

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS, CONTINUED

CERD

- Mali, CERD, A/57/18 (2002) 66 at para. 398.

398. The Committee notes with concern the social and cultural inequalities that continue to affect rural populations. It regrets that the present report does not provide information on access to development for the various ethnic groups or on the distribution of wealth among those groups, in particular nomadic peoples.

- Bolivia, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 58 at para. 330.

330. The Committee notes that, despite the State party's considerable progress and outstanding efforts, Bolivia remains one of the poorest and least developed countries in Latin America. According to the poverty indicators of 2002, 64.3 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line (53.3 per cent of the population of the urban areas and 82.1 per cent of the population of rural areas). The Committee is particularly concerned about this data and underlines that the discrepancy between urban and rural areas especially affects indigenous peoples and their daily living conditions.

- Brazil, CERD, A/59/18 (2004) 14 at para. 58.

58. The Committee is concerned about *de facto* racial segregation faced by some black, mestizo and indigenous peoples in rural and urban areas, such as the commonly known "favelas", and regrets that the State party has not provided sufficient information in this regard.

In the light of its general recommendation XIX, the Committee reminds the State party that racial segregation may also arise without any initiative or direct involvement by the public authorities, and encourages the State party to continue monitoring all trends which may give rise to racial or ethnic segregation and to work for the eradication of the resulting negative consequences.

ICCPR

- Republic of Moldova, ICCPR, A/57/40 vol. I (2002) 76 at para. 84(19).

(19) While acknowledging steps that have been taken to improve the legal position of minorities, the Committee remains concerned at their situation in practice. In this connection,

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it expresses its concern at the situation of the Gagauz and that of the Roma, who continue to suffer serious discrimination, notably in rural areas.

The State party should increase its efforts to translate its international commitments under articles 26 and 27 of the Covenant into practical achievements for its minorities, including the Gagauz and the Roma in rural communities.

- Egypt, ICCPR, A/58/40 vol. I (2003) 31 at para. 77(7).

(7) While welcoming the steps taken by the authorities in recent years to encourage participation by women in public life (in the diplomatic service, for example), the Committee notes that women are underrepresented in most areas of the public sector (for instance, the magistrature) and in the private sector (articles 3 and 26 of the Covenant).

The State party is encouraged to step up its efforts to secure greater participation by women at all levels of society and the State, including decision-making positions, *inter alia* by ensuring that women in rural areas learn to read and write.

- Kenya, ICCPR, A/60/40 vol. I (2005) 44 at para. 86(12).

(12) The Committee remains concerned that, despite the recent legal ban on female genital mutilation (FGM) of children (section 14 of the Children Act (2001)), the practice of FGM persists, particularly in rural areas of the country, and that there is no legal prohibition of FGM for adults (articles 3 and 7 of the Covenant).

The State party should increase its efforts to combat the practice of FGM, including through prohibition of FGM for adults, and, in particular, step up the awareness campaign launched by the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services.

ICESCR

- Colombia, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 110 at paras. 772, 773, 775, 793 and 796.

772. The Committee is deeply concerned that the State party has not yet undertaken genuine agrarian reform in order to address effectively the problems of poverty and economic disparities in the rural areas.

773. ...The Committee is...concerned about the high infant and child mortality, especially in the rural areas.

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775. The Committee is concerned about the reduction of State subsidies for health care which makes access to health care even more difficult, particularly in the rural areas where health care coverage is already significantly more limited than in urban areas. The Committee also notes that women and indigenous groups are adversely affected by this reduction in subsidies.

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793. The Committee urges the State party to adopt the necessary measures to carry out genuine agrarian reform.

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796. The Committee urges the State party to allocate a higher percentage of its GDP to the health sector and to ensure that its system of subsidies does not discriminate against the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

- Algeria, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 116 at para. 840.

840. The Committee urges the State party to take all necessary measures in order to lower maternal and infant mortality rates and to ensure that all forms of health services are available to women and men, especially in rural areas, in particular reproductive health services.

- Jamaica, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 130 at para. 938.

938. The Committee is concerned that more than one third of the population lives in poverty despite measures taken by the State party, such as the implementation of a National Poverty Eradication Programme. The Committee has received reports from Jamaican non-governmental organizations that poverty rates are highest among women, particularly women who head single-parent households. The reports also state that while the State party has undertaken significant steps to improve the housing situation, thousands of Jamaicans continue to live in deplorable conditions in wooden and tin shacks with no running water or electricity. The Committee also expresses special concern for farmers who, allegedly owing to free trade agreements, are unable to compete with prices of cheaper imported foods on local markets, which has eroded their ability to provide for their families.

