



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
26 February 2024

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Djibouti*

1. The Committee considered the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Djibouti ([CEDAW/C/DJI/4-5](#)) at its 2045th and 2046th meetings (see [CEDAW/C/SR.2045](#) and [2046](#)), held on 8 February 2024. The list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group is contained in [CEDAW/C/DJI/Q/4-5](#), and the responses of Djibouti are contained in [CEDAW/C/DJI/RQ/4-5](#).

A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State party of its combined fourth and fifth periodic reports. It also appreciates the State party's written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group. It welcomes the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party on its high-level delegation, which was headed by the Minister of Women and the Family, Mouna Osman Aden, and included representatives of the Ministry of Women and the Family, the Ministry of Justice and the Gender Observatory, the Legal Councillor to the Presidency of the Republic and the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, Kadra Ahmed Hassan, and other members of the Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue held between the delegation and the Committee.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2011 of the State party's previous reports in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of the following:

(a) Act No. 66 on violence prevention and the protection and care of women and children who are victims of violence (2020);

* Adopted by the Committee at its eighty-seventh session (29 January–16 February 2024).



- (b) Act No. 28, ratifying the loan agreement for the project to support the entrepreneurship of women and young people (2019);
- (c) Act No. 219, raising the mandated proportion of women in the National Assembly from 10 per cent to 25 per cent (2018);
- (d) Act No. 221, amending and supplementing Act No. 133 of 28 January 2006 on the Labour Code of 25 June 2018, which prohibits sexual harassment (2018);
- (e) Act No. 133 on combating trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants (2016).

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

- (a) Project to Support the Empowerment of Women and the Protection of the Rights of Women and Girls, in 2021;
- (b) Gender caucus in the National Assembly, in October 2019;
- (c) Three-year action plan of the Ministry for Women and the Family (2019–2021);
- (d) National Strategy for the Integration of Djiboutian Women in Development (2019–2021);
- (e) Gender Observatory, in 2018;
- (f) Ministry for Women and the Family, in 2017;
- (g) National Family Planning Communication and Promotion Strategy (2017–2020);
- (h) National Action Plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), in 2017;
- (i) National strategy to combat female genital mutilation (2017–2021);
- (j) National Gender Policy (2011–2021).

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

- (a) Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), of the International Labour Organization, in 2020;
- (b) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in 2012;
- (c) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, in 2011.

C. Sustainable Development Goals

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

driving force of the sustainable development of the State party and to adopt relevant policies and strategies to that effect.

D. Parliament

8. The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see [A/65/38](#), part two, annex VI). It invites the National Assembly, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the submission of the next periodic report under the Convention.

E. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Legislative framework and domestication of the Convention

9. The Committee takes note with interest of the State party's indication that its policy framework for gender is defined by the National Gender Policy and its action matrix. It notes the draft legislation establishing gender parity at all levels of government and aimed at putting into place measures to promote equal access by women and men to decision-making positions in all departments. The Committee notes with concern, however, that:

- (a) Many women, especially rural women, in the State party are not aware of their rights under the Convention and the remedies available for claiming them;
- (b) While the process of accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention was initiated in 2011, the State party has still not ratified it.

10. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) **Raise awareness among women, including rural women, of their rights under the Convention and the legal remedies available to them for claiming violations of such rights and ensure that information on the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations is accessible to all women;**
- (b) **Expedite its accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention and train members of the judiciary, prosecutors, the police, other law enforcement officers and lawyers on the application of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations.**

11. The Committee takes note of the Government's indication that it has adopted legislative measures to ensure the full development and advancement of women and to guarantee their enjoyment of their human rights on an equal basis with men. The Committee is nevertheless concerned that the capacity of the State party to implement and monitor such legislation is weak. It also notes with concern the absence of legislation to regulate the relationship between the formal and customary justice systems.

12. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt legislation to regulate the relationship between the formal and customary justice systems, ensuring that formal laws take precedence over customary laws and that customary laws and court proceedings are in conformity with the Convention, including by providing capacity-building on women's rights and gender equality to customary justice authorities to ensure that customary courts are free from any gender bias.**

Access to justice

13. The Committee takes note of the State party's indication that the law allows for the free choice of the legal system under which women and men wish their cases to be heard. It is nevertheless concerned about reports that the access of women to justice is limited in the State party due to legal pluralism and the prevalence of the use of customary laws over formal laws, in particular in rural areas, where the decentralized formal judicial institutions are weak. The Committee notes that the State party has set up courts of justice in the southern and northern parts of the country and on the outskirts of the capital city but that those courts are not operational due to a lack of financial resources.

14. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that women can make informed choices regarding the applicable law and have unobstructed access to the judicial system of their choice in order to bring their claims. It also recommends that the State party allocate sufficient financial, human and technical resources to enable the operationalization of the decentralized courts outside of the capital city and ensure that those courts are accessible to women and girls with disabilities and that childcare services are available for women with young children.**

Women, peace and security

15. The Committee welcomes the State party's adoption of a national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women, peace and security, in 2017. It notes with concern, however, that the State party is facing instability in the region which, along with the high level of militarization that has become a key development feature, creates a major challenge to women's empowerment.

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

(a) **Renew its national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women, peace and security and ensure that it is gender-responsive and promotes the role of women in peace processes, taking into consideration the regional context, and allocate sufficient resources for the effective implementation of the plan;**

(b) **Ensure that the development, peace and security concerns of women are fully integrated into the national security architecture and development priorities, including the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;**

(c) **Reinforce its commitment to ensuring the equal and inclusive representation of women in the armed forces and in multilateral peace processes.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

17. The Committee notes with interest that gender focal points have been appointed in the line ministries, with a view to integrating a gender perspective into the formulation of development policies, programmes and projects. It notes with concern, however, reports that the gender focal points have a weak and limited mandate to influence sectoral policies. It also notes with concern that the State party has not introduced gender performance standards or gender-responsive budgeting.

18. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (CEDAW/C/DJI/CO/1-3, para. 15) and recommends that the State party support the gender focal points in the line ministries to ensure effective gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting by providing them with adequate human, technical and financial resources and clearly defining their**

mandates and responsibilities in the implementation of national legislation and policy frameworks on gender equality. It also recommends that the State party set clear indicators and gender performance standards, carry out an impact assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the results emanating from the National Gender Policy and collect disaggregated data to track the progress on sectoral mainstreaming.

National human rights institution

19. The Committee notes that Act No. 59 of 20 July 2014 established the National Human Rights Commission and that, while the Commission had applied to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions for accreditation, it has requested the postponement of the accreditation.

20. The Committee recommends that the State party provide the National Human Rights Commission with adequate human, technical and financial resources to carry out its mandate effectively and independently and in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and ensure that it has a clear mandate to promote and protect the human rights of women and gender equality. It also recommends that, once operational, the national human rights institution reactivate its request to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions for accreditation.

Temporary special measures

21 The Committee notes with concern that, apart from statutory quotas aimed at increasing the participation of women in political life, the State party has not adopted any temporary special measures, such as administrative orders or affirmative procurement, hiring and promotion, to achieve substantive equality between women and men in areas in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged, including education, employment, health and the judiciary, and as beneficiaries of poverty reduction strategies for disadvantaged groups, including older women, rural women, women with disabilities, women belonging to the Al-Akhdam community and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women. It is also concerned about the inadequate understanding and capacity of officials with respect to the application of temporary special measures as tools for meeting the provisions and standards of the Convention.

22. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Adopt temporary special measures, including quotas, administrative orders, special scholarships, affirmative procurement and financial incentives for hiring women, and establish time-bound targets to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality between women and men in all areas covered by the Convention in which women, including older women, rural women, women with disabilities, women belonging to the Al-Akhdam community and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, are underrepresented or disadvantaged, including in political, public and economic life, education, employment, health care and access to justice, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures;

(b) Raise public awareness about non-discrimination and build the capacity of the relevant public officials with respect to the value and effective use of temporary special measures for achieving substantive equality between women and men.

