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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**  
Pre-session working group  
Thirty-fourth session  
16 January-3 February 2006

**Responses to the list of issues and questions for  
consideration of the combined second, third,  
fourth and fifth periodic report**

**Mali**

### **General**

2. Please indicate whether government sectors, non-governmental organizations, civil society and other relevant institutions were consulted and involved in the process of preparing the report.

### **Response**

The second, third, fourth and fifth periodic report on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was compiled following a participatory process involving government bodies and civil-society organizations and comprising two stages, namely:

- Training in the United Nations guidelines on the form and content of national reports;
- The drafting of the report (see annexes I and II containing respectively the list of participants in the training workshop on the Convention and the United Nations guidelines on the form and content of national reports, and the list and composition of the drafting teams).

The document was considered by the Council of Ministers on 11 February 2004, in addition to which all ministerial departments were given the opportunity to submit their contributions or amendments.

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

3. The report indicates that, in accordance with the Malian Constitution, any treaty to which Mali is a party has precedence over national legislation from the moment that the treaty in question is published and that Mali thus conforms to the definition of discrimination against women contained in article 1 of the Convention (p. 13). Please provide any examples of whether any laws, policies, programmes or administrative practices have ever been challenged in court as discriminatory on the basis of sex utilizing the provisions of the Convention, and if so, information on the outcome.

### **Response**

To date, no laws, policies, programmes or administrative practices have been officially challenged in court as discriminatory on the basis of sex utilizing the provisions of the Convention. This can be explained by the fact that many women are illiterate. Those who are educated more often resort to negotiation and not to the legal system in order to resolve their problems, despite the awareness-raising and information activities undertaken by the Government and women's rights organizations.

4. Besides the proposed family law reform (see paras. 27 and 28 below), please indicate whether there are any plans to undertake a comprehensive law reform process so as to identify and subsequently amend or repeal laws and combat practices which conflict with various provisions of the Convention.

## Response

Notwithstanding the regard of the legislature for the welfare of disadvantaged groups, an analysis of the laws has shown that there are inadequacies and constraints as far as the application of legislation is concerned.

Concerning the identification of discriminatory laws, attention should be drawn to:

- The study on discriminatory laws carried out by the Children’s and Women’s Rights Action Committee (CADEF) in 1994;
- The study on discriminatory laws carried out by civil society (Observatory for Women’s and Children’s Rights (ODEF)) in 1995;
- The white paper on women’s rights produced by the Association for the Advancement and Defence of Women’s Rights (APDF) in 2000;
- The study carried out by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families (MPFEF) in 2001, entitled *Analytical study of the status of women and the law in Mali*;
- The study on Malian legislation and international conventions carried out by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2004.

In addition to the family law reform project, a comprehensive report has been compiled on the particular situation of women, children and disabled persons in matters of personal law. As vulnerable groups, it is essential that they should have specific protection. A decree on the subject of State- and privately owned land is planned for adoption with the aim of eliminating discrimination against women concerning their customary land rights. The decree will introduce a method for establishing customary land rights and determine the composition, competencies and modus operandi of the conciliation commission. The draft decree is awaiting submission to a conference of all land actors entitled “General meeting on land affairs”.

We should point out that a new law promoting the participation of women in public life, namely the Political Parties Act, was introduced prior to the compilation of the periodic reports on implementation of the Convention (1990-2002) submitted to the Committee. Under the Act, 0.25 per cent of tax receipts are earmarked for the public funding of political parties in accordance with the following criteria:

- 15 per cent for parties that participated in the last general elections (legislative and community);
- 40 per cent in proportion to the number of deputies;
- 35 per cent in proportion to the number of community councillors;
- 10 per cent in proportion to the number of women elected (5 per cent for women deputies and 5 per cent for women councillors).

5. The report indicates that concern over the situation of women led to the development and implementation of a national strategy to combat poverty for the period 1998-2002 (p. 11). It also refers to a number of decennial programmes (p. 20). Please provide information about progress in the implementation of these

programmes and the impact their implementation is having in terms of achieving the goals of the Convention.

### Response

The implementation of various projects and programmes has effectively contributed to the achievement of the Convention's goals.

The table below shows numerous projects and programmes and indicates the Convention goals which have been addressed through their implementation.

<i>Title/programme</i>	<i>Programme goals</i>	<i>Impact in relation to Convention goals</i>
Decennial Education Programme (PRODEC) 1998-2007	Enrol all school-age children in education by 2010	Equal access for girls and boys
Decennial Social and Health Programme (PRODESS) 1988-2003	Improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of social and health services, in particular those relating to reproductive health and nutrition	Empowerment of women in protecting their reproductive health
Decennial Justice Programme (PRODEJ) 2000-2010	Promote individual rights	Review of laws discriminating against women and children
	Abolish or reduce legal costs	Review of the Penal Code in regard to the physical abuse of women and girls
National Rural Infrastructure Programme (PNIR) 2001-2007	Achieve the sustainable and equitable improvement of incomes and living conditions (geographical region and gender)	Equitable improvement of living conditions
Support Programme for the Farm System and Rural Organizations (PASAOP) 2002-2006	Increase the contribution of the rural development sector to the country's economy by promoting sustainable growth of farm production in general and food production in particular, strengthen food security and self-sufficiency, improve the incomes and living conditions of rural inhabitants, protect the environment and contribute to better management of the environment	Capacity-building in rural women's organizations

6. Please provide information about the implementation of the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women (2002-2006), including in relation to achievements, obstacles encountered and progress to date (p. 19).

## Response

The Government is negotiating with partners with a view to evaluating, in 2006, the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women (2002-2006). It should be noted, however, that various projects and programmes are under way in the context of implementing the Plan.

