



# 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  
Fortieth and forty-first sessions  
16-20 July 2007

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

#### Nigeria

##### Introduction

The pre-session working group examined the sixth periodic report of Nigeria (CEDAW/C/NGA/6).

##### General

1. In the introduction to part I, the report indicates that as part of the preparatory processes for the writing of the sixth periodic report, a series of interventions were mutually agreed by Government, civil society organizations and development partners as critical to the production of a consensus report. Please clarify whether the report was approved by the Cabinet and presented to the Parliament.

##### Constitution, legislation and national machinery for the advancement of women

2. In its previous concluding comments,<sup>1</sup> the Committee urged the State party to place high priority on completing the process of full domestication of the Convention. The report indicates (see Executive Summary and part II, articles 2 and 15) efforts under way towards domestication and reasons for the delay and refers to a bill for an act to provide for the enforcement of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the Federal Republic of Nigeria and for the purposes connected therewith, 2005 (see part II, article 2). Please provide further information as to whether a time frame is in place to expedite the process of full domestication of the Convention. Please also give an update on the status of the said bill and on its expected impact in regard to full domestication of the Convention.

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<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly*, Fifty-ninth Session (A/59/38), part I, para. 292.

3. The report refers to a publication entitled “A compilation of the Constitution, national and state statutes and regulations, local government by-laws, customary laws and religious laws, policies and practices and court decisions relation to the status of women and children, applicable in Nigeria, 2005”, as well as the subsequent establishment of a Committee on Reform of Discriminatory Laws against women and the drafting of a bill on the abolition of all forms of discrimination against women in Nigeria and other related matters, 2006. Please explain the relationship between the latter bill and the bill referred to in question 2 above. Please also provide information about any other follow-up measures taken in response to the publication.

4. The report refers to several draft bills, including those referred to in questions 2 and 3 above, as well as bills that are under consideration at the federal level, such as the 2003 Violence against Women Bill (see part II, article 3), and state levels, for example the gender and equal opportunities bill, the gender mainstreaming bill, the bill on domestic violence and other related matters (see part II, article 2). Please provide an update on the status of the preceding bills, including the anticipated time frame for their adoption.

5. The report indicates (see part II, section 3.0) that the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs is the national gender focal machinery situated at the highest level of Government, replicated in all 36 states of Nigeria. Please describe the coordination mechanisms in place between the federal and state levels. Please also 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.

### **Education and stereotypes**

6. The report refers to activities undertaken to redress gender-role stereotyping that impedes the advancement of women. Please clarify how the impact of efforts undertaken is being assessed. For example, please provide the number of girls who have benefited from the National Policy on Education (2004), which aimed at encouraging increased participation of girls in science and technology (see part II, article 5).

7. The report indicates (see part II, article 3) that the series of activities including training programmes and the commemoration of “Female Genital Mutilation Day”, were carried out by the federal Ministry of Health. Please provide information about the impact of those activities, as well as of the programmes listed in box 3.1, on the reduction and elimination of harmful and negative socio-cultural patterns, particularly female genital mutilation. Please also indicate whether there has been follow-up to the activities and programmes mentioned in box 3.1.

8. The report indicates (part II, section 10.3) that the total school enrolment is higher for boys compared to girls during the reporting year and that gender disparities continue to persist in retention (see tables 10.3 and 10.4). Please indicate whether benchmarks for girls’ universal access and completion are in place, and progress made towards achieving such goals.

9. The report notes (part II, section 10.5) that the establishment of women development centres in all 36 states provided opportunities for young girls who

dropped out of school to continue non-formal education. Please describe the impact of steps taken and indicate whether the intended goals have been achieved.

10. The report (part II, section 10.8 ) indicates that the Government has taken measures to step up recruitment of qualified teachers. According to 2003 data, there was a wide gap between the number of female and male teachers, including at secondary schools. Please provide more information regarding measures taken to rectify that situation, including temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to accelerate the increase in the number of female teachers at all levels.

### **Violence against women**

11. The report provides some information (table 3.2 ) about the status of cases of violence against women. Please provide information about data collection efforts in place nationally and at the state level in regard to all forms of violence against women, including any population-based survey that might have been undertaken.