Gender stereotyping and harmful practices

23. The Committee notes with appreciation the decrease in the harmful practice of female genital mutilation. It also notes that the national committee for the eradication of all forms of excision is still active. The Committee notes with concern, however, that the prevalence of female genital mutilation remains high, particularly in rural areas. It also notes with concern that child marriage is permitted for girls and boys between the ages of 16 and 18 years and remains prevalent, especially in rural areas.

24. The Committee, recalling its general recommendations No. 14 (1990) on female circumcision and No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, and joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, as well as its previous recommendations (CEDAW/C/DJI/CO/1-3, para. 19), urges the State party to:

- (a) Effectively enforce article 333 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes female genital mutilation, by prosecuting and adequately sentencing perpetrators and those complicit in or failing to report the crime and provide, in its next periodic report, information on the number of reports, prosecutions and convictions of female genital mutilation and on the sentences imposed on the perpetrators;
- (b) Amend article 14 of the Family Code to prohibit marriage under the age of 18 years without exception;
- (c) Strengthen awareness-raising campaigns and training efforts, particularly in rural areas, targeting families, practitioners, communities, traditional and religious leaders, health workers, judges and magistrates, including those in personal status courts, prosecutors and police officers, addressing the harmful health and psychosocial effects of female genital mutilation and child marriage on women and girls, with a view to eradicating both harmful practices and their underlying cultural justifications.

Gender-based violence against women

25. The Committee welcomes the establishment of a national protocol referral for gender-based violence, the launch in 2022 of the Gender-based Violence Information Management System to collect data on gender-based violence, the introduction of public education and awareness-raising programmes on gender-based violence and the development of guides on addressing gender-based violence and sexual violence. The Committee remains nevertheless concerned:

- (a) About the prevalence of domestic violence and reports that most cases of domestic violence are settled within families or the community by traditional or religious leaders in accordance with customary and religious law;
- (b) That the definition of rape in the Penal Code is still based on the use of force or threat by the perpetrator rather than the lack of consent;
- (c) That marital rape is not explicitly criminalized, that it is up to the court to decide whether or not to consider it an offence and that it is rarely prosecuted in practice.

26. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Ensure that mediation and reconciliation in cases of domestic violence require the free and informed consent of the survivor and do not take priority

over prosecution and that women and girls who are survivors of domestic violence have effective access to the courts;

(b) Amend the Penal Code to incorporate a definition of rape based on the lack of free consent, covering any non-consensual sexual act, and takes into account all coercive circumstances, in line with international human rights standards;

(c) Amend the Penal Code to explicitly criminalize marital rape and conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the criminal nature of marital rape, ensure that women can report such cases without fear of reprisal, stigmatization or re-victimization, prosecute and adequately sentence perpetrators and provide adequate redress to survivors.

Trafficking in persons and the exploitation of prostitution

27. The Committee notes the legislation and action plan addressing trafficking in women and girls, as well as the commitment of the State party to international anti-trafficking standards and cooperation. The Committee notes, however, with concern:

(a) The high risk of trafficking and sexual exploitation for women and girls in the State party, in particular for refugee and migrant women and girls, women and girls living in poverty and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, due to the State party's geographical location and socioeconomic challenges and the presence of foreign military bases;

(b) That there have been no reports of investigations into or prosecutions of cases of trafficking in persons and of convictions of traffickers or their accomplices, who are often part of international trafficking rings, in the past six years;

(c) The criminalization of women in prostitution under the Penal Code, which discourages women in prostitution from reporting abuse and trafficking for fear of prosecution.

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

(a) Provide access to alternative income-generating opportunities, microcredit and economic empowerment to refugee and migrant women and girls, women and girls living in poverty, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and other women and girls belonging to disadvantaged groups, to reduce their risk of being trafficked and of having to engage in survival sex;

(b) Effectively enforce Act No. 133 on combating trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants by prosecuting and adequately sentencing traffickers and their accomplices and by providing support services and rehabilitation to victims of trafficking in persons;

(c) Ensure that military personnel and contractors on foreign military bases receive training on criminal responsibility for purchasing sex from victims of forced prostitution or victims of trafficking in persons or otherwise exploiting such victims, including women and girls, and ensure accountability in cases of sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons by private military groups, security companies or foreign troops on the State party's territory;