Table 2

### Projects and programmes completed by MPFEF (2002-2004)

<i>Areas of activity</i>	<i>Target groups</i>	<i>Achievements</i>	<i>Difficulties</i>
Female literacy	Rural women	Literacy and citizenship classes for 555 women and 42 men from 15 villages in the region of Mopti  Functional literacy classes for 20 craftswomen in Baco-Djicoroni in the district of Bamako  Functional literacy classes for 100 out-of-school girls, using picture and video aids  Functional literacy classes for 700 migrant girls	Insufficient teaching materials
Women's active participation in improving their reproductive health and combating sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS	Religious and community leaders, administrators and policymakers	Activities aimed at raising awareness of the target groups against the practice of excision	
Strengthen women's education in regard to the legal system and citizenship	Women	Training for women candidates in the regions of Gao, Tombouctou, Kidal, Ségou, Sikasso, Kayes, Koulikoro, Mopti and Bko  Support for approximately 100 women candidates for political parties  Completion of a study on the constraints on women's participation in public life and the establishment of a strategy  Awareness-raising for women in the regions of Tombouctou, Ségou, Sikasso, Kayes, Mopti, Koulikoro and Bamako	Low financial resources  Unavailability of women  Inadequate funding

<i>Areas of activity</i>	<i>Target groups</i>	<i>Achievements</i>	<i>Difficulties</i>
		Dissemination of the Convention in the regions of Kayes, Ségou, Sikasso and Tombouctou and circulation of 15,000 copies at the Dakar conference in 1994	
		Teaching about the Convention to 3,000 students	
Institutional development	Women	Facility support for the bodies responsible for the advancement of women in the regions of Ségou, Sikasso, Kayes, Mopti, Koulikoro and Bamako	No post-activity follow-up
		Support for the holding of regional consultations on family law reform	
		Support for development of the policy document and action plans for the advancement of women, children and families 2002-2006	
		Support for the mapping of male/female disparities in the regions of Mopti and Tombouctou	
		Completion of the study on gender-mainstreaming in UNDP projects and programmes	
Social protection		Classes for 700 migrant girls in the district of Bamako and the town of Kayes designed to teach domestic skills, raise awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention and inform them of their rights and obligations	
Female poverty	Women's umbrella organizations in Mali	Improved access for members of women's organizations to information and communication technology (ICT) and women's capacity-building in project structuring	Inadequate financial resources
		Capacity-building in management and production	

<i>Areas of activity</i>	<i>Target groups</i>	<i>Achievements</i>	<i>Difficulties</i>
Women and environmental protection	Women's organizations	Organization of informal debates on environmental protection, the national forestry policy and better use of cooking equipment	Lack of funding
Women and subregional integration	Women's organizations	Completion of a study on the establishment of a network of women economic operators in the member States of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) with a view to identifying the true obstacles to strengthening the role of women in the WAEMU community area  Development of a support project for rural women in the border areas of Mali, Guinea and Senegal	Lack of funding

7. The report recognizes the need to step up awareness-raising and education for politicians and other segments of society in order to maintain a focus on women and systematically mainstream gender issues in the development, implementation and evaluation of programmes (p. 15). Please describe what the Government is doing to raise awareness among lawmakers, judges, lawyers, law enforcement officers, administrators and women themselves, in urban and rural areas, regarding the persistence of discrimination against women and of discriminatory stereotypes in general, and in particular Mali's obligations under the Convention.

### **Response**

Within their respective areas of concern, MPFEF and civil society, notably Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) and the Joint Action Group on Women's Rights and Citizenship, ran information and awareness-raising workshops on CEDAW for parliamentarians, judges, lawyers, the police, the gendarmerie and women themselves. They were also active in translating the Convention into the national languages (Soninke, Bamanan and Peul) in 2003-2004 and disseminating the text of the Convention in the national languages or French. A training guide in the national languages (Soninke, Bamanan and Peul) was similarly produced and disseminated in 2003-2004 by the National Directorate for the Advancement of Women (DNPf).

Accordingly, 260 religious and traditional leaders, 148 magistrates, 230 lawyers, 230 police officers, 84 doctors and approximately 100 deputies benefited from such training, information and awareness-raising activities. Examples of training and awareness-raising workshops include:

- The awareness-raising seminar for magistrates and other court officials on women's human rights and violence against women (Bamako, 19-21 December 2000);

- The awareness-raising seminar for police officers on the Convention (Bamako, 17 February 2003).

8. Women's access to justice is said to be problematic owing to legal costs, lack of information and lack of assistance. To date, have any legal aid services and legal assistance funds been established, as referred to on page 62 of the report?

**Response**

Within the framework of PRODEJ, Legal Assistance Act No. 01-082 of 24 August 2001 was reviewed in order to facilitate access to the legal system for the disadvantaged, and its implementing decree is now being drafted. The provisions of this Act are not specifically aimed at women but at any disadvantaged individual in need of legal assistance. Through PRODEJ, however, the Ministry of Justice has granted financial and technical support to NGO counselling centres in the context of combating violence against women.

In addition, the PRODEJ budget items include a legal assistance fund, amounting to 180 million CFA francs, from which such NGOs as APDF, the Coordinating Body for Women's Associations and NGOs in Mali (CAFO), the Malian Human Rights Association (AMDH) and the Joint Action Group on Women's Rights and Citizenship, as well as the Demesso clinic, have each received an allocation of 5 million CFA francs.

WILDAF has a legal assistance and support centre for disadvantaged women and children which, on average, receives 100 cases each year and deals with 60 of them.

In 2003-2004, the APDF legal assistance centre received 158 cases and dealt with 58 of them.

In 2003-2004, the CADEF legal assistance centre received 25 cases and dealt with 5 of them.

Between 2003 and October 2005, the Association of Women Jurists of Mali (AJM) received 367 cases and dealt with all of them.

**Discriminatory practices and stereotypes**

9. The report acknowledges that Malian society is a patriarchal society, with the roles and responsibilities of men and women clearly delineated depending on the ethnic or religious group concerned. In this context, reference is made to the persistence of discriminatory traditional practices, such as the dowry system, polygamy, customary inheritance practices, early and forced marriage, nutritional taboos, customs and privileges in favour of men — such as the prerogative of deciding where the family will live (pp. 23 and 24). The report also refers to harmful traditional practices, such as humiliating and degrading treatment of widows and the giving of a girl in marriage to a witch doctor for religious reasons (p. 14). Many of these practices are contrary to the provisions of the Convention in general, and especially its articles 2 (f) and 5 (a). Please provide information on what measures the Government is taking to remedy this situation, and in particular whether a comprehensive strategy exists, involving collaboration with non-governmental organizations, to change stereotyping that discriminates against women.



## Response

Generally speaking, the Government, acting either single-handedly through its own bodies or in collaboration with civil society, including by helping to finance the latter's activities, carries out awareness-raising, information and training activities for the benefit of inhabitants and actors involved in eliminating practices harmful to women's and children's health.