- Benin, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 34 at paras. 176 and 195.

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176. The Committee notes with concern the disparities in living standards between urban and rural areas, given that people living in rural areas have considerably less access to drinking water, sanitation and electricity and that the privatization of water and electricity are leading to a rise in costs.

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195. The Committee urges the State party to do whatever is necessary to reduce the current disparities between urban and rural areas, by improving access to water, electricity and sanitation in rural areas and ensuring that water and electricity remain affordable.

- Trinidad and Tobago, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 45 at paras. 276 and 299.

276. The Committee is deeply concerned about the lack of housing programmes to provide the poorest members of society with appropriate accommodation. The Committee is also concerned at the number of urban squatter communities which are exposed to forced evictions, in the light of the highly restrictive legal conditions governing their right to tenure.

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299. The Committee urges the State party to devise a housing strategy for disadvantaged and marginalized groups and to provide low-cost housing units to them. The Committee also urges the State party to provide more disaggregated data on squatters, as well as to adopt measures to improve their legal position with regard to their security of tenure. In addition, the Committee recommends that the State party take into account the Committee's general comments no. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing (art. 11, para. 1 of the Covenant) and no. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.

- Slovakia, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 50 at paras. 316 and 329.

316. The Committee is alarmed about the high rate of unemployment and, in particular, the large disparities in employment between the different regions of the country, as well as between urban and rural areas...

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329. The Committee calls upon the State party to take effective measures, including increasing the resources allocated to reducing the unemployment rate, in particular among women, Roma people and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups, especially in rural areas.

- Poland, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 54 at paras. 357, 364, 379 and 386.

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357. The Committee is concerned about the high level of unemployment in the State party, which has steadily increased since the consideration of its last periodic report and which currently affects over 17 per cent of the active population. The Committee notes with concern that rural areas are particularly affected in this regard as a result of the restructuring of the public sector in the field of agriculture.

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364. The Committee expresses its concern that the relatively high incidence of child labour in rural areas, as acknowledged by the State party's delegation, has a negative impact on children's health and on their right to education.

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379. In order to tackle unemployment, the Committee urges the State party to intensify its efforts to implement the relevant national plans of action with a view to adapting the workforce to a changing labour market and providing alternative sources of income for workers affected by restructuring programmes, particularly in the heavy industry and agricultural sectors.

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386. The Committee...recommends the adoption of legislation in order to regulate child labour in rural areas in such a way that the right to health and right to education of working children are fully protected.

- Solomon Islands, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 65 at para. 474.

474. The Committee urges the State party to seek international cooperation and assistance with a view to ensuring access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation systems for all rural and urban communities.

- Brazil, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 28 at paras. 130, 139, 140, 154, 162 and 163.

130. In spite of the State party's successful efforts to release many workers from forced labour, the Committee is deeply concerned about the persistence of forced labour in Brazil, which is often close to slavery, particularly in the rural areas.

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139. In spite of the efforts taken by the State party to reduce poverty, the Committee is concerned about the persistence of poverty in the State party, especially in the north-east, in rural areas and among Afro-Brazilians and disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

140. The Committee notes with concern that, according to the State party's report, at least 42 per cent of families currently live in inadequate housing facilities without adequate water supply, waste disposal and trash collection. It also notes that 50 per cent of the population of major urban areas lives in informal urban communities (illegal settlements and homes, as

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stated in paragraph 512 of the State party's report).

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154. The Committee urges the State party to implement its National Plan for the Eradication of Slave Labour and to undertake urgent measures in this regard, especially through the imposition of effective penalties.

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162. The Committee urges the State party to take effective measures to combat the problem of poverty, including the setting up of a national anti-poverty strategy that would include economic, social and cultural rights. In this regard, the Committee refers the State party to its statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.^{7/}

163. The Committee urges the State party to give effect to its national housing policy and its federal housing programmes and to adopt nationwide policies in order to ensure that families have adequate housing facilities and amenities. In this respect, the Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing (art. 11 (1) of the Covenant).

Notes

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^{7/} *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 2 (E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII).*

- Republic of Moldova, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 49 at paras. 312, 316, 334, 336 and 338.

312. The Committee is concerned that an estimated 40 per cent of the population live in absolute poverty, and that extreme poverty is especially pronounced in rural areas and among children.

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316. The Committee is concerned about the rising incidence of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases in the State party. In this regard, it is also concerned that sex education classes held in urban areas are almost non-existent in rural areas.

