



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

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

**Information provided by Paraguay in follow-up to the concluding
observations on its seventh periodic report***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



A. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 9 (a) of the concluding observations

1. As the body responsible for formulating the gender policies of the central Government, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has developed and is implementing the National Equality Plan for 2018–2024.¹ Approved under Decree No. 936/2018, the Plan sets out strategies designed to create the conditions for achieving substantive equality in various areas, removing the obstacles hindering or preventing its achievement and eliminating all forms of discrimination.

2. The National Equality Plan for 2018–2024 is based on a series of national and international instruments which provide for a gender perspective, including the national Constitution, human rights treaties ratified by Paraguay, laws promoting equality, the Government Plan for 2018–2023, the 2030 National Development Plan, the 2024 National Education Plan, the National Plans on Sexual and Reproductive Health for 2009–2013 and 2014–2018, the Agricultural Strategic Framework for 2009–2018, the National Plan on Citizen Security for 2013–2018, the 2030 National Plan of Action for the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality), the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework, the Beijing Platform for Action and the 100 Brasilia Regulations.

3. As a primary measure for combating attacks against gender equality, both in the public sphere and in the collective consciousness itself, the National Equality Plan for 2018–2024, through its five rights-related objectives, sets out specific work areas, identifies recurrent and persistent obstacles, and establishes concrete goals. Aligned with four cross-cutting objectives, the rights-related objectives are aimed at eliminating discriminatory stereotypes embedded in Paraguayan society, and thus at effecting the social, cultural and political change necessary to overcome the barriers preventing or hindering the achievement of substantive equality and normalizing discrimination against women.

4. In addition, in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Directorate-General of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses has developed the Gender Atlas² as part of the work of the Working Group on Gender Statistics of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The Gender Atlas is a tool designed to highlight the inequalities between men and women, facilitate the formulation of public policies which advance real and effective equality, and remove obstacles in that regard, as indicated in the National Equality Plan for 2018–2024.

5. This initiative is part of an effort to ensure the highest possible quality of gender statistics for the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals, with the understanding that “gender statistics are those that ‘adequately reflect differences and inequalities in the situation of women and men in all areas of life’ – differences that often arise from the gender biases embedded in society,” as emphasized in the report entitled “Turning promises into action: Gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

6. Moreover, with the support of the Fund for Excellence in Education and Research, the Ministry of Education and Science is leading a national social dialogue

¹ http://www.mujer.gov.py/application/files/6515/4583/7140/DECRETO936_plan_de_igualdad.pdf.

² <https://atlasgenero.dgeec.gov.py/index.php>.

in order to identify the various points of view and realities regarding, as well as the challenges affecting, education in each region of the country. This dialogue is also aimed at promoting informed debate and agreement on essential issues among stakeholders involved in education, within the framework of the 2030 Paraguay Project for Educational Transformation,³ designed to foster the participation and inclusion of education and organized civil society actors in the design of a strategy and road map for the Project's implementation over the next several years.

7. To that end, Decree No. 1083/2019 established the Committee for the Project for the Design of Educational Transformation in Paraguay, comprising representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Finance, the Technical Office for Economic and Social Development Planning and the Management Unit of the Office of the President of the Republic, as well as eight civil society representatives focusing on research, teaching and social communication. The aim of the Committee is to design, through a participatory process leading to the conclusion of an education pact, the 2030 National Plan for Educational Transformation, aligned with the 2030 National Development Plan, as well as a road map for 2018–2023, setting out a clear and concrete agenda for the next five years.

8. The review of administrative decisions, policies and plans relating to education, including decision 29664/17, is a key priority under this project. Consequently, any determination in that connection depends on the results of the aforementioned discussions with all education and organized civil society actors, in order to ensure high-quality education in accordance with the principles of the common good and fundamental human rights.

9. In addition, one of the work areas identified in connection with the rights-related objectives established under the National Equality Plan for 2018–2024 is “Education for equality,” aimed at the promotion of inclusive education to advance equality between women and men. Similarly, a working group, comprising representatives of different domains within the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, has been established to review current regulations and laws on education in relation to violence, gender and human rights, with a view to developing, in accordance with international standards, a guide which will serve as a single consolidated instrument in line with the scope of responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science.

B. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 15 (a) of the concluding observations

10. An examination of the allocation of resources to the Ministry of Women's Affairs in previous years clearly demonstrates the tireless efforts made by the State to increase its budget in order to enable it to fulfil its legal mandate. Although the Ministry had limited resources between 2003 and 2008, increases were applied starting in 2009, indicating greater knowledge and awareness of the body's critical mandate, strengthened by the submission of reports and action plans, and by the receipt of funds in support of its programmes from external cooperation, which have been indispensable for the implementation of programme activities to date.

11. Under the 2011 budget, two shelters for the protection of female victims of domestic violence and trafficking in persons were established, one in the department of Central and the other in Distrito Capital. The Ministry of Women's Affairs was strengthened and four regional/departmental offices of the Ministry were established. In 2015, the third shelter for victims of domestic violence and trafficking in persons

³ <http://www.feeci.gov.py/?programas=transformacion-educativa-2>.

was opened in the city of Curuguaty, in the department of Canindeyú. This initiative marked the beginning of the implementation of a service decentralization strategy.

12. In 2017, the Ministry's budget increased as a result of resources received from the National Public Investment and Development Fund for the construction, equipping, organization and operationalization of the *Centro Ciudad Mujer– Ñande Kerayvoty Renda* (Women's City Centre),⁴ located in the city of Villa Elisa. In implementing this project, the national Government established a true inter-agency management model principally defined by coordination for comprehensive and integrated service provision. A total of 15 public entities have agreed to carry out the initiative, and 12 entities are currently operating at the Centre, providing more than 80 public services exclusively for women.

13. In 2018, the Ministry's budget increased considerably as a result of the allocation of resources to the National Programme for Prevention, Suppression and Support for Victims of Trafficking through the related national investment fund, in accordance with Comprehensive Act No. 4788/2018 on countering trafficking in persons.

14. In 2019, 26 billion guaranías were allocated to the budget of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and the remaining challenge will be to continue to increase the proportion of the total national budget reserved for the Ministry, in order to ensure the efficient implementation of strategic initiatives such as the Women's Monitoring Centre for a Life Free from Violence;⁵ the *Ciudad Mujer* (Women's City) programme, including its two subprogrammes, *Ciudad Mujer Móvil* (Mobile Women's City)⁶ and *Centro Ciudad Mujer* (Women's City Centre); and the National Programme for Prevention, Suppression and Support for Victims of Trafficking.

15. Moreover, pursuant to, inter alia, articles 46, 47 and 48 of the national Constitution regarding equality and State responsibilities, the National Equality Plan for 2018–2024, Act No. 5777/2016 on the comprehensive protection of women against all forms of violence, Act No. 5446/2015 on public policies for rural women and Comprehensive Act No. 4788/2012 on countering trafficking in persons, the Ministry of Women's Affairs works closely with other central-level bodies and with departmental and municipal governments to ensure that, in formulating preliminary draft budgets and in their planning activities, they include substantive equality between women and men among their planning priorities.

16. The Directorate of Municipal Government Coordination of the Ministry of Women's Affairs provides technical assistance to support relevant procedures. The latest records for 2019 show 104 women's offices operating in 255 municipalities. Departmental governments are also required to organize their resources in compliance with current laws.

C. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 23 (b) of the concluding observations

17. Article 44 of Act No. 4788/12 provides for the establishment of the Inter-Institutional Committee for Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons (Committee on Trafficking in Persons), even though that Committee had already been set up by Decree No. 5093 of 15 April 2005 and had been operational since 2004. It coordinates all measures related to the prevention and countering of trafficking in persons taken by State bodies. The coordination of the Committee falls

⁴ <http://www.ciudadmujer.gov.py/>.

⁵ <http://observatorio.mujer.gov.py/>.

⁶ <http://www.mujer.gov.py/index.php/ciudad-mujer-movil>.

under the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has subcommittees for prevention, victim care and prosecution.

18. The Ministry of Women's Affairs has set up the National Programme for Prevention, Suppression, and Support for Victims of Trafficking in Persons. In accordance with article 49 of Act No. 4788/12, the Programme has as its main objective the promotion, monitoring and supervision of public policies to counter trafficking in persons, and is working in particular to strengthen the coordinating authorities (the Committee on Trafficking in Persons and the departmental commissions) and provide victims with comprehensive care.

19. The Ministry is responsible for implementing the Programme. It is also responsible for the related investment fund, which was first included in the national budget for 2018 and is now being included in the Ministry's current budget.

20. As part of the implementation process, the Programme's structure is currently being developed by an internal working group. Afterwards, workshops will be held with members of the Committee on Trafficking in Persons to review, adjust and finalize the structure.

D. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 35 (c) of the concluding observations

21. The bill criminalizing dangerous child labour and unpaid domestic child labour (*criadazgo*), submitted by the National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour and for the Protection of Adolescent Workers (CONAETI) on 3 November 2016 under reference No. S-161319, is still under consideration by the Senate. It has been transmitted to the advisory committee on legislation, codification, justice and labour; the advisory committee on human rights; and the advisory committee on equity and gender. The advisory committee on equity and gender has issued its opinion on the matter. The opinions of the other two committees are pending consideration by the Senate when it meets in plenary session.

22. Nonetheless, with the adoption of Act No. 5407/15 on domestic work, there is a categorical ban on children engaging in domestic work (art. 5). Although the term "*criadazgo*" does not appear as such in Act No. 4788/12, the following provisions, when read in conjunction with each other, categorize as trafficking in persons any acts and situations in which children or adolescents are subjected to labour or exploitation, including within the household: article 4, subparagraph 8;⁷ article 5, paragraph 2;⁸ article 6, subparagraph 1;⁹ and article 7, subparagraph 3.¹⁰

23. In addition, CONAETI drew up the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour and for the Protection of Adolescent Workers for the

⁷ Article 4. Definitions. For the purposes of the present Act, the following terms are hereby defined: • 8. Servitude: conditions of work or the obligation to work or provide services, or both, in which the service provider has no option to resign.

⁸ Article 5. Criminalization of trafficking in persons. ... (2) He who, for the purpose of subjecting another to a servitude, servile marriage, forced labour or service, slavery or any practice similar to slavery; captures, transports, transfers, shelters or receives the direct victim shall be sentenced to up to eight years' imprisonment.

⁹ Article 6. Aggravating circumstances. The acts described in the previous article are subject to a penalty of 2 to 15 years' imprisonment where: (1) The direct victim is 14 to 17 years of age.

¹⁰ Article 7. Particularly aggravating circumstances. For the acts described in article 5 of the present Act, the penalty imposed in the previous article may be raised to 20 years' imprisonment or less where: ... (3) The direct victim is 13 years of age or less.

period 2019-2024.¹¹ After approval by the National Council for Children and Adolescents, it was officially launched on 29 April 2019. The National Strategy is focused on public policies intended to shield children and adolescents from the worst forms of labour and to protect adolescent workers by means of effective monitoring, as well as through training and income generation for parents and guardians, awareness-raising among key actors and society in general with regard to children's rights, and access to and completion of an education.

24. The National Strategy is based on indicators. The baseline year is 2015, the targets are set for 2024. The Strategy is in line with Sustainable Development Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda, under which child labour is to be ended in all its forms by 2025. The Strategy covers children and adolescents who are subjected to, or at risk of being subjected to, the worst forms of child labour, especially in families living in extreme poverty; rural child labour performed by indigenous children; and domestic labour performed by children and adolescents. It also specifies the institutions responsible for implementing the strategy, in particular public bodies.

25. CONAETI also approved a *criadazgo* protocol as an update to the inter-institutional intervention guide for working minors under 18 years of age. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security has held training events on the protocol with other institutions of the National System for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Children and Adolescents (SNPPI), such as the national police, the Municipal Advisory Service on the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CODENI), the children's ombudsman (*Defensoría de la Niñez*), the juvenile courts, the prosecution service, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture. The courses were held in Alto Paraná, Itapúa, Concepción, Guairá, Boquerón and San Pedro, and were attended by more than 1,200 participants.

26. A team drawn from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry for Children's and Adolescents' Affairs and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security developed a workshop series entitled "No to child labour, no to *criadazgo*, respect my rights", which reached a total of 335 participants in Caazapá, Coronel Oviedo, Ciudad del Este, Filadelfia, Pilar and Concepción. The workshops were designed to raise awareness among key players and encourage them to commit to taking the lead in the defence and protection of children and adolescents in regard to child labour, trafficking for purposes of labour exploitation, *criadazgo* and intervention.