By Decree No. 99-157/PM-RM of 16 June 1999, the Government established the National Action Committee on the Eradication of Practices Harmful to Women's and Children's Health, which is tasked with making proposals to MPFEF for strategies and activities designed to counter practices harmful to women's and children's health. To that end, the Committee formulates proposals and suggestions in the following areas:

- Information and awareness-raising;
- Production of audio-visual materials suitable for awareness-raising purposes;
- Training;
- Promotion of research;
- Legislation reform;
- Support for the activities of associations and NGOs;
- Affirmative action.

It comprises representatives of ministerial departments, national directorates, customized services, religious congregations and associations or NGOs.

Furthermore, pursuant to Order No. 02-053/P-RM of 4 June 2002, a national programme to combat the practice of excision was set up by the Government in order to coordinate, follow up and evaluate the policy and the strategies in that area. To that end, it has the tasks of:

- Coordinating all activities to combat the practice of excision;
- Conducting studies and research on the phenomenon of excision;
- Elaborating an information, education and communication strategy for individuals, social groups and regional population groups with a view to achieving their commitment to the national policy aimed at ending excision;
- Devising countrywide programmes in conjunction with all partners;
- Evaluating and following up activities on the ground concerning the issue of excision;
- Supporting the development of curricula and introducing them into training colleges for health and education professionals.

It should also be noted that, pursuant to Circular No. 0019/MSSPA/SG of 7 January 1999, the Ministry of Health prohibited the performance of excision in health centres.

### **Violence against women**

**10.** Please provide detailed information on the forms and extent of violence against women, including domestic violence, supplying any available statistics and trends over time. Please also provide information on any instances of violence against women that have been prosecuted under the general penal laws, and the outcomes of such court action.

### **Response**

In Mali, the identified forms of violence are:

1. Physical violence manifested through beatings, injuries, forced feeding of young girls and excision;
2. Sexual violence manifested through rape, sexual abuse and sexual harassment;
3. Psychological violence manifested through sexist language and insults, lack of respect for women and attempts to make women feel inferior and to humiliate, devalue and demean them, etc.;
4. Psychological and physiological violence manifested through the desertion of wives by their husbands for years on grounds of migration;
5. Institutional violence manifested through levirate marriage, sororate marriage, forced or early marriage, repudiation under Muslim or sharia law, certain widowhood rites, religious confinement, abduction of women, barter of women, change of marital option and forced wearing of the veil;
6. Violence resulting from deprivation and discrimination manifested through segregation from family and community, disinheritance, lack of access to various services, e.g., schooling and health care, discrimination in administrative and political posts, difficult access to land and so on;
7. Women-on-women violence manifested through co-wife abuse and self-abuse through depigmentation and tattooing;
8. Forced prostitution and procurement.

As for the extent of violence, it transpires from the figures available through a study conducted by MPFEF in 2001 that all women are victims of at least one form of violence.

In all, 77 to 98 per cent of women are victims of excision, 41 to 92 per cent are beaten by their birth parents or spouse and 57 to 100 per cent are victims of verbal abuse.

In rural areas, forced marriage is the rule. In some areas, it can account for 77 per cent of marriages. Levirate and sororate marriages account for 10 per cent of marriages.

**11.** Please indicate whether the Government has contemplated or begun working towards a comprehensive and multidisciplinary strategy to combat all forms of violence against women, and if so, please describe it.

## Response

Concerning the issue of violence against women, the political will of the Government of Mali has been reflected in the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women (1996-2000), which states the Government's commitment to "taking concerted action to prevent and eliminate violence against women", and in the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women (2002-2006), which provides for the development and implementation of a national plan to combat violence against women and girls.

A national action plan to combat violence against women and girls (2006-2011) was in fact developed in June 2005. The overall objective of this plan is to mobilize national public opinion on the subject of violence with a view to eradicating the phenomenon.

Its specific objectives are to:

- Prevent violence;
- Deal with cases of violence;
- Establish an exhaustive legislative and regulatory mechanism for countering violence;
- Obtain the commitment of socio-professional groups responsible for dealing with cases of violence to the objectives of the policy and national action plan to combat violence;
- Further improve women's health;
- Further improve women's image;
- Further improve the status of women;
- Establish a genuine partnership of those involved in combating violence by building their institutional and technical capacities;
- Develop a partnership with bilateral and multilateral institutions or organizations.

The expected outcome of the activities to be carried out as part of the above plan should help to ensure that:

- All forms of violence are condemned by society;
- All Malian communities are primed and receive the messages embodied in the national action plan against violence;
- The bodies involved in combating violence are better organized and have at their disposal the financial resources, logistics and methodology needed for their activities on the ground;
- Facilities for victims are in future available to them throughout the country;
- All forms of violence will be covered by Malian legislation once new laws better designed to address violence have been adopted.

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

12. Kindly provide information about the implementation of penal laws to prevent and punish the exploitation of prostitution as well as measures taken to provide rehabilitation and support for the social reintegration of women in order to help them leave prostitution.

#### **Response**

In Mali, prostitution is not a criminal offence and is not therefore punishable under the Penal Code.

The exploitation of prostitution is, however, a grave violation of women's rights and also constitutes physical abuse. The Malian courts unquestionably deal with cases involving exploitation of prostitution, which, under article 229 of the Penal Code, is an offence (including incitement, debauchery and procurement) punishable by a term of imprisonment of six months to three years and a discretionary penalty of 20,000 to 1 million CFA francs.

From January to October 2005, 1,113 girls were interrogated by the vice squad. Patrols and raids are carried out daily across the city of Bamako, especially on the streets and in the vicinity of bars and restaurants.

In August 2005, 73 bars and hotels engaged in this type of activity were closed down.

Prostitutes are helped by a number of associations, such as Soutrasso, Danayasso and Lakanasso, with a view to their social reintegration.

13. Please provide information on the prevalence of trafficking in women and girls, including on domestic legislation and its implementation and other mechanisms at the national level to prevent and punish trafficking in women and girls.

#### **Response**

In Mali, trafficking in children is prohibited under article 224 of the Penal Code, which provides for a penalty of imprisonment of 5 to 20 years. It is also covered under articles 57 and 58 of the Child Protection Code, which prohibits all forms of child exploitation (sexual and economic).

Known cases of trafficking in children between 2000 and 2005 are as follows:

- 430 children repatriated, including 123 girls;
- 241 children rescued, including 66 girls;
- 42 children of other nationalities rescued in Mali, including 3 Ivorians, 4 Ghanaians, 15 Burkinabe, 5 Congolese and 15 Nigerians.

