and services;

(d) Phase out institutionalization by adopting a concrete plan that includes the systemic transformation of the childcare and protection system and an intersectoral approach to ensuring that funds are redirected to community-based services;

(e) Ensure the registration and inspection of existing alternative care centres for children in accordance with the regulation on residential care facilities (decree No. 278/2010), ensure that such centres are transformed into small-group settings as close as possible to a family situation and provide an independent monitoring system and accessible channels for reporting and responding to the maltreatment of children;

(f) **Ensure adequate safeguards and clear criteria, based on the needs and the best interests of the child, for determining when it may be necessary to provide residential care, and ensure also that such care is used as a temporary measure and is accompanied by regular reviews of the affected child's situation.**

F. Disability, basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (1)–(3) and 33)

Children with disabilities

31. **While welcoming the strategy on inclusive education for children with disabilities 2018–2027, the Committee is concerned about stigmatization and discrimination against children with disabilities and their limited access to education and social assistance, and recommends that the State party adopt a human rights-based approach to disability and that it set up a comprehensive strategy to eliminate discrimination against children with disabilities. It also recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources to effectively implement the above-mentioned strategy;**

(b) **Increase the number of parents or caregivers of children with disabilities who benefit from the basic social subsidy programme;**

(c) **Redouble its efforts to ensure that all children with disabilities have quality, inclusive education in mainstream schools, ensuring that schools are equipped with the necessary trained human resources, accessible infrastructure and teaching materials adapted to the needs of children with disabilities;**

(d) **Invest in reasonable accommodations to ensure the full inclusion of children with disabilities in all areas of public life, such as leisure activities, community-based care and social housing, and their access to basic services, including health-care services;**

(e) **Undertake awareness-raising campaigns targeting government officials, the population and families in order to combat stigmatization and prejudice against children with disabilities and to promote a positive image of children with disabilities as rights holders.**

Health and health services

32. **The Committee welcomes the reduction in child mortality, the increase in immunization coverage and the introduction of a global financing facility to respond to decreasing and inconsistent donor contributions. However, the Committee remains concerned about:**

(a) **Limited access to quality health-care services, in particular in rural areas, inadequate health infrastructure with regard to electricity, water and sanitation facilities and a shortage of qualified health-care personnel and medicines;**

(b) **The prevalence of preventable diseases, including pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition and HIV/AIDS, which also contribute to the persistently high rates of neonatal and under-5 mortality;**

(c) **The growing number of unvaccinated children, despite improvements in immunization coverage;**

(d) **Reliance on external sources for financing of health-care services.**

33. **In the light of its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and taking note of target 3.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 62) and also recommends that the State party:**

(a) Prioritize measures to improve access to, and the quality of, primary health services, in particular in rural areas and for low-income families, including by improving health planning and service delivery at the provincial and district levels, by allocating sufficient human and financial resources for health infrastructure, by developing an integrated medicine supply management system to improve the availability and access of essential medicines and by evaluating and scaling up the community health worker programme;

(b) Ensure the availability of qualified health personnel who are adequately trained to address the specific needs of children and adolescents and to treat preventable diseases, including pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition and HIV/AIDS;

(c) Improve immunization rates by establishing more vaccination centres close to communities, by ensuring the proper functioning of the cold chain and by disseminating more information on vaccination campaigns;

(d) Increase the national, provincial and district budget allocations to the health sector with a view to moving progressively towards meeting the target of 15 per cent set out in the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases, with a view to ensuring the sustainability of the national health system;

(e) Strengthen the District Health Information System 2 platform for effective and regular data collection in order to guide the implementation and monitoring of the national health promotion strategy and other related policies;

(f) Strengthen actions to promote breastfeeding, monitor the implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, extend maternity protection to women working in the private sector, increase the number of hospitals implementing the child-friendly hospital initiative and implement the guidelines of the World Health Organization on HIV and infant feeding;

(g) Implement comprehensive policies and strategies for mental health promotion, mental disorder prevention and early identification of mental health issues.

Nutrition

34. Expressing deep concern at the high rates of child undernutrition and stunting in the State party and taking note of target 2.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To allocate sufficient resources to the council charged with food and nutritional security to ensure its effective operation at the national, provincial and district levels through multisectoral investments aimed at reducing undernutrition and chronic malnutrition;

(b) To ensure the availability of essential micronutrients, including vitamin A, iron and iodized salt, to children under 5 years of age, paying particular attention to children in rural areas and from low-income families, and include nutrition counselling services in the basic nutritional package;

(c) To strengthen preventive measures, including awareness-raising on nutrition issues and proper feeding practices, and nutritional support for breastfeeding mothers;

(d) To integrate acute malnutrition case management in health-care facilities and disaster response plans.