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334. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen its efforts to combat poverty under the National Poverty Alleviation Programme and to give special attention to the most vulnerable groups, including children and people living in rural areas. It urges the State party to develop a mechanism for measuring the poverty level and to monitor it closely...

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336. The Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures to ensure the quality, affordability and accessibility of health services, especially in rural areas. In this

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respect, the Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 14 (2000) on the right to the highest attainable standard of health (art. 12 of the Covenant)...

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338. The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, including through public information campaigns and by ensuring that sex education is also introduced to schools in rural areas.

- Yemen, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 55 at paras. 358, 360, 362, 368, 377, 379, 381 and 387.

358. The Committee is concerned about the high rate of infant and maternal mortality and the insufficient availability of health services, especially for women in rural areas. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health programme in the State party.

360. The Committee is deeply concerned about the persistence of extreme poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas, and among the disadvantaged and marginalized groups

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362. The Committee is concerned about the persisting water crisis which constitutes an alarming environmental emergency in the State party, and which prevents access to safe and affordable drinking water, particularly for the disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society, and for rural areas.

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368. The Committee remains concerned that the high level of illiteracy, especially among women in rural areas amounting to over 70 per cent, poses a major problem and has a deep impact on the enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights.

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377. The Committee urges the State party to increase its efforts to reduce the rate of infant and maternal mortality by providing adequate access to health services and vaccination programmes, especially for women and children in rural areas. The Committee urges the State party to adopt and implement a national sexual and reproductive health programme.

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379. The Committee...urges the State party to take effective measures to combat the problem of poverty, including the effective implementation of its poverty reduction strategy.

...

381. The Committee further urges the State party to introduce strategies, plans of action, and legislative or other measures to address the scarcity of water problems, in particular sustainable management of the available water resources. The Committee recommends that effective water management strategies and measures be undertaken in urban areas, exploring possibilities for alternative water treatment and developing ecological dry sanitation methods in rural areas...

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387. The Committee requests the State party to adopt effective measures to combat illiteracy...

- Guatemala, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 59 at paras. 407, 409, 415, 416, 419, 425, 427, 434 and 437.

407. Notwithstanding the measures taken by the State party to decentralize and expand labour inspection services, the Committee is concerned that labour inspections are not carried out regularly, especially in rural areas.

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409. The Committee is concerned that only 15 per cent of the population are covered by the Guatemalan Social Security Institute and that there is a considerable disparity in the coverage of workers in rural and urban areas...

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415. The Committee is concerned about the negative effects of the coffee crisis on rural employment and standard of living.

416. The Committee continues to be deeply concerned that the uneven distribution of wealth and land and the high level of social exclusion, in particular among indigenous and rural populations, hinder the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

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419. The Committee is concerned that only 30 per cent of children living in rural communities complete primary education and, in the case of indigenous children, only 20 per cent complete it. The Committee also expresses its concern about the limited access for indigenous peoples to enjoy education in their mother tongue and to use it in their dealings with public authorities.

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425. The Committee urges the State party to verify and ensure the fulfilment of labour legislation concerning occupational health and safety conditions, including through regular inspections.

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427. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that the coverage of the national social security system is significantly extended to include rural and domestic workers and their families...

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434. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation^{27/} and urges the State party to implement the measures contained in the peace agreements of 1996, in particular those related to the agrarian reform and the devolution of communal indigenous lands.

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437. The Committee urges the State party to make efforts to increase school attendance of

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children, particularly of indigenous children. The Committee recommends that the State party broaden its intercultural bilingual education and allocate adequate funds and human resources to the Department of Intercultural Bilingual Education, and improve the working conditions of teachers by paying them better salaries and providing them with training as well as hiring additional teachers to cover rural areas fully.

Notes

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27/ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 2 (E/1997/22-E/C.12/1996/6), chap. IV, para. 137.*

- Lithuania, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 18 at paras. 89 and 111.

89. The Committee is concerned about the situation in rural areas of the State party where, as reported in the State party's written replies to the list of issues, lack of agricultural reforms has left nearly a quarter of the Lithuanian population with no economic prospects or hope.

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111. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen programmes aimed at improving living conditions in rural areas. It also recommends that the State party develop a mechanism to measure and monitor levels of poverty...

- China, ICESCR, E/2006/22(2005) 25 at paras. 156, 159, 160, 185, 188 and 190.