We should point out that, during 2005, a network of Nigerian procurers using Mali as a transit country for Europe or the United States of America was dismantled. The perpetrators were apprehended and are awaiting sentence.

### **Participation in political and public life and representation at the international level**

**14.** The report indicates the prevailing underrepresentation of women in decision-making bodies, despite their ability to mobilize (p. 12). What efforts have been made to achieve equal representation of women and men in political and public life, and have these included temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 25, such as quotas, to increase the numbers of women in decision-making bodies?

#### **Response**

No legal quota for equal representation of men and women in public life has been introduced. As explained in the reply to question 4, however, financial incentives are available to political parties which have women deputies and/or municipal councillors. The institutional reform programme now under way is also opening up the debate on gender-mainstreaming in State institutions.

### **Nationality**

**15.** Please indicate what the Government is doing to amend or repeal laws whereby a woman cannot transfer her nationality to her children in all cases so as to bring its legislation into conformity with the Convention.

#### **Response**

This question will be examined in the context of the review of the law on nationality that is currently in progress (the text on nationality is incorporated into the draft Personal and Family Code).

### **Education**

**16.** On page 33 of the report, it is stated that data on progress in enrolment in primary schools conceals large disparities between boys and girls, between urban and rural areas and between regions. At other levels males predominate. The higher the level, the larger the gap (p. 34), until the enrolment of girls at the tertiary level becomes negligible (p. 35). Women and girls are inadequately represented at all levels in the education system, including as teachers. What has been the impact of the national policy on the education of girls, and what strategic actions have been successful? What concrete steps have been taken to address the remaining challenges?

#### **Response**

The school enrolment rates effectively conceal the disparities between girls and boys, between urban and rural areas and between regions. The situation has moved in a positive direction since 2002, as borne out by the statistics for all forms of education. In the first cycle of basic education, the gross school enrolment rate for girls increased threefold from 19 per cent in 1990 to 59.9 per cent in 2004 (and for boys from 26 per cent in 1990 to 78 per cent in 2004). Nevertheless, the imbalance persists; the education gap between girls and boys is still above 20 points. The district of Bamako, however, has a gross school enrolment rate of over 100 per cent for girls and boys.

Implementation of the policy on school enrolment for girls has led to progress. The following strategic actions have borne fruit and are again included in the new policy document on accelerating school enrolment for girls:

- The development of specific support measures for the school enrolment of girls and the promotion of behavioural change (equal enrolment of children in year one, from the age of six years as far as possible, and awareness-raising in order to reduce early marriage);
- The implementation of a national teacher-training strategy (initial and continuing) on the basis of active teaching practices, life skills, gender, child participation and community relations;
- Development of the tutorial system and mutual academic support among students themselves and among young people, students and adults;
- A broader and multi-sector partnership;
- The development of advocacy and communication plans;
- The establishment of adequate implementing structures, inter alia.

The concrete measures taken to resolve outstanding problems consist in applying incentive measures (known as affirmative action), referred to in the initial document.

A new national policy document for accelerating the school enrolment of girls has been developed and is presently awaiting adoption by the Ministry of National Education and the Government.

In order to take gender equity into account, the Department of Education (with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)) commissioned two major studies entitled:

- “Gender analysis of the documents for the Decennial Education Programme”, by a team of Malian consultants, including a female civil-society representative;
- “Gender consideration in the curriculum”, by a Malian consultant and an international consultant.

The significance of the studies is that they meticulously analysed all PRODEC documents. They arrived at the conclusion that gender is cross-cutting in nature and made concrete proposals for taking into account the needs of girls and women in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation processes.

The collection and analysis of all statistics should also be disaggregated (systematically).

With regard to activities aimed at improving the school enrolment of girls, the following should be mentioned:

1. Student Award Day

On 21 September 2002, the Department of National Education instituted the Student Award Day, when the best students are greeted and honoured by the President of the Republic.

## 2. Excellence camps

Following the successes produced by the Student Award Day, excellence camps have been organized since 2003. For a fortnight every year and with strict regard to gender equity, the top-performing examination students are accommodated in the Cité des Enfants and attend courses in French, mathematics, physics, computing, civic education, the environment and first-aid practice. As part of their civic education, they are taken on visits to major departments and meet eminent persons (for instance, a short stay might be organized with a successful woman role model).

At the primary level, the boy and girl who come top in the examination for the certificate awarded at the end of the first cycle of basic education in each of the 15 school academies in Mali, together with the boy and girl who come top in the same examination in the medersas (but only at the national level), are selected. In all, 64 children are selected of whom 32 are girls.

At the secondary level

- General education: the two best performers (boy and girl) at the national level by subject area: final year of exact sciences, final year of biological sciences, final year of arts subjects, final year of social science;
- Technical education: the two best in three subject areas: technical mathematics (economics), technical mathematics (industry), technical mathematics (civil engineering);
- Tertiary sector: the two best in the tertiary subject areas of literature and industry.

## 3. Competitions to find girls who excel at science and mathematics

Since 2001, the Pathfinder Foundation, of which the astronaut Cheick Modibo Diarra is a member, has organized a competition in various francophone countries of Africa (including Mali, Burkina Faso and Senegal) to select girls with outstanding performances in science and mathematics. They attend camps for two weeks and the best among them receive prizes. The camps are held at Bamako, Ouagadougou, Dakar and Nouakchott in turn. A Malian girl won first prize in 2002 at Ouagadougou.

**17.** Please explain the impact of the repeal of provisions that prohibited young girls who became pregnant from attending school. How many girls and young women are benefiting from this repeal annually, on average?

### **Response**

All girls who become pregnant when in the first or second cycle remain at school. Those who are prevented by their physical or psychological health from pursuing their studies have their schooling postponed. The year in which this occurs is not reflected in the attendance record. The retention of girls has improved considerably. No statistics are kept by the educational authorities in these cases, which cannot be accounted for as either suspensions or attendances.

**18.** Please provide information on the findings of studies undertaken on the issue of gender stereotyping in textbooks (p. 36) and on measures taken to revise school curricula and textbooks.