27. A second round of workshops was held in Ñemby, Ypané, San Antonio, Villa Elisa, Fernando de la Mora, San Lorenzo, Luque, Mariano Roque Alonso, Itá, J. Augusto Saldívar, Guarambaré, Nueva Italia, Itauguá, Capiatá and Ypacaraí. They were attended by 487 participants. Campaigns were also created to raise awareness of the worst forms of child labour, including *criadazgo*, among family farmers, taking into account the circumstances and needs of each area.

28. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security conducted press campaigns on the 26 worst forms of child labour in Paraguay. The last publication, issued on 11 June 2019 to coincide with the World Day against Child Labour, highlighted the requirements related to labour protections for adolescents. Also in observance of the World Day, the Supreme Court of Justice, with the support of the

¹¹ Comisión Nacional para la Prevención y Erradicación el Trabajo Infantil y la Protección del Trabajo de los/las Adolescentes, *Estrategia Nacional de Prevención y Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Protección del Trabajo Adolescente en el Paraguay, 2019-2024*. Available at https://www.mtess.gov.py/application/files/9715/6926/1549/Estrategia_Nacional_-_para_impresion.pdf.

Ministry, held a seminar-workshop to present the bill to criminalize *criadazgo* to the public.

29. In addition, the Supreme Court has conducted workshops to raise awareness of *criadazgo* in the judicial circuits of Caaguazú, Itapúa, Alto Paraná and Caazapá, reaching many judicial officials. Magistrates specializing in juvenile cases made contributions to the bill on *criadazgo*.

30. In 2018, working meetings were held to prepare a manual on child labour for first-instance judges who hear criminal, labour and juvenile cases. In March and April 2019, information material was made available to justices of the peace on access to justice at the community level in cases involving child labour, in particular its worst forms, including hazardous labour, with a focus on indigenous peoples.

31. To reduce child labour, a project entitled “Paraguay Okakuaa”, funded by the Department of Labour of the United States of America, has been in place since 2015. It is aimed at improving working conditions and the application of labour laws, with a focus on preventing and countering child labour in Guairá and preventing forced labour in Chaco.

32. The project is coordinated by Partners of the Americas and the Ministry, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry for Children’s and Adolescents’ Affairs, the Ministry of Social Development, Petróleos Paraguayos (Petropar) joint stock company and municipal governments, and the implementing agencies are the foundations CIRD and ALDA. A coordinated and comprehensive approach is taken in four domains, the first three applying to five districts in Guairá,¹² and the fourth in Boquerón.¹³

33. The Protected Work Training Programme of the National Service for Professional Development (SNPP), relaunched by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security in its decision No. 1609/19, aims to offer adolescents of developmental age comprehensive support. Under the Programme, about 2,000 young people aged 15 to 17 have used the services of institutions such as the National Anti-Drugs Secretariat, the National Culture Secretariat, the National Sports Secretariat and the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare.

34. Under the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour and for the Protection of Adolescent Workers, as well as under the National Plan of the same name, the Ministry for Children’s and Adolescents’ Affairs is implementing the “Abrazo” Programme, which is part of the “Vamos!” National System of Social Protection and provides immediate protection to children aged 0 to 17 who are engaged in hazardous child labour and/or are at risk of being engaged in child labour. The Programme consists of the following components:

- Targeting: detection and inclusion in the Programme by a social worker
- Family support: access to public services through a plan for the award of cash transfers with joint responsibility (*transferencias monetarias con corresponsabilidad*), scholarships, basic living expenses, social micro-insurance and financial inclusion
- Protection centres: three types (early childhood centres, open centres and community centres) serve as alternatives to child labour, providing food, sports, recreation, and tutoring

¹² On education, livelihoods and the strengthening of institutions.

¹³ On forced labour.

- Networks: protective services linked to departmental and municipal councils for children and adolescents.

35. Under the National Financial Inclusion Strategy, the “Abrazo Kyrey” project offers opportunities for education and financial inclusion to vulnerable families in the form of training on formal employment, business skills, investment, savings and credit.

36. The Ministry for Children’s and Adolescents’ Affairs addresses the prevention and eradication of child labour among members of indigenous peoples by doing field work in community centres focused on offering comprehensive and intercultural assistance and improving the quality of family and community life, and on restoring, protecting and promoting people’s rights.