(d) Ensure the early identification and referral to appropriate services of victims of trafficking in persons, including refugee and migrant women and girls, and provide training for front-line officials, including the police, immigration officers and other law enforcement officers and social workers, on early identification, gender-responsive protocols and support for survivors of trafficking in persons;

- (e) **Decriminalize prostitution to allow women trafficked for exploitation in prostitution and other women and girls to report violations without fear of prosecution;**
- (f) **Ensure that survivors of trafficking in persons have access to temporary residence permits, support services and justice, including reparations, irrespective of their ability or willingness to cooperate with prosecution authorities, and promote regional cooperation and information exchange to prosecute traffickers;**
- (g) **Collect disaggregated data on the number of prosecutions and convictions and the sentences imposed on traffickers and include such data in its next periodic report.**

Participation in political and public life

29. The Committee notes the establishment of a gender equality working group to provide a collaborative platform for female parliamentarians and monitor legislative reforms regarding the human rights of women. It also notes that the representation of women in the Cabinet has increased from 12.5 per cent to 23 per cent since May 2021 and that a law was passed in 2018 to increase the participation of women in elective and administrative positions from 10 per cent to 25 per cent, resulting in an increase in the representation of women in the National Assembly to 26 per cent. The Committee nevertheless notes with concern:

- (a) That women remain underrepresented in decision-making positions in the lower management levels of public administration, particularly at the community level, and in the private sector;
- (b) The persistence of patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory stereotypes that continue to hamper women's participation in political and public life in the State party and the limited support that women candidates receive from political parties;
- (c) The lack of campaign financing and skills training for women candidates in elections;
- (d) The limited access for women with disabilities to political decision-making processes, including in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and community projects that affect them;
- (e) The low number of women ambassadors in the State party.

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

- (a) **Increase and effectively enforce existing quotas and adopt additional quotas for women candidates for public office throughout the public service at the national, regional and municipal levels, with a view to accelerating the equal representation of women and men in elected and appointed political bodies, especially in decision-making positions;**
- (b) **Conduct public awareness campaigns on the need for women's equal participation in all sectors, including in political and public life and the private sector, as a necessary condition for political stability, sustainable development and inclusive growth and put into place strategic interventions to address underlying systemic barriers that hinder women's participation, such as patriarchal attitudes, discriminatory stereotypes and negative sociocultural practices;**
- (c) **Provide capacity-building on political leadership skills and campaigning and adequate campaign financing to women candidates, including women with disabilities, in the public funding of election campaigns;**

- (d) Ensure that women, including women with disabilities, are represented equally with men in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and community projects;
- (e) Take affirmative action to increase the number of diplomats who are women, in particular ambassadors.

Education

31. The Committee welcomes the measures taken by the State party to increase the access of girls to education, including vocational training, such as the Master Plan 2010–2019, the Action Plan on Education 2017–2019, the development of early childhood education programmes and the expansion of the national literacy programme in urban and rural areas. It welcomes that parity between girls and boys has been reached in enrolment at the primary school level and that there has also been an overall increase in school enrolment. The Committee notes, however, with concern:

- (a) The disparities between the enrolment rates of girls and boys at the secondary and tertiary education levels;
- (b) The persistence of the low retention rate for girls at the secondary level, particularly in rural areas, especially when compared to that of boys;
- (c) The disparity between literacy rates, with the rate among women and girls aged 15 years and older reportedly at 53 per cent compared with 63 per cent among men and boys aged 15 years and older in 2017;
- (d) That the State party has not ratified the Convention against Discrimination in Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

32. **Recalling its previous recommendations (CEDAW/C/DJI/CO/1-3, para. 27) and its general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education, the Committee recommends that the State party promote the importance of girls' education at all levels as a basis for their empowerment. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) Address barriers to education for women and girls, such as negative cultural attitudes, child marriage, poverty, infrastructural challenges linked to health, water and sanitation, a lack of personal hygiene products, a lack of safety and limited career options for women and girls in the formal sector;
- (b) Carry out awareness-raising campaigns among parents, communities, teachers, traditional leaders and public officials, especially men, about the importance of education for girls and women;
- (c) Strengthen measures to address the retention, safety and health needs of girls in rural communities, including by opening more schools with boarding facilities, building separate and adequate sanitary facilities, providing public transport and establishing re-entry policies;
- (d) Develop and strengthen technical and vocational training to facilitate the professional insertion into the labour market of girls who have dropped out of school;
- (e) Put into place robust remedial and continuing education programmes that ensure reintegration into mainstream education;
- (f) Orient women and girls by means of temporary special measures towards non-traditional fields of study and career paths, including science,

technology, engineering and mathematics, information and communications technology and studies relating to climatology;

(g) Scale up and strengthen its adult literacy programmes, especially for rural women;

(h) Ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education.