### **Response**

The purpose of the studies was to find out whether textbooks reflect the cultural reality and whether the content of lessons and the methods used by teachers help to adapt textbooks to needs. In the wake of the studies, the Department has issued a number of guidelines for use in the preparation of school textbooks:

- Reflect the gender dimension;
- Play down the traditional role of women and emphasize their new, modern functions in science, daily life, politics and government;
- Give weight to women’s personality and status;
- Include women and girls as role models when discussing science and technology;
- Represent men and women in a balanced way;
- Highlight the aspirations of women.

The National Education Centre is in charge of all these questions.

### **Employment and poverty**

**19.** The report states on page 39 that equality of opportunity as laid down in the law is still being applied only hesitantly. Please provide information on the steps taken or measures envisaged to increase women’s employment and training opportunities in the civil service and remove the pay gap between the sexes.

### **Response**

According to the legislation, there is no discrimination between men and women (equal pay for equal work). However, as there are few women in the higher echelons of the civil service (category A), male employees in the civil service as a whole are better paid than female employees.

To remedy this situation, several measures are contemplated, including:

- Improvement of the school enrolment of girls;
- Keeping girls in school and steering them towards science and technology;
- Giving girls access to the various levels of higher education; and
- Providing girls and women with improved opportunities for acquiring skills and receiving further training.

**20.** The report focuses mainly on the situation of women in the civil service. Please provide information on the de facto situation of women in the private sector. In particular, provide greater detail, including on any programmes to enhance women’s position in the formal labour market (p. 53).

**21.** The report, in the section on article 13, describes the situation of women in the informal sector and of women entrepreneurs. Please describe progress set out on page 53 under the heading “outlook”.



## Response

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families, as part of the effort to boost women's economic strength and to combat poverty, has put emphasis on women's partnerships in the agricultural and food sector.

Accordingly, the project for the development of women entrepreneurs in the agricultural and food sector, the goals of which are to enhance the competitiveness of women's enterprises in that sector by capacity-building in the national institutions providing support services required by women entrepreneurs and to create national capacity in order to promote female entrepreneurship in the sector, was launched in 1997 for a period of four years.

The first phase of the project saw the implementation of a series of activities relating to:

- Strengthening of the entrepreneurial technical capabilities of women, women's associations, support services and oversight;
- The establishment of a network to collect and disseminate information of use to women and their partners;
- Communication and consciousness-raising through the production of media tools designed to help reduce any adverse effects of the sociocultural milieu and to publicize the realities of women's enterprises.

Evaluation of the project's impact revealed:

- A distinct improvement in the production techniques of the women concerned, and, in addition, diversity of production;
- The availability of human resources at the national and local levels capable of providing the necessary assistance to women in the area of technology and management;
- Improvement of the women's management skills through the acquisition of knowledge, management tools and specific techniques (making entries in the trade register, keeping accounting and management records, improving product presentation, and so forth);
- The promotion of products in local and subregional markets;
- Through consciousness-raising and information it was possible to get to know the women and their specific problems and needs;
- Enhancement of the partnership with other facilities in the sector, leading to a better coordination of activities and resources that enabled the women in the sector to be better served;
- Production of tools appropriate to the women's needs, including credit, various technologies, and equipment.

The results achieved by the project supporting women entrepreneurs in the agricultural and food sector encouraged the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families to launch a project to assist women's associations in the production of shea, which in 2002 and 2003 received a first allocation of funds amounting to 250 million CFA francs from the special investment budget. This project was executed in various villages in the Bla, Dioila, Kadiolo and San

subregions. Its impact was largely positive in the area of coverage, where the following significant results were obtained:

- Approximately 110 members of the women’s associations of Dioila, Bla, San and Kadiolo received training in improved techniques for the extraction of shea butter;
- Millers were trained to use management and equipment maintenance tools;
- Funds totalling 1,050,000 CFA francs were transferred to 10 women’s associations in the Dioila subregion for the acquisition of donkeys;
- Funds totalling 6 million CFA francs were transferred to 10 women’s associations in the Kadiolo subregion for marketing purposes;
- Funds totalling 6 million CFA francs were transferred to 10 women’s associations in the San and Bla subregions for marketing purposes;
- Funds totalling 7,200,000 CFA francs were transferred to 12 women’s associations in the Dioila subregion for marketing purposes;
- Equipment (carts, alternators, mills) were delivered to 32 women’s associations in the Koulikoro, Sikasso and Ségou regions.

In view of the sustained commitment of the beneficiaries and the declared usefulness of the project to support women’s associations in the production of shea, the Department has requested that it be continued for a period of six years (2004-2009).

To this end, the Ministry of Finance has earmarked an amount of 1,250,000,000 CFA francs from public funds (the special investment budget) for implementation of the project, whose overall goal is to help to eradicate poverty among women by supporting the development of local agricultural products, especially the production of shea butter, thereby enabling them to augment their income.

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families also helped women entrepreneurs to form a coordinating body and prepared the document for a project to provide assistance to women economic operators that will cost 3,540,405,000 CFA francs, funding for which is currently being negotiated.

### **Health**

**22.** Notwithstanding the existence of the Decennial Social and Health Programme, the report depicts the precarious health situation of women and girls, with high rates of mother and child morbidity and mortality, a predominance of infectious, parasitic and nutritional diseases, inadequate coverage of health care, underutilization of services, a dire lack of medications and health supplies, inadequately trained and motivated staff and too few women who obtain pre- and post-natal care (pp. 44 and 45). Please provide details of initiatives to improve the health of women and girls and information on the impact of the actions taken.

### **Response**

Initiatives to improve the health of women and girls are, among others, the following:

1. ***Infrastructure and equipment***

- 25 operating units;
- 24 facilities for basic obstetric care;
- 84 facilities for emergency obstetric care, out of an eventual 135 planned by 2008 to cover the whole of the country;
- 24 new centres for emergency obstetric care (EOC), set up in 2005.

