



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

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

**Pre-session working group**

**Forty-second session**

20 October-7 November 2008

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

**Cameroon\***

The pre-session working group examined the combined second and third periodic report of Cameroon (CEDAW/C/CMR/3).

**General**

1. Please provide information on the process of preparation of the combined second and third periodic report of Cameroon. This information should include whether non-governmental organizations — particularly women's organizations — were consulted, and which Government departments and institutions were involved in the preparation of the report.

2. The Committee requested the wide dissemination in Cameroon of the concluding observations on the initial report to administrators, officials, politicians and the general public, as well as women from rural and urban areas. Please provide information on the measures taken on the basis of the concluding observations to guarantee, de jure and de facto, equality between men and women and indicate what remains to be done to complete this process.

**Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework and status of  
the Convention**

3. In its previous concluding observations the Committee noted some legislative achievements with respect to the incorporation of the Convention into domestic law but also the existence of a number of provisions that discriminate against women. Please provide information on any progress achieved, or plans envisaged, with respect to the Committee's recommendations. Please indicate if it is possible to refer to the Convention in litigation in national courts.

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\* Issued without formal editing.



4. During the consideration of the initial report of Cameroon, the representative of Cameroon noted that preparation of a bill was under way to address violence against women. The combined second and third periodic report states that there is a draft law for the prevention and punishment of violence against women and of gender-based discrimination. Please provide an update on the status of the preparation of this bill and the draft law including the definition of discrimination against women and any sanctions provided.

5. Please describe the mechanisms and remedies available to women in relation to complaints of gender-based discrimination, including independent mechanisms such as ombudspersons. Please provide further information on the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms, its compliance with the “Paris principles” (General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993, annex) and in particular how far it addresses women’s human rights. Please provide statistical information on the use and outcome of these mechanisms by women.

6. Please indicate whether such a national plan of action is being considered for the promotion of gender equality, the implementation of the Convention and/or the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action as well as the Millennium Development Goals.

7. Please provide information on the steps being considered to ensure that the principle of non-discrimination is fully applicable to all areas of law in accordance with obligations under the Convention. Please include information on any legislative review process and its time frame in respect to customary law that has been undertaken with a view to reforming or repealing provisions that discriminate against women as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations.

### **Stereotypes**

8. The report states that stereotypes and prejudices related to roles and responsibilities of women and men, in all areas of life, persist and describes actions being undertaken to overcome them. Please provide an overview of the outcome of these actions taken to combat discrimination against women. Please also indicate further actions that are envisaged to address discriminatory societal attitudes, practices, customs and attitudes and their impact on women’s equality.

### **Violence against women**

9. Please provide information on steps taken, in accordance with general recommendation 19, to develop a comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of violence against women, including the adoption of an national law on violence against women and the introduction of capacity-building and awareness-raising programmes for various groups (including the police, lawyers, the judiciary, health workers and religious and traditional leaders) and the public at large.

10. Please provide information on the scale of violence against women, including domestic violence, and the measures taken to address it and on the availability of health and social services and shelters — safe houses — to the victims. Please provide, if available, statistical information concerning the number of complaints, investigations, prosecutions and penalties handed down and any compensation

awarded to the victims or their families. Please also indicate if the State envisages the criminalization of marital rape.

### **Trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution of women**

11. The report focuses on legal and other measures taken to address trafficking of children for commercial purposes and their exploitation in such work arrangements. Please provide information on the number of girls in such exploitative situations and on the impact of measures taken, including measures contained in the national plan against child labour. Please provide information on measures taken to suppress all forms of trafficking in women and the exploitation of prostitution of women and girls, including provide information on the enactment of any specific legislation and measures taken to prevent and punish trafficking in women and girls and to prevent and punish the exploitation in prostitution. Furthermore, please provide information on Governmental rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives for women and girls who wish to leave prostitution.

### **Participation in political and public life and decision-making**

12. Please provide information on the involvement of women in politics as voters and any steps taken to increase their political participation.

13. While noting the increased number of women active in political life, please highlight any special measures that have been taken, as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations, to enhance the number of women participating in decision-making bodies at all levels, including in the judiciary, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations 23 and 25.

### **Nationality**

14. According to the information provided in the combined second and third periodic report, the legislation related to nationality remains unchanged. However, the report states that a draft bill on the Code of Persons and the Family is being prepared. Please provide updated information about the content and status of this bill and the time frame for its adoption.

### **Education**

15. The report refers to measures taken to improve the education of girls and women. Please provide information on the implementation and results achieved. Please indicate what further plans, programmes and strategies are envisaged to ensure that girls and women have equal rights with men in the field of education and provide information about temporary special measures undertaken by the Government to retain girls in particular those in rural areas in school, and ensure their access to all levels of education.

16. According to the report, the literacy rate in 2001 was 59.8 per cent for women and 77 per cent for men aged 15 years or over; with greater disparities existing between rural and urban areas. Please provide updated statistical data and describe the measures in place or envisaged to address illiteracy among women, particularly in rural areas, and the results of such measures.

**Health**

17. Please provide information on the steps taken to implement the Committee's recommendation in its earlier concluding observations to review the abortion law and increase access to, and availability of, contraception. Please provide information on sex education in school curricula and awareness-raising campaigns to prevent teenage pregnancy. Please include information on the enjoyment of the right to education by pregnant girls and young mothers.

18. It appears that a high percentage of girls, in order to prevent rape and early marriage, are subjected to "breast ironing". Please provide more information on this practice and indicate the measures taken to prevent it.

19. Please confirm that the draft law for the prevention and punishment of violence against women and gender-based discrimination prohibits female genital mutilation and indicate what measures have been taken to eradicate this practice. Please also provide information on the health consequences of underage marriages.

20. Please further elaborate on the strategies of the National Aids Control Committee and measures taken to combat HIV/AIDS as well as discrimination against affected women. Please also further elaborate on any awareness-raising campaigns undertaken, as recommended by the Committee.

**Employment, rural women, access to property and poverty**

21. Please provide disaggregated data (by sex and, where possible, by ethnic group and urban and rural area) on women's labour force participation in the public and private employment sectors. Please also provide information on the informal sector, particularly on types of legal, social, or other services and protection available to women.

22. Please provide information on the women's participation in legal and medical professions and indicate if measures have been taken in order to encourage women's participation in that regard.

23. Please indicate what measures are planned or in place to comply with article 13 (a) of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Please describe the outcome of the action taken in order to facilitate the access of women to bank loans and mortgage financing. What measures does the Government envisage to encourage women, particularly from rural areas, to participate in the same manner as men in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life?

24. Please describe the effect of measures described in the report, carried out to improve the situation of rural women. Please provide data and trends showing rural women's education levels, health, participation in the formal and informal labour sectors, access to loans and financial credit, and their participation in social and political life.

25. Please inform the Committee what measures the State party plans to take in order to make land more accessible to women; if the Government envisages reviewing the customary practices which prohibits women from inheriting land; and whether it envisages undertaking awareness-raising campaigns in that regard.

**Refugee women**

26. Please provide information, including disaggregated data on the situation and number of refugee women, in particular with regard to violence and access to work, education and health. Please indicate when the State party will adopt a decree which will enable the 2005 Law to enter into force.

**Marriage and family relations**

27. Please clarify whether the age of marriage for girls will be increased to 18 and if measures to eliminate early and forced marriages exist. Please provide detailed information on the extent of polygamy and practice of levirate under the customary law. Furthermore, please indicate if a wife can, in an equal manner as the husband, determine the location of the family residence and domicile.

**Article 20, paragraph 1**

28. Please indicate any progress made towards acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Committee's meeting time.

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