Employment

33. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to facilitate access to employment for women, including through the adoption of the Strategy for Accelerated Growth and the Promotion of Employment (2015–2019), which promotes gender equality. The Committee notes with interest the introduction of moral and sexual harassment into the Labour Code in June 2018. It also notes that the State party is considering repealing article 111 of the Labour Code, which restricts the types of work in which women can engage. The Committee notes, however, with concern:

(a) The low labour market participation of women, which stands at 18.2 per cent compared with 45 per cent for men, and their high unemployment rate, which stands at 63.4 per cent compared with 38.7 per cent for men;

(b) The concentration of women in the informal sector, which is not adequately regulated, with limited access to labour benefits and social protection;

(c) The precarious situation of women migrant workers in the labour market, where they are exposed to unsafe conditions, including in domestic work, and often do not have access to the same benefits as Djiboutian workers.

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

(a) Increase the access of women to formal employment, particularly rural women, including by dismantling gender stereotypes regarding the traditional roles of women, conduct awareness-raising campaigns on gender equality targeting employers and adopt temporary special measures, such as quotas and incentives for employers to hire women, to promote the equal participation of women in the labour market;

(b) Enforce labour legislation and expand social protection schemes to cover women employed in the informal economy;

(c) Ensure that women migrant workers, including domestic workers, have access to labour and social protection, information on their labour rights in languages that they understand and confidential procedures for lodging complaints of exploitation and abuse;

(d) Regulate and monitor the working conditions of domestic workers, in particular women and girls, by means of regular labour inspections, including of private households, and consider ratifying the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), of the International Labour Organization.

Health

35. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved in maternal health care, including with regard to prenatal and postnatal services, assisted childbirth and modern forms of contraception. It notes that a national health development plan covering the period 2020 to 2024 was adopted in 2020 to guarantee “health for all and everywhere” and that an updated plan is currently being prepared. It also notes the launch of the National Strategy for Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal and

Child Mortality (2022–2026) in 2022. The Committee notes, however, with concern:

- (a) The limited coverage of the national health-care infrastructure, including for women and girls;
- (b) That the maternal mortality rate is still twice as high as the regional average;
- (c) That abortion is criminalized in all cases, including in cases of rape and incest;
- (d) The high malnutrition rates in the State party, including among women and girls.

36. In line with its general recommendation No. 24 (1999) on women and health and targets 3.1 and 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that, to reduce global maternal mortality and ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, the State party:

- (a) **Expedite the adoption of the updated national health development plan and ensure that it enables the access of all women and girls within its territory, including refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women and girls, to the health-care infrastructure;**
- (b) **Ensure that it accurately identifies and addresses, under the National Strategy for Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality (2022–2026), the root causes of maternal mortality, such as obstetric complications, female genital mutilation, early pregnancy, unsafe abortion and HIV infections;**
- (c) **Amend the Penal Code to legalize abortion and decriminalize it in all cases and ensure that women and adolescent girls have adequate access to safe abortion and postabortion services to ensure the full realization of the rights of women, their equality and their economic and bodily autonomy to make free choices about their reproductive rights and to strengthen measures to combat maternal mortality;**
- (d) **Address food insecurity and the high levels of malnutrition in a gender-responsive and culturally appropriate manner;**
- (e) **Collect data, disaggregated by age, nationality, ethnicity, disability and urban or rural area, on the number of women covered by the national health development plan and on the health status of women, including the number of unsafe abortions and the number of women and girls affected by malnutrition.**