12. The report indicates (part II , section 3.8.1) that despite ongoing efforts, a variety of patterns of violence against women in the country still prevail, as highlighted in box 3.4. Please indicate whether the Government intends to adopt a comprehensive plan or strategy to combat all forms of violence against women and girls.

### **Trafficking, and exploitation of prostitution**

13. The report indicates (part II, section 6.1 ) that a major breakthrough in trafficking of women and children is the enactment of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act 2003. Please provide information on how the implementation of this Act is being monitored. Please also provide information about the number of cases investigated and those which were successfully prosecuted under the Act and the sentences that have been imposed on the perpetrators.

### **Participation of women in political and public life**

14. The report (part II , section 4.2) indicates that the Government has taken special measures to ensure equality between women and men through affirmative action. However, table 7.1 shows that women's participation in decision-making in elective/appointed positions, particularly in the Upper and Lower Houses of the National Assembly, in the Senate, federal House of Representatives and at the local government level is still low. What measures has the Government taken to increase the number of women in the above-mentioned areas, bearing in mind article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations 25 on temporary special measures and 23 on women in political and public life?

15. What was the outcome of the National Political Reform Conference, mentioned in part II, section 7.2 , and its impact on implementation of article 7 of the Convention? Please indicate how the recommendations of female stakeholders were taken on board by the above-mentioned conference.

**Employment, poverty and rural women**

16. 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 mechanisms available to challenge discrimination in the workplace and also indicate whether such discrimination has been challenged in the past. If yes, what was the outcome of such cases?

17. Please provide recent statistical information, disaggregated by sex and showing trends over time, on women's overall labour force participation in the public and private sectors. Please also 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 equal work and work of equal value exists, and the means of its enforcement.

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

19. The report indicates (part II, section 11.2 ) that the Nigeria Labour Congress adopted a Gender Equity Policy in February 2003. Please describe the impact of that policy on women's participation in the labour market. Are the provisions of the policy equally applicable in regard to employment in Government and in the private sector?

20. The report considers various policies at the national, state and local levels aimed at poverty eradication, improvement of the quality of life and the creation of social safety nets for vulnerable groups, for example the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS), and the Local Government Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS). Please indicate how those policies incorporate a gender perspective and contribute to the implementation of the Convention. Please also indicate how implementation of the policies is monitored for the benefit of women.

21. The report indicates progress, as well as challenges in the implementation of article 14 of the Convention. What steps is the Government taking to ensure that rural women benefit fully from all relevant strategies for rural development, including in the areas of education, health and economic development, and participation in decision-making? What measures are in place to enhance rural women's access to justice, information, modern technologies and land?

**Health**

22. The report indicates that maternal mortality rates are still very high, in particular in rural areas. What measures have been taken to reduce the high maternal mortality rates and to address in-country differences, as well as those between rural and urban areas? Please describe steps taken or planned to increase the number of primary health-care facilities and their accessibility, especially in rural areas.

23. The report indicates that the Medium Term Plan of Action for Health Sector Reform initiated by the present administration is still on going. How does the Government monitor implementation of the plan in regard to women's health, and

how does it assess the tangible improvement in the seven key areas mentioned in the report (part II, section 12.2 )?

24. The report indicates the steps and policies in place to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. Please describe the impact and results of those strategies, policies, mechanisms and the programmes adopted at the federal, state and local levels and how the strategies empower women to protect themselves effectively against the epidemic.

#### **Marriage and family relations**

25. The report indicates (part II, article 16) that Nigeria has three different forms of marriage based on civil, religious and customary law, operating side by side. Please explain how the Government plans to harmonize civil, religious and customary law with the Convention, in particular in relation to article 16 of the Convention.

26. The report states that at least 10 states of the Federation have adopted the provisions of the Child's Rights Act, which stipulates a minimum age of 18 for marriage and betrothal (see part II, section 16.1 ). Please elaborate on the efforts undertaken by the Government to ensure that the minimum age of marriage is raised to the age of 18 for women and men throughout the country, in accordance with article 16 of the Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including any draft laws under consideration.

#### **Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20, paragraph 1**

27. Please provide information on measures taken to make widely known the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which Nigeria ratified on 22 November 2004. Please also indicate any progress made towards acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention.