

Pre-session working group

Fortieth and forty-first sessions

16- 20 July 2007

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

Burundi

The pre-session working group examined the combined second, third and fourth periodic reports of Burundi (CEDAW/C/BDI/4).

General

1. Please provide more information on the process of preparing the report. This information should indicate which Government departments and institutions were involved and the nature and extent of their participation, whether consultations were held with non-governmental organizations and whether the report was adopted by the Government and presented to Parliament.
2. The report contains very limited statistical data disaggregated by sex on the situation of women in areas covered by the Convention. Please provide information on the status of data collection in the country in general, and to what extent such data collection takes place on a sex-disaggregated basis. Please indicate how the Government intends to improve the collection of data disaggregated by sex pertaining to the areas of the Convention so as to support policymaking and programme development and to measure progress towards implementation of the Convention.
3. What measures has the Government taken to ensure that the promotion of gender equality and the full implementation of the Convention are an integral part and priority goal of the State in the rebuilding of the country after years of conflict?
4. Kindly provide information on the measures taken or planned by the Government to ensure that women, in a phase of rebuilding after years of conflict, are fully involved in the Government peacebuilding efforts, in particular in its consultations towards the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms.

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

5. The report gives a list of many laws that discriminate against women, including the Penal Code, the Labour Code, the Code of the Person and the Family and mentions that some of those laws are before the Parliament for revision (para. 20). Kindly provide information on what steps the Government has taken or intends to take to amend all laws that are discriminatory against women and not in compliance with the Convention. Please also indicate whether a time frame is in place for adoption of those laws already before the Parliament.
6. Please provide information on what measures are in place to enhance access to justice for women; to encourage women, especially rural women, to use the courts to enforce their rights; and to raise awareness and sensitize judges, lawyers and law enforcement officers with regards to the State party's obligations under the Convention to achieve gender equality.

Stereotypes and education

7. Please provide further details about the reforms which have been initiated following the Arusha Agreement and which are reported to have led to some progress in the fight against stereotypes (para. 55).
8. In its previous concluding comments the Committee expressed concern about the high level of illiteracy among women and the low level of schooling of girls, especially in rural areas, and encouraged the Government to introduce corrective measures that address all stakeholders involved, including incentives for parents, and to consider requesting international assistance to improve women's and girls' education (A/56/38, Part I, paras. 57 and 58). Please provide further details about the steps taken by the Government in response to the Committee's recommendation.

Violence against women

9. Given the impact of the war on women and girls, please provide details on the steps that have been taken to provide rehabilitation and support programmes, including psychological recovery and social reintegration, for women and girls who were victims of violence taking into account the recommendations of the Arusha Accords.
10. The report mentions that the Government is in the process of elaborating a national action plan to combat violence against women (para. 60). Please provide information on progress made towards its completion and on its content. Also, does the Government intend to use all media for supporting implementation of such a plan and has it established a specific budget for that purpose? Please provide details.
11. In its concluding comments, the Committee Against Torture was alarmed at reports of large-scale sexual violence against women and children by State officials and members of armed groups, as well as at the systematic use of rape as a weapon of war. It further expressed deep concern at the apparent impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of such acts and at the extrajudicial or amicable

settlement of rape cases (CAT/C/BDI/CO/1, para. 11). What measures has the Government taken to eliminate impunity of the perpetrators of such acts, to conduct timely and impartial investigations and to punish adequately the perpetrators?

12. The report acknowledges that domestic violence against women is becoming more and more alarming, in particular in rural areas, and lead to death in some cases (para. 133). Please provide information on the forms and extent of domestic violence, including statistical data and information on legislative provisions, remedies, social support services and awareness-raising activities. Please also provide information on any instance of violence against women that have been prosecuted and the outcomes of such court action.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

13. Please provide information on the prevalence of trafficking in women and girls, including on domestic legislation and its implementation and other mechanisms at the national level to prevent and punish trafficking in women and girls.

14. Kindly provide statistics, if available, on the number of women and girls engaged in prostitution. Please elaborate on laws and measures adopted to prevent and punish the exploitation of prostitution as well as measures taken to provide rehabilitation and support for the social reintegration of women who wish to leave prostitution.

Participation in decision-making and representation at the international level

15. The report provides some statistical information about the number of women in elected bodies. Please provide more detailed statistical information about women's representation in executive branch of the State, including at municipal level, and trends over time.

16. The report states that there has been no progress in women's representation at the international level (para. 71). Please provide information on measures aimed at increasing women's representation in decision-making positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including in the diplomatic and consular missions. Please indicate what temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, and the Committee's general recommendation 25 are being used to increase these numbers.

Employment

17. Please indicate what measures have been taken by the Government to promote women's access to productive factors, which is one of the three goals in the strategic axe No. 6 of the Interim Strategic Economic Recovery and Poverty Reduction Framework (para. 92).

18. Kindly provide information on the situation of women in the informal economy. This should include information about the number of women in this sector, as compared to men, and their areas of work, as well as information about social protection measures available to such workers, and the number and percentage of women who in practice have access to them.

Health

19. The report contains little information on women's health. Please provide an assessment, and trends over time, of women's health, using women's health indicators — most especially in the areas of infant mortality, maternal mortality and overall life expectancy. Please provide separate assessments for rural and urban women. Information should also be provided about women's access to health-care services, including obstetric services, in urban and rural areas.

20. The report does not provide information on the laws in place in regard to abortion, on the extent to which women may be resorting to clandestine abortions and how many such women die as a result, nor does it provide information on the contraceptive prevalence rate. Please provide this information, as well as information on the availability and accessibility of comprehensive sex education and family planning services.

21. The report states that women are more vulnerable to contracting HIV/AIDS owing, among other factors, to women's economic dependency, prostitution and sexual violence (para. 120). Please assess the effectiveness of the steps that the Government has been taking, as well as obstacles encountered, to overcome the factors that make women more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

Vulnerable groups of women and rural women

22. Please give more details about how rural women, particularly rural women in extreme poverty, benefit from the "Cadre Stratégique Intérimaire de Relance Economique et de Lutte contre la Pauvreté". The response should indicate how implementation of the strategy is monitored in regard to its impact on the situation of women.

23. In its previous concluding comments the Committee expressed its concern about the situation of displaced women and girls and their living conditions, including those in refugee camps and recommended that greater assistance to refugee and displaced women and girls be given, including rehabilitative efforts (A/56/38, Part I, paras. 52 and 53). Please provide details about the steps taken by the State party in response to the Committee's recommendation.

Marriage and family relations

24. The independent expert on the human rights situation in Burundi deplored the failure of the Government to submit to Parliament the draft family and inheritance law (see E/CN.4/2006/109, para. 54). Please indicate the obstacles faced by the Government to submit this legislation to Parliament that was under consideration by the previous Government and discussed for several years, and if any new steps have been taken in order to adopt and enact it.

Optional Protocol

25. Please indicate any progress made with respect to the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Please also indicate when the State party intends to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention pertaining to the Committee's meeting time.