2. ***Innovative strategies in reproductive health (RH)***

- Training of 142 professional staff in 2004 to carry out safe transfusions;
- Training of EOC providers;
- Training of 4,400 providers of basic care with a view to changing social attitudes to practices used in families and villages to prepare for the birth of a child;
- Provision of staff for 17 RH centres (two staff members per centre);
- Review of the conceptual framework for a referral and transport system, taking into account the village concerned and the condition of the newborn infant (between 1996 and 2005, 41 facilities out of an eventual 59 organized referrals);
- Provision of free caesareans (pre-operative, operative and post-operative care) in 2005;
- Strengthening of the Accelerated Strategy for Child Survival and Development (SASDE) through the integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI); according to 2004 statistics, 92 per cent of children from the ages of 0 to 5 sleep under impregnated mosquito nets, and 92 per cent of the same age group had received a dose of vitamin A;
- Campaign for free screening for cancer of the neck of the uterus and for breast cancer in health facilities managed by the State or by the local authority;
- Combating malaria in pregnant women, particularly through the distribution of free impregnated mosquito nets to 78 per cent of those women who come regularly to their antenatal appointments, and the distribution of new anti-malarial drugs and iron tablets;
- Improvements to maternal health through the provision of free caesareans in public health facilities, to prevent women from dying in childbirth (decree adopted by the Council of Ministers on 27 July 2005).

23. The report discusses the prevalence of 16 harmful traditional practices listed on pages 45 and 46. According to the report, excision — a practice the Government is addressing with special emphasis — affects 94 per cent of Malian girls and women. The Government has taken a significant number of important steps to combat this practice. Please provide an assessment of the impact of these measures and information on whether the Government plans to introduce legislation to sanction this practice.

**Response**

The Government of Mali has been combating the practice of excision for the past 10 years and more. Its efforts have yielded a number of results:

1. Once a subject that was almost taboo, excision is now a topic of discussion in Malian society. Many articles and broadcasts deal with the subject in the media (radio, television and newspapers). Each year, moreover, new studies and research on the phenomenon are carried out in the universities and by civil society;

2. While the percentage of women affected by the practice was almost 96 per cent a dozen years ago, it had fallen to 91.6 per cent by 2001 according to the demographic and health survey (EDS III, 2001) of women of childbearing age (15-45). The percentage would certainly be much lower if it included children of 0-15 years, given that the public awareness campaigns have intensified over the past 10 years;

3. The number of associations and NGOs committed to making excision a thing of the past has gone up from a dozen 10 years ago, to more than 80 in 2005;

4. The positive change in attitudes has led the Government to move a step closer to passing a law punishing excision via the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights dealing with the rights of women in Africa, which commits States parties to the adoption of legislation outlawing the practice;

5. The dialogue and discussions undertaken by the Government of Mali with civil society, and also the many campaigns to raise awareness targeted at the population as a whole, will mean that a law can now be passed within a reasonably short time. Some examples of the campaign are the day spent on awareness-raising with 100 local and traditional chiefs from the District of Bamako in May 2004, the awareness day for traditional communicators from the Ségou region in June 2004, the current 2003-2004 awareness campaign for 75 deputies and their assistants, 200 members of the children's parliament, 800 religious leaders (Muslims, Catholics and Protestants), 645 community leaders (griots and other caste members), 16,000 people (both men and women), 3,051 schoolchildren and university students, and 27 education officials;

6. The Government of Mali, working together with the NGO No Peace Without Justice, is preparing to organize in February 2006 a subregional meeting on excision, which will focus on the question of passing a law outlawing this practice.

**24.** It is stated that women are more at risk of HIV/AIDS owing to certain sociocultural and socio-economic factors, in particular levirate marriage, illiteracy and extreme poverty (p. 45). Please assess the effectiveness and obstacles vis-à-vis the numerous steps that the Government has been taking to overcome the factors that make women more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

**Response**

Several measures have been taken by the Government, and their effective implementation has contributed to:

- Increasing the number of visits to screening centres;

- Raising the public’s consciousness about the realities of HIV and demystifying the illness;
- Facilitating access to anti-retroviral drugs, tests, analyses and hospitalization in public health facilities, because all of them are offered free (Decree No. 05-147/P-RM, of 31 March 2005, establishing conditions and arrangements for the provision of special State assistance to AIDS patients and those living with HIV, and the guarantee of confidentiality);
- Mobilizing the voluntary sector by setting up networks of patients living with HIV and of religious groups, groups of young people and groups of women to combat HIV/AIDS;
- Promoting action-oriented research in the use of traditional medicines and nutritional support;
- The establishment of a Supreme National Council to Combat HIV/AIDS, involving the private sector and civil society in its work;
- The establishment of a Sectoral Coordination Committee to organize the work of combating HIV/AIDS, set up within the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families, aimed at coordinating HIV/AIDS-related activities within the Department and providing follow-up for HIV/AIDS-related activities within the Department on behalf of external groups (women and children).

**25.** The laws in place in regard to abortion are restrictive. The report does not provide information on the extent to which women resort to illegal abortions and how many such women die as a result. The report also notes that the contraceptive prevalence rate is very low (8 per cent). What plans are there in place to enhance the availability and accessibility of comprehensive sex education and family planning services, including to reduce teenage pregnancy (which leads to dropping out of school) and the need for women to resort to illegal abortion (which puts their lives at risk)?

### **Response**

Although abortion is not permitted in Mali except when necessary to protect the life of the mother, illegal abortion is frequently practised.

The numbers using family planning are still low, at 8 per cent, even though the unsatisfied demand remains high at 29 per cent.

When it restructured in 2000, the Ministry of Health set up a section for the reproductive health of young people, within the Reproductive Health Division, in order to be able to take issues related to the sexual health of this target group better into account.

Reproductive health training modules for young people were developed, to be used by the staff of health centres, and staff in several health districts throughout the country were trained in the provision of reproductive health services for adolescents and young people. At the same time, in Kayes, Bamako and Sikasso counselling and assistance centres were set up. These centres give young people the chance to be better informed and to be given services that are appropriate and accessible. The centres have the advantage of being multifunctional: under one roof they have room

for games, Internet access and a clinic offering social and health services. The centres also use peer educators, and youth workers offer such services as distribution of contraceptives including condoms, IEC counselling in family planning, and counselling for HIV and other reproductive health issues, to young people from the same age group.

A youth radio station in Sikasso also offers information and advice on combating HIV, promoting family planning, and the virtues of abstinence, in order to prevent unwanted pregnancies, abortions, and dropping out of school. There has also been the launch of a campaign entitled “Info Jeunes” (“Youth Information”) in the Sikasso region, with the slogan “Jeune bien informé, tu es branché” (“Knowledge is cool”).

A website exclusively for young people has been set up, intended to provide answers on all the sex-education issues of concern to the young. There is, in addition, a chat show aimed at providing more information for young people about social issues, particularly sex issues.

An information kit has been developed, along with targeted training, particularly for teachers, to provide outreach and support for young people working in the informal economy.