Economic empowerment of women

37. The Committee notes with concern the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on women and girls, as the pandemic exacerbated their vulnerabilities and led to a deterioration of their living conditions due, in part, to the lack of a gender-responsive social protection system. The Committee also notes with concern:

- (a) The wide gender gap in access to financial services in the State party, with only 14 per cent of women having a bank account compared with 38 per cent of men;
- (b) The lack of information available to women about microfinance institutions;
- (c) The barriers faced by women working in the informal economy and in precarious sectors in gaining access to traditional financial instruments, such as bank

loans and other forms of financial credit, including microfinance, as many women have no bank account or sufficient financial guarantees;

(d) The absence of information on the involvement of women in decision-making on the financial and other aspects of the presence of military bases;

(e) The low participation of women in sports due to educational gaps, sociocultural stereotypes and poor infrastructure in rural areas, although such participation is increasing slowly in urban areas.

38. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Facilitate the access of women to financial services, low-interest loans without collateral, financial literacy skills and training and adopt temporary special measures to ensure that women have access to banking services;**

(b) **Adopt special financial support measures for the development of entrepreneurship by women;**

(c) **Ensure the meaningful participation of women, including women with disabilities and migrant women, in the formulation and implementation of economic empowerment strategies;**

(d) **Ensure that women and women's groups are equally represented at decision-making levels in consultations and negotiations on military base lease renewals and contract and license renewal procedures for international and local military contracting companies, in line with the Convention and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;**

(e) **Collect data on economic participation rates in Djibouti, disaggregated by sex, age and geographical location;**

(f) **Adopt specific measures to encourage women and girls to engage in sports, including by eliminating discriminatory stereotypes and prejudices, developing sports-related infrastructure in rural areas and raising public awareness about the benefits of the participation of women and girls in sports.**

Rural women

39. The Committee notes that rural women make up 22 per cent of the State party's population. It also notes the Women's Empowerment and Community-building Strategy aimed at providing economic and social support to women in rural and suburban areas and combating poverty. The Committee is concerned, however, that many rural women in the State party face extreme poverty, limited access to basic services and illiteracy, as well as gender-based violence due to harmful practices, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation. It is also concerned about the real and potential impact of military bases on the State party's territory, mainly in rural areas, including the increased risk for women of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and the potential impact of the testing of armed drones and other remote warfare equipment on the safety and livelihoods of women and girls.

40. Recalling its general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women and target 5.a of the Sustainable Development Goals regarding undertaking reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Ensure that the needs of rural women and girls are fully integrated into development policies and programmes, including Djibouti Vision 2035 and the National Gender Policy 2023–2030;**

- (b) Ensure that sufficient human, technical and financial resources are allocated for the effective implementation of the Women's Empowerment and Community-building Strategy, using income from lease contracts for foreign military bases on the State party's territory;
- (c) Address the root causes of the poverty and social exclusion of rural women by improving and expanding their access to justice, education, formal employment, entrepreneurship opportunities, low-interest loans without collateral and other forms of financial credit, land ownership and use, social protection, health care and sanitation;
- (d) Strengthen the involvement and leadership of women in cooperatives in rural areas as mechanisms for their economic empowerment;
- (e) Conduct a review of the environmental and social impact assessment on the real and potential impact of military bases hosted within its territories, including the increased risk for women of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation, as well as on the collateral damage resulting from the testing of armed drones and other remote warfare equipment to the safety and livelihoods of women and girls, and widely disseminate the review's findings in local languages to raise awareness among women's groups and other members of the public;
- (f) Develop, in consultation with stakeholders, particularly women's groups, a resettlement and livelihoods restoration action plan to mitigate the gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and related incidents linked to military bases and allocate a dedicated budget for the rehabilitation, adequate compensation and training of affected women, girls and communities.

Impact of climate change and natural disasters on women

41. The Committee notes that, although the State party is considered to be highly vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change, it has made no explicit efforts to address, as a priority concern, the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change and natural disasters on women, particularly rural women, and their livelihoods.

