



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
6 April 2010

Original: English

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Pre-session working group
Forty-seventh session
4 – 22 October 2010

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

Burkina Faso

The pre-session working group considered the sixth periodic report of Burkina Faso (CEDAW/C/BFA/6).

General

1. Please provide more information on the process of preparation of the report, in particular, whether non governmental organizations (NGO), including women's rights organizations, were consulted and whether the report was presented to Parliament.

Data collection and analysis

2. In its previous concluding observations, the Committee called upon the State party to put in place a comprehensive system of data collection and assessment of trends in the situation of women (A/60/38, para. 346). Please provide updated information on the status of data collection in the country, and to what extent it takes place on a sex-disaggregated basis. Please describe the coordination mechanisms in place between the federal and state levels, and among all ministries committed to gender equality, and indicate the monitoring and assessment mechanisms in place at the federal level to track progress in the implementation of the programmes for the advancement of women mentioned in the report (paras. 40-47).

Constitution, legislative and institutional framework

3. Please provide information on the status of the Convention vis-à-vis the Constitution and other national laws, and indicate whether the Convention is directly applicable and whether there are instances of cases where the Convention has been cited in courts.

4. The State party acknowledges in its report that women's access to justice is problematic owing to, inter alia, legal illiteracy and the lack of legal assistance. Please provide information on measures taken to increase women's access to justice and remedies

achieved by the implementation of the National Plan for Judicial Reform mentioned in paragraph 31 of the report.

5. The State party makes reference to the adoption of the second action plan and the National Coordinating Meeting of the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women (CNPAPF) in 2003 and to a number of programmes for the advancement of women. Please further elaborate on each activity and provide information about progress in the implementation of these programmes and the impact that their implementation has had in achieving substantive equality between women and men.

Temporary special measures

6. Please indicate if the State party has an official policy aimed at accelerating de facto equality of women and their full participation into, inter alia, education, the economy, politics and employment? If so, what steps have been taken to implement this policy?

Stereotypes and discriminatory cultural practices

7. The State party acknowledges that despite steps taken to improve women's rights, the situation of women, in particular in rural and suburban areas, remains the same, mainly because society is governed by customary and religious practices which institute the superiority of men over women (paras. 58 and 195). Please provide information on concrete measures, including legal provisions and awareness-raising campaigns, taken by the State party to change the public attitude and social and cultural patterns, and eliminate discriminatory customs, traditions and gender-based stereotypes.

Violence against women

8. The report indicates that new legislation on violence against women was not enacted during the reporting period. Please inform the Committee of the reasons for the delay and whether the State party intends to enact such legislation, as per the Committee's previous recommendations (A/60/38, para. 338). Given the fact that violence against women is perceived as "normal" behavior in the society (para. 58), what concrete actions and measures have been taken by the Government, such as launching of national educational and awareness campaigns and involvement of community and religious leaders in an effort to change the social and cultural patterns and attitudes in this regard, the absence of a law, to eliminate violence against women.

9. Please indicate the existence of other legislation and policies in place to deal with violence against women, including domestic violence, and the impact of such laws.

10. The report mentions the draft laws on child pornography on the Internet and violence in schools by the National Codification Commission (para. 48). Please provide information on the status of these draft laws and whether they have been adopted as well as the measures taken for their implementation.

11. The report mentions a national study on violence against women, and harmful traditional practices analyzed by region and ethnic group (para. 60). Please provide information on the findings of the study and the measures that have been implemented based on these.

12. Please provide additional information on the progress made by the National Committee to Combat the Practice of Excision (CNLPE), in particular with regard to findings indicating that female genital mutilation during a girl's first week of life had arisen because it was more difficult for the authorities to detect. What concrete actions, including legal measures, have been taken by the State party to tackle this challenge? How many

cases of female genital mutilation have been brought to courts since this practice was outlawed, and what has been the result, including the penalties for the offenders?