Teenage pregnancies do not always lead to dropping out of school. A major project developed by the Department of Education, called “Education for family life/Education for population issues” (EVF/EMP), has been incorporated into the health education section. It is essential that children should be informed and educated about these matters, given the AIDS pandemic.

### **Rural women**

**26.** The report indicates that 75 per cent of women in rural areas are engaged in agriculture. Please provide information on achievements and challenges of the Rural Development Master Plan (p. 59), in particular the strategies therein for supporting rural women, as well as an assessment of the projects and programmes undertaken to achieve compliance with article 14 of the Convention (p. 60) and to address the negative influences of customs, especially in respect of access to land, and traditions on rural women’s advancement.

### **Response**

Among the measures taken on behalf of rural women, mention should be made of the following:

- Systematically including gender considerations in all projects and programmes within the sector;
- Improving women’s access to land through the texts of the rural development offices;
- Providing FENAFER with duly equipped premises to serve as headquarters;
- Equipping the Federation with information technology and Internet connections;

- Institutionalizing and celebrating in practical ways every World Rural Women’s Day, a time when many women’s groups are given equipment and credit and are informed of their rights;
- Revising the decrees issued by the irrigated or improved lands management organizations concerning the granting of land to women farmers so as to place them on an equal footing with men (concept of active labourer to replace the term male labourer). In the case of the Niger Office, in 1995 there were 106 women heads of farms, whereas in 2003 there were 641.

### **Marriage and family relations**

**27.** On pages 11 and 23 of the report, it is stated that 42 per cent of women live in polygamous relationships (45 per cent of rural women). It is further reported that women agree to polygamy when they marry. What factors prompt their acceptance, and what efforts are being made to change existing attitudes regarding polygamy and to abolish the practice, in accordance with the Committee’s general recommendation 23 on marriage and family relations?

#### **Response**

The factors that prompt women to agree to polygamy are, inter alia, illiteracy, poverty, the high number of women compared to men and social and cultural pressure.

Efforts to abolish polygamy include action to combat poverty, the revision of the Family Code, for example by introducing the concept of the inadmissibility of the polygamy option, and ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

**28.** The current Marriage and Guardianship Code contains many discriminatory provisions in regard to age of marriage, divorce, inheritance and differences of rights between spouses during marriage, including the right of choice of domicile. What are the reasons for the lengthy delay in enacting the new Family Code, under consideration since 1998?

#### **Response**

The sensitive nature of this subject requires that work proceed at a pace at which the prevailing concerns can best be dealt with. The Government Action Plan for the period 2004-2007 provides for the adoption of the draft Family Code and for its dissemination following adoption by the National Assembly. Accordingly, Parliament will consider this matter during the period of implementation of the current Government Action Plan.

### **Optional Protocol**

**29.** Please describe measures in place to publicize the Optional Protocol and encourage its use.

#### **Response**

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families has distributed the text of the Protocol to all the basic components of civil society,

which in turn have carried out training, information and awareness activities for public service workers and women themselves.

It should be noted that training activities, conducted by WILDAF (an NGO) and the National Directorate for the Advancement of Women, for judges, lawyers, judicial police officers, doctors, religious leaders, traditional leaders and the men and women directing self-advancement centres have included information on both the Convention and the Optional Protocol.



## Annex I

**List of men and women participating in the training workshop on the Convention and the United Nations guidelines for the preparation of national reports**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Contact/Address</i>
1	Mme DIARRA Kadidia	MPFEF	228-12-13
2	Mme DIARRA Ramata	MPFEF	228-74-42
3	Mme DIANE Mariam KONE	CNDIF/MPFEF	222-01-58
4	Mme TRAORE Hadiza DJIBO	MPFEF	223-67-46
5	Mme DIALLO Fatoumata CAMARA	MPFEF	223-71-17
6	MAIGA Soyata	AJM	221-01-46
7	Fatoumata Siré DIAKITE	APDF	229-10-28
8	Mme DEMBELE Oulématou SOW	MPFEF	228-74-42
9	Mme SANGARE Nafatouma DIAWARA	MAEP/DNAMR	222-28-77
10	Mme KOUYATE Yakaré SOUMANO	MEN	671-02-21/222-24-50
11	Mme DIAMOUTENE Aminata TRAORE	WILDAF	223-26-71
12	Daouda CISSE	MPFEF	228-74-42
13	Mme KEITA Fatoumata	CSLP/MEF	223-86-37
14	Mme KEITA Safiatou	MCNTI	222-60-16
15	Marius W. de Jong	Amb. Netherlands	221-56-11
16	Ruth Emmerink	Amb. Netherlands	221-56-11
17	Mme SANOGO Karidia COULIBALY	CCA/NGO-ALPHALOG	222-40-95
18	Mme TOUNKARA Fatoumata	Min. of Labour and Civil Service	222-11-17
19	Mme DIARRAH COULIBALY	DCF Coalition	224-77-26
20	Mme TRAORE Safoura	Min. of Health	222-53-02
21	DIARRA Abel	Min. of Justice	222-68-98

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<i>No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Contact/Address</i>
22	Mme KEITA Joséphine TRAORE	PNLE/MPFEF	223-20-87/30-98
23	Mme KEITA Fatoumata KEITA	DNPF	223-67-29/67-30
24	Mme SISSOKO Naminata DEMBELE	MPFEF	228-74-42
25	Amadou Bocar TEGUETE	AMDH/Platform Civil Society	222-34-62 223-74-74
26	Mme ZOURE Fadimata MAIGA	MDSSPA	222-16-77
27	Agathe DIAMA	Radio Klédu	221-00-11/18
28	Mme SOME Mariame D.	MDEFP	229-51-96

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## Annex II

### Organization of work of the Technical Drafting Committee

#### I. Committee names and mandates

- (a) Committee on legal rights (arts. 1, 2, 9, 15 and 16);
- (b) Committee on political rights (arts. 3, 4, 7 and 8);
- (c) Committee on economic rights (arts. 11, 13 and 14);
- (d) Committee on social rights (arts. 5, 6, 10 and 12).