42. The Committee, in view of its general recommendation 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change, recommends that the State party:

- (a) Ensure that a gender perspective is integrated into the development and implementation of policies and programmes on climate change and disaster preparedness and response and that women, in particular rural women, are actively involved in decision-making in relation to climate change and disaster risk management to guarantee that their views are fully taken into account;
- (b) Ensure the effective involvement of women, including rural women, in all aspects of climate change mitigation projects and actions, such as the climate resilience project initiated in 2024 in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme.

Refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women and girls

43. The Committee notes the legislative reforms undertaken to protect the rights of refugee, migrant and displaced women. It notes with concern, however, that many refugee and migrant women fall outside of the scope of such legislation and that undocumented migrant women face extreme poverty and limited access to education, employment, health care, birth registration and social protection, increasing their risk

for homelessness and sexual exploitation. The Committee regrets the lack of official disaggregated data on undocumented migrant women.

44. In line with its previous recommendations (CEDAW/C/DJI/CO/1-3, para. 35) and its general recommendation No. 32 (2014) on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) **Ensure that all refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women in its territory have access to education, employment, health care and shelters or affordable housing, as well as birth registration and birth certificates for themselves and their children, regardless of their migration status, and protect them from gender-based violence and sexual exploitation;**
- (b) **Expand and further strengthen access to social protection schemes for refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women, regardless of their migration status;**
- (c) **Collect disaggregated data on refugee, asylum-seeking and undocumented migrant women and girls and include such data in its next periodic report.**

Equality in marriage and family relations

45. The Committee notes that the Constitution and other legislation of the State party provide for the equality of women and men. It notes with interest the information provided by the State party that work is under way to revise the Family Code of 2002, guided by Tunisian personal law, and that a draft Family Code will be tabled for further review and discussion in 2024. The Committee notes, however, with concern:

- (a) The discriminatory provisions in the Family Code of 2002, including article 7, which requires the consent of the bride's guardian and the payment of a dowry for a marriage to have legal effect, article 14, which allows child and forced marriage with the authorization of the legal guardian, article 22, which authorizes polygamy, and article 31, which gives the husband marital authority;
- (b) That women and girls continue to have unequal access to inheritance in comparison to men and boys, notwithstanding that articles 101 et seq. under chapter II of the Family Code provide for the equality of women and men in matters of inheritance;
- (c) Persistent societal structures that privilege men over women, giving them disproportionate control over resources and power and privileged access to financial services, land ownership and business opportunities;
- (d) That food security in the family has a negative impact on women and girls, who are often the last to eat, and that the responsibility for food security in the family disproportionately rests upon women.

46. The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (CEDAW/C/DJI/CO/1-3, para. 37) and its general recommendations No. 21 (1994) on equality in marriage and family relations and No. 29 (2013) on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution and calls upon the State party to expedite the ongoing amendments to the Family Code and to repeal all discriminatory provisions relating to marriage, family relations, access to marital property, inheritance and joint heads of household, with a view to bringing the Family Code into conformity with the Convention. The Committee also recommends that the State party address gender inequality

in food responsibility in the family through specific gender-sensitive programmes aimed at mitigating food insecurity.

Data collection and analysis

47. The Committee is concerned about the lack of available data on the progress made in achieving the aims of the National Gender Policy and the insufficient generation and availability of sex-disaggregated data across all sectors, including education, health, employment and violence against women, noting that the lack of data has an impact on public policy decision-making, which is often guided by incomplete evidence on the specific needs of women and girls.

48. The Committee recommends that the State party promote and build capacity for the collection of statistical data, including on the prevalence of gender-based violence and trafficking in persons and on socioeconomic status and access to education, disaggregated by sex, age and socioeconomic background, for the purposes of planning and for the design and implementation of tailored, gender-sensitive legislation, policies, programmes and budgets.

Optional Protocol to the Convention and amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention

49. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

50. The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to further evaluate the realization of the rights enshrined in the Convention in order to achieve substantive equality between women and men.

Dissemination

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

Technical assistance

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

Follow-up to the concluding observations

53. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 20, 24 (c), 28 (c) and 40 (e) above.

Preparation of the next report

54. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the sixth periodic report of the State party in line with a future predictable reporting calendar based on an eight-year review cycle and following the adoption of a list

of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State party. The report should cover the entire period up to the time of its submission.

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