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

13. Please provide information on the prevalence of trafficking in girls and women. Further, please include information on domestic legislation, its implementation, and other national mechanisms to prevent and prosecute trafficking in girls and women and to protect victims. Also, please indicate the status of the “draft law to combat human trafficking and similar practices and protecting victims” presented to the National Assembly, and whether it contains a focus on girls and women (para. 48). Does the State party foresee implementing a national strategy to combat trafficking in women and girls?

14. Kindly provide information about the existence and implementation of penal laws to prevent and punish the exploitation of prostitution. The report mentions the involvement of girls and young women who have dropped out of school in prostitution for economic reasons (para. 75). Please provide information on the concrete steps, as well as rehabilitative and supportive measures for the social reintegration of girls and women involved in prostitution in order to provide them with alternative life choices.

Participation in decision-making and representation at the international level

15. The State party indicates that, despite some efforts made, participation of women in decision-making bodies, in particular in the legislative branch, continues to be very low (para. 77). Please provide concrete information on the steps taken by the Government to achieve equal representation of women and men in political and public life, including temporary special measures, such as a quota system, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee’s general recommendation No. 25 (2004), to increase the numbers of women in decision-making bodies. The State party indicates a proposed law on a quota of at least 30 per cent of men and women on electoral rolls (*ibid.*), please indicate if the law has passed and elaborate on its impact on women’s participation in electoral rolls.

16. Please inform the Committee on women’s representation in the diplomatic and international fields.

Education

17. As mentioned in the report of the State party, the rate of literacy in general, and in particular among women, is low (para. 108). Please provide updated information and disaggregated data on women’s literacy rate, and concrete efforts made, including legal measures, to increase women’s access to education at all levels, such as non-formal education, adult literacy and higher education programs.

18. The State party mentions the 10-year plan for the development of basic education 2001-2009 (PDDEB) based on the educational policy letter of May 2001, to achieve an enrollment rate of 70 per cent by 2010, with a focus on girls and the most disadvantaged areas (para. 83). Please inform the Committee on the status of this plan and whether the set goals have been reached, providing statistical information on progress made.

19. The State party mentions an increase in the number of schools, staff and classrooms for the whole population from 2000 to 2006 (para. 85, table 3). However, it also acknowledges the obstacles to girls’ access to education, namely poverty, persistence of traditional practices (early and forced marriages, preference for boys and overburdening of girls with housework) and an educational environment that is unfavorable to girls. Please provide information on what immediate and concrete measures are taken to remedy these

obstacles preventing girls' access to education, and address the increase in girls dropping out from primary and secondary school.

20. With regard to the Committee's previous recommendations in 2000, reiterated in 2005, to increase the presence of women teachers and ensure that school textbooks no longer carry negative images of women, please clarify whether any measures have been undertaken by the State party so far (A/55/38, para. 268, A/60/38, para. 335).

Employment and economic empowerment

21. The report indicates that there are still persistent cases of social exclusion and discrimination against women in relation to article 11 of the Convention. Please provide information on the complaint mechanisms available to challenge discrimination in the workplace and also indicate whether such discrimination has been challenged in the past. If so, what was the outcome of such cases?

22. The report does not provide any information on the situation of women in the informal sector. Please provide such information, including any measures in place to support women entrepreneurs and measures towards extending social security for this group of women workers.

23. Please provide information on the wage gap between women and men in the private and public sectors and clarify whether a law on equal pay for work of equal value exists, and the means of its enforcement.

24. The State party indicates that women are often employed as cashiers, secretaries, phone operators or receptionists but that women are almost completely unrepresented in technical positions in both the private and public sectors (para. 116). Please provide information on whether there is a lack of capacity among women in technical positions and if so, please indicate whether training and capacity-building programs for women in technical and other areas of work are available.

25. The report cites the "comprehensive programme to promote the rights of girls working as servants" as a result of poverty (para. 46). Please provide information on the status of this programme and the impact or change in the working environment, treatment by employers and respect of the rights of girl child domestic workers.

26. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants has highlighted the socio-economic empowerment of returnee Burkina Faso migrants from Côte d'Ivoire as a matter of urgency (E/CN.4/2006/73/Add.2, paras. 36-74). Please provide additional information on the measures in place to deal with the situation of repatriated women and girls and to promote income-generating activities for women returnees.

Health

27. Please provide updated statistical information, including mortality and morbidity rates, on women's health issues in general, and specifically, reproductive and mental health, as well as disability among women in Burkina Faso.

28. Please inform the Committee on the measures undertaken by the State party to ensure equal access to health care and health-related services and information, including family health and family planning, to specifically address the fact indicated in the report that 74 per cent of the female population surveyed replied that their husbands alone made decisions regarding their wives' health (para. 21). What measures have been taken to educate women and their spouses on the rights of women to independent decision-making on their health and well-being?

29. Please indicate any targeted interventions to combat high maternal mortality, and in particular in the Sahel region, which as indicated in the report, suffers from much higher rates in comparison to other regions (para. 142, note 7). Please also provide information on the provision of contraceptives and sex education for women and adolescent girls throughout the country and in particular in the Sahel region.

30. The State party indicates that, in addition to women being more at risk of HIV/AIDS owing to the fact that they are often not in control of their reproductive lives, they additionally face the risk of unwanted pregnancies (para. 153). Please assess the progress made and remaining obstacles vis-à-vis the numerous steps that the Government has taken to overcome the factors that make women more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, and increase the reproductive health knowledge of women throughout the country, including in rural areas.

Rural women

31. With regard to women's access to arable land and housing, please indicate measures taken by the State party to implement existing land laws that often differ from local customs and traditions, and which, according to the report, still dominate and hamper the equality of opportunity among rural women (para. 195). Which specific actions have been taken to strengthen the legal and socio-economic protection of women and ensure that women can have access to information, in their language, and to the administrative bodies to formalize transactions in which they are involved?

32. The State party states that major initiatives have been taken to address women's economic poverty, vulnerability and dependency, and to improve women's access to economic resources in the State party, namely the Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development and Gender (March 2005), the shea butter national project, and the National multipurpose platform Program for the fight against poverty (PN-PTF/LCP). Please provide information on the concrete results of these initiatives. How are these initiatives monitored for the benefit of women? Please provide updated information on the implementation of the provisions of the National Policy on Land Security in Rural Areas (PSFMR) in order to combat poverty and inequality and increase the participation of rural women in economic development efforts.

33. As mentioned in the report, the progress achieved by microfinance opportunities in the combat against poverty (paras. 165-167) still faces major challenges such as illiteracy, the isolation of rural areas, lack of or inadequacy of information, and in general, overburdening, and local customs and traditions which affect women negatively. What measures have been taken to face these challenges and to enhance the situation of women, and what has been the impact of these measures?

Marriage and family life

34. Please provide updated information on the concrete measures taken to implement the Committee's previous concluding observations relative to the practice of polygamy and the differing minimum ages of marriage for girls and boys, and the outcome of these measures (A/60/38, paras. 339-340).

35. The report indicates the use of community mediation as the preferred strategy for women's access to justice in the context of domestic violence (para. 48). How does the State party ensure that such alternative dispute resolution services do not disadvantage women or limit their access to justice?

36. The report indicates that in rural and suburban areas in particular women's rights with regard to marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance and rights between spouses during marriage, were not respected in practice in accordance with the Committee's general recommendation No. 21 (1994). Please inform the Committee of the specific measures

being taken to raise awareness of opinion leaders, religious and traditional chiefs, as noted in the report (para. 195). Please indicate the types or forms of family that exist under civil, religious and customary laws such as marriages, unions, partnerships, or other kinds of cohabitation and whether all of them are recognized by the State party and whether female spouses are allowed to exercise their legal rights.