Adolescent health

35. Expressing deep concern about the high teenage pregnancy rate, very low levels of contraceptive use and limited access to safe abortion services, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Provide free, confidential and adolescent-responsive sexual and reproductive health services, information and education aimed in particular at preventing early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections;

(b) Ensure girls' access to family planning services, affordable contraceptives and safe abortion and post-abortion care services, and ensure that their views are always heard and given due consideration in abortion decisions;

(c) Introduce sexual and reproductive health education into the mandatory school curriculum for adolescent girls and boys, focusing on non-discrimination, sexual and reproductive rights, healthy sexuality and the prevention of high-risk sexual behaviour and sexually transmitted diseases.

HIV/AIDS

36. Expressing deep concern about the high HIV prevalence rate among adolescents, which is much higher among girls than among boys, and the high rates of new infections, the Committee, taking note of target 3.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 68) and also recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen and extend the implementation of national plans on HIV/AIDS and the elimination of mother-to-child transmission and ensure regular access to antiretroviral treatment, in particular in youth-friendly services;

(b) Build the capacity of community and health workers to provide care and support for children living with HIV/AIDS;

(c) Strengthen awareness-raising campaigns aimed at providing accurate information on HIV/AIDS and reducing related stigma and discrimination.

Impact of climate change on the rights of the child

37. Taking note of target 13.b of the Sustainable Development Goals and expressing concern over the disproportionately negative effects that natural disasters have on children, as seen recently with Cyclone Idai, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that the specific vulnerabilities and needs of children, as well as their views, are taken into account in the development of policies and programmes addressing the issues of climate change and disaster risk management;

(b) Increase children's awareness of and preparedness for climate change and natural disasters by incorporating these issues into the school curriculum and teacher training programmes;

(c) Strengthen the awareness of communities on disaster risk reduction and prevention measures and on how to move from at-risk to safe areas and strengthen the early warning systems, especially at the community level.

Standard of living

38. While welcoming the adoption of the national basic social security strategy 2016–2024, the Committee remains concerned about the persistence of extreme poverty among a large proportion of children in the State party and the low standard of living of many children, in particular with regard to access to clean water, sanitation facilities, adequate housing and electricity.

39. Taking note of target 1.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to address poverty and the lack of access to clean water and sanitation among children in rural areas. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Adopt and implement national standards and technical regulations on water, sanitation and hygiene for schools and health facilities, and prioritize increased access to clean water and sewage disposal in rural areas;

(b) Create a separate national budget line and allocate sufficient resources for sanitation and hygiene.

G. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28–31)

Education, including sexual violence in schools

40. The Committee welcomes the measures taken to provide free primary education and textbooks to all children and the cancellation of dispatch No. 39/GM/2003, which required the transfer of pregnant girls to evening classes. Nonetheless, the Committee reiterates its previous concerns (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 71) regarding low retention rates, regional disparities in access to education, low secondary enrolment rates and the quality of education. It is also deeply concerned about the prevalence of sexual harassment and violence in schools, as well as to and from schools, which constitute a barrier for girls to access education.

41. Taking note of targets 4.1 and 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 72) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Improve access to and retention in primary and secondary schools and ensure the availability of qualified teachers, transportation to schools, learning and instructional materials and adequate physical infrastructure, including access to clean water and sanitation facilities;

(b) Strengthen measures to provide free and compulsory primary education to all children and address the high number of dropouts, particularly among girls, due to pregnancy, child marriage, poverty, fear of sexual abuse and poor sanitary conditions;

(c) Improve the quality of education by, inter alia, providing quality training and incentives for teachers, addressing teacher absenteeism and ensuring that curricula and teaching methods are monitored, in cooperation with school councils;

(d) Ensure that human rights education, including education on the principles of the Convention, is integrated into the mandatory school curriculum as a matter of priority;

(e) Address the sexual abuse and harassment of children, especially girls, by their peers and teachers, by implementing a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse in schools that includes preventive, protective and support measures, such as counselling, medical and legal assistance, and by strengthening awareness-raising and training of teachers and students;

(f) Prioritize and provide adequate resources for the effective enforcement of legislative and administrative provisions, including Ministry of Education instruction No. 5/2016, that prohibit sexual misconduct by teachers and other education personnel and ensure that the sanctions applied are commensurate with the gravity of the offences;

(g) Develop and implement strategies to ensure that girls can travel to and from school safely;

(h) Allocate adequate resources for the effective implementation and expansion of the integrated development strategy for children in preschool and the bilingual education programme.

Rest, leisure, recreation and cultural and artistic activities

42. In the light of its general comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to guarantee, based on the principles of inclusion, participation and non-discrimination, the right of the child to

rest and leisure, to engage in age-appropriate recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, and to access safe playground spaces.

H. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d), 38–40)

Asylum-seeking and refugee children

43. Recalling joint general comments No. 3 and No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families/No. 22 and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the human rights of children in the context of international migration, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that asylum procedures systematically identify and refer unaccompanied or separated children to appropriate protection and support services; facilitate these children's access to services such as education and health care; and ensure that best interests assessments are carried out at all stages of the procedures, including by ensuring safety and security for asylum-seeking and refugee children in camps;

(b) Ensure that all the children living in Maratane refugee camp have full access to the existing child protection system, including education and health services;

(c) Consider withdrawing all of its reservations to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Economic exploitation, including child labour

44. While noting with appreciation the adoption of the National Plan of Action for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour 2017–2022 and the amendment of the minimum age of employment to 15 years of age, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 81) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its labour inspectorate, including through increased financial resources and continuous capacity-building, in order to strengthen the monitoring of employment practices and effectively implement the laws and policies on child labour, particularly in the agricultural and mining sectors;

(b) Develop programmes and intersectoral coordination mechanisms to identify and protect victims of child labour, including in the informal sector.

Children in street situations

45. Drawing attention to its general comment No. 21 (2017) on children in street situations, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 83) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Conduct a comprehensive study to assess the scope, nature and root causes of the presence of children in street situations in order to develop a national strategy and plan of action, with the participation of children, to support such children;

(b) Ensure that children in street situations are provided with educational opportunities, counselling and family reintegration services.

Sale and trafficking

46. Taking note of target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CRC/C/MOZ/CO/2, para. 87) and recommends that the State party:

- (a) Adopt the draft national action plan against human trafficking with a view to strengthening the implementation of the law;
- (b) Continue to make efforts to strengthen the capacity of police officers, border guards and social workers to identify and protect child victims of trafficking, and ensure systematic and timely information-sharing among relevant officials;
- (c) Ensure that perpetrators of child trafficking are prosecuted and punished with penalties commensurate with the gravity of their crimes, and that child victims of trafficking are compensated and provided with social and rehabilitation services.

Administration of child justice

47. In the light of its general comment No. 24 (2019) on children's rights in the child justice system, the Committee urges the State party to bring its child justice system fully into line with the Convention and other relevant standards. In particular, the Committee urges the State party:

- (a) To designate specialized judges for children and ensure that such specialized judges, as well as prosecutors, police officers and other professionals, receive training on the provisions of the Convention;
- (b) To record the number of children under 18 years of age in prison and other forms of detention separately from the number of persons under 21 years of age, and ensure that the number of children deprived of their liberty is monitored on an ongoing basis;
- (c) To promote diversion from an early stage in the child justice system, promote the use of non-custodial measures, ensure the availability of measures such as mediation and counselling and roll out a pilot project on community service;
- (d) To reduce the period of pretrial detention by ensuring that children arrested and deprived of their liberty are promptly brought before a competent authority to examine the legality of the deprivation of liberty or its continuation, in line with article 308 of the Penal Code, provide legal representation for children who are detained and expedite trials involving children;
- (e) To ensure that detention is used as a last resort and for the shortest period of time possible and that it is reviewed on a regular basis with a view to withdrawing it;
- (f) To ensure that, in cases where detention is unavoidable, children are not detained together with adults and that detention conditions comply with international standards, including with regard to access to education and health services;
- (g) To strengthen assistance programmes for children at risk of coming into conflict with the law and provide services for the psychological counselling and social reintegration of children released from prison, including access to education and vocational training.

I. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

48. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.

J. Ratification of international human rights instruments

49. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, consider ratifying the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

50. The Committee urges the State party to fulfil its reporting obligations under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as the related reports have been overdue since 19 November 2006 and 6 April 2005 respectively.

K. Cooperation with regional bodies

51. The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of Children of the African Union on the implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State party and in other African Union member States.

IV. Implementation and reporting

A. Follow-up and dissemination

52. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations are fully implemented. The Committee also recommends that the combined third and fourth periodic reports, the written replies to the list of issues and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country.

B. National mechanism for reporting and follow-up

53. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen the National Directorate for Human Rights and Citizenship and ensure that it has a mandate to coordinate and prepare reports to and engage with international and regional human rights mechanisms, and to coordinate and track national follow-up to and implementation of treaty obligations and the recommendations and decisions emanating from such mechanisms. The Committee emphasizes that the Directorate should be adequately and continuously supported by dedicated staff and should have the capacity to consult systematically with the National Human Rights Commission and civil society.

C. Next report

54. The Committee invites the State party to submit its combined fifth to seventh periodic reports by 25 November 2024 and to include therein information on the follow-up to the present concluding observations. The report should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines adopted on 31 January 2014 (CRC/C/58/Rev.3) and should not exceed 21,200 words (see General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16). In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State party will be asked to shorten the report in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution. If the State party is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the treaty body cannot be guaranteed.

55. The Committee also invites the State party to submit an updated core document, not exceeding 42,400 words, in accordance with the requirements for the common core document contained in 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) and paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 68/268.