#### II. Membership of committees

##### Committee on legal rights

Chairperson: Daouda Cissé / Supervisor (CT (Chef de Travaux)), MPFEF

Members: Abel Diarra / Ministry of Justice

DNPEF

Sohoyata Maiga / AJM

Diadié Tékété / Malian Human Rights Association (AMDH)

Malian Coalition for the Rights of the Child

Ms. Djourté Fatoumata Dembélé (Resource Officer)

##### Committee on political rights

Chairperson: Amidou Dembélé / CT, MPFEF

Members: APDF, Fatoumata Siré Diakité

CAFO

National Committee for Women's Documentation and Information (CNDIF), Ms. Diané Mariam Koné

Ms. Dembélé Oulémata Sow

##### Committee on economic rights

Chairperson: Ms. Sissoko Namynata Dembélé / CT, MPFEF

Members: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Farming and Fisheries (Environment Section)

Ministry of Social Development, Solidarity and the Elderly

Ministry of Planning

Ministry Responsible for Employment and Vocational Training

CAFO

APDF

**Committee on social rights**

Chairperson: Ms. Kéïta Fatoumata Kéïta / DNPF

Members: Ministry of Social Development, Solidarity and the Elderly  
Ministry of Education  
Ministry of Health  
Ministry Responsible for Employment and Vocational Training  
Ministry of Labour and the Civil Service  
APDF  
CADEF

**III. Timetable for committee documents**

Deadline for the submission of documents: 30 November 2003

**IV. Work methodology of the committees**

*Schedule*

- Document research, 27 October-6 November
- Drafting, 10-13 November
- Pooling, from 13 November

**V. Information sources for the committees**

Information needed to draft the report may be acquired from the following sources:

- Offices of statistics;
- Technical departments and offices (Ministries of Health, Education, including higher education (in the case of sciences), Employment and Labour);
- Associations and NGOs working in this subject area;
- CNDIF;
- International organizations (the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS));
- Other sources: The Djoliba Centre, the French Cultural Centre, the National Library, the American Cultural Centre and university research work (theses and dissertations).

Bamako, 22 October 2003

## Annex III

### Acronyms and abbreviations

AJM:	Association of Women Jurists of Mali (Association des Juristes Maliennes)
AMDH:	Malian Human Rights Association (Association Malienne des Droits de l'Homme)
AN-RM:	National Assembly of the Republic of Mali (Assemblée Nationale de la République du Mali)
APDF:	Association for the Advancement and Defence of Women's Rights (Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes)
BSI:	Special investment budget (budget spécial d'investissement)
CADEF:	Children's and Women's Rights Action Committee (Comité d'Action pour les Droits de l'Enfant et de la Femme)
CAFO:	Coordinating Body for Women's Associations and NGOs in Mali (Coordination des Associations et ONG Féminines du Mali)
CCA-ONG:	NGO Coordinating Committee (Comité des Coordinations des Actions des ONG)
CNAPN:	National Action Committee for the Eradication of Practices Harmful to Women's and Children's Health (Comité National d'Action pour l'Eradication des Pratiques Néfastes à la Santé de la Femme et de l'Enfant)
CNDIF:	National Centre for Women's Documentation and Information (Centre National de Documentation et d'Information sur la Femme)
CSLP:	Strategic Framework for Combating Poverty (Cadre Stratégique de Lutte contre la Pauvreté)
DEFSAM:	Development of Women Entrepreneurs in the Malian Agricultural and Food Sector (Développement de l'Entreprenariat Féminin dans le Secteur Agroalimentaire au Mali)
DCF:	Women's rights and citizenship (Droits et citoyenneté des femmes)
EDS:	Malian demographic and health survey (Enquête démographique et de santé du Mali)
EDS I:	Malian demographic and health survey 1994 (Enquête démographique et de santé du Mali 1994)
EDS II:	Malian demographic and health survey 1995-1996 (Enquête démographique et de santé du Mali 1995-1996)
EDS III:	Malian demographic and health survey 2002-2003 (Enquête démographique et de santé du Mali 2002-2003)
DNAMER:	National Directorate for Rural Affairs (Direction Nationale d'Appui au Monde Rural)

DNPF:	National Directorate for the Advancement of Women (Direction Nationale de la Promotion de la Femme)
EVF/EMP:	Education for family life/Education for population issues (Education à la vie familiale/Education en matière de population)
FENAFER:	National Federation of Rural Women (Fédération Nationale des Femmes Rurales)
GRM:	Government of the Republic of Mali
HIS:	Health information system
HIV:	Human immunodeficiency virus
IEC:	Information, education and communication
ICT:	Information and communication technology
IMCI:	Integrated management of childhood illness
MCNTI:	Ministry of New Information and Communication Technologies (Ministère de la Communication et des Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information)
ME:	Ministry of Education (Ministère de l'Education)
MEB:	Ministry of Primary Education (Ministère de l'Education de Base)
MEF:	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance (Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances)
MPFEF:	Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families (Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille)
MSSPA:	Ministry of Health, Solidarity and the Elderly (Ministère de la Santé, de la Solidarité et des Personnes Agées)
NGO:	Non-governmental organization
ODEF:	Observatory for Women's and Children's Rights (Observatoire des Droits de la Femme et de l'Enfant)
PASAF:	Support project to combat practices harmful to women's and children's health (Projet d'appui à la lutte contre les pratiques préjudiciables à la santé de la femme et de l'enfant)
PASAOP:	Support project for the farm system and rural organizations (Project d'appui au système agricole et aux organisations paysannes)
PM-RM:	Prime Minister of the Republic of Mali
PNLE:	National Programme to Combat the Practice of Excision (Programme National de Lutte contre la Pratique de l'Excision)
PNLS:	National Programme to Combat AIDS (Programme National de Lutte contre la Pratique de l'Excision)
P-RM:	President of the Republic of Mali

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PRODEC:	Decennial Education Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education)
PRODEJ:	Decennial Justice Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de la Justice)
PRODESS:	Decennial Social and Health Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de la Justice)
PTME:	Programme to Prevent Mother-to-Child Transmission (Programme de Prévention de la Transmission Mère-Enfant)
REFAMP:	African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Network (Réseau des Femmes Africaines Ministres et Parlementaires)
SASDE:	Accelerated Strategy for Child Survival and Development (Stratégie Accélérée pour la Survie et le Développement de l'Enfant)
SDDA:	Rural Development Masterplan (Schéma Directeur du Développement Rural)
SECO-ONG:	Malian NGO Coordination Secretariat (Secrétariat de Coordination des ONG du Mali)
SG:	General Secretariat (Secrétariat Général)
STD:	Sexually transmitted disease
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
WAEMU:	West African Economic and Monetary Union (Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA))

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