156. The Committee is concerned that many of the reforms in the formal welfare system have not been extended to the countryside, where the local authorities of poor regions have a limited capacity to generate the funds necessary to provide welfare and social services. The Committee notes with concern that the means-tested non-contributory social assistance extended to all urban areas starting in 1996 was similarly extended to some, but not all rural areas.

...

159. The Committee is deeply concerned that despite the rapid economic development in recent years, poverty persists in the country, disproportionately affecting the rural population. The Committee is concerned that in spite of the efforts made by the State party to improve the economic and social conditions of rural populations, the disparity in income and in the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living continues to widen between the rich and the poor, in particular those in urban/rural areas, as well as those in coastal provinces/inland provinces. The Committee also regrets the absence of an official poverty line that would enable the State party to define the extent of poverty and to monitor and

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evaluate progress in alleviating poverty.

160. The Committee is concerned about the reports of forced evictions and insufficient measures to provide compensation or alternative housing to those who have been removed from their homes in the context of urban development projects as well as of rural development schemes such as the Three Gorges Project. The Committee is concerned about the number of forced evictions and demolitions that have occurred in anticipation of the 2008 Olympic Games to be hosted by the State party. The Committee further expresses concern about the lack of effective consultations and legal redress for persons affected by forced evictions and demolitions, including those of historic structures, buildings and homes in Lhasa, Tibet...

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185. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen the redistributive mechanisms between regions and levels of government, so as to ensure that local authorities receive additional funds necessary for adequate provision of welfare and social services to their populations. The Committee urges the State party to extend non-contributory social assistance to the rural areas that are presently not covered, as a means to combat poverty among the rural populations.

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188. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party take immediate measures, *inter alia*, by increasing allocations, for the protection of economic, social and cultural rights of persons living in disadvantaged areas, in particular with regard to adequate housing, food and water, and health services and sanitation. The Committee calls upon the State party to develop a mechanism to measure the poverty level and to monitor it closely, and refers the State party to the Committee's statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights...

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190. The Committee recommends that the State party take immediate measures to enforce laws and regulations prohibiting forced evictions and ensure that persons evicted from their homes be provided with adequate compensation or offered alternative accommodation, in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the Committee in its general comment No. 7 (1997) on the right to adequate housing (art. 11, para 1 of the Covenant): forced evictions. The Committee also recommends that, prior to implementing development projects, the State party should undertake open, effective and meaningful consultations with affected residents. In this connection, the Committee wishes to draw the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing (art. 11, para 1 of the Covenant)...

- Serbia and Montenegro, ICESCR, E/2006/22 (2005) 41 at paras. 293 and 320.

293. The Committee is concerned about the limited access to primary health care in rural

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areas, especially for refugees and other vulnerable groups, and that 7 per cent of the Serbian population are not covered by compulsory health insurance.

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320. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure universal access to affordable primary health care, in particular by increasing the number of family doctors and community health centres, and allow all members of society, including refugees, internally displaced persons and Roma, to join the compulsory health insurance scheme.

CEDAW

- Estonia, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 13 at paras. 113 and 114.

113. The Committee expresses its concern that the report does not contain sufficient information on the situation of rural women, including older rural women, including with regard to their cash income, social security, access to free health-care services and social and cultural opportunities. It also expresses concern at the situation of women spouses in family business, whose work is not reflected in official statistics.

114. ...The Committee recommends that the State party monitor existing programmes and develop comprehensive policies and programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women, ensuring their access to training, productive resources and capital, as well as to health-care services, social security and to social and cultural opportunities.

- Sri Lanka, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 31 at paras. 294 and 295.

294. Noting that the majority of women live in rural areas, the Committee is concerned that economic policies do not incorporate a gender perspective and do not take into account rural women's role as producers.

295. The Committee urges the State party to recognize rural women's contributions to the economy by collecting sex-disaggregated data on rural production and to ensure the incorporation of a gender perspective in all development programmes, with special attention to minority rural women.

- Russian Federation, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 40 at paras. 401 and 402.

401. The Committee expresses concern with regard to the situation of rural women and, in particular, their degree of access to income-generating activities.

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402. The Committee...recommends that the State party pay greater attention to the situation of rural women and develop special policies and programmes aimed at their economic empowerment, ensuring their access to capital and productive resources.

- Suriname, CEDAW, A/57/38 part II (2002) 82 at paras. 65 and 66.

65. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, in particular the indigenous Amerindians and the Maroons, in the coastal plain and in the interior of Suriname, who are disadvantaged by poor infrastructure, limited markets, obstacles in availability and accessibility of agricultural land and agricultural credit, low literacy rates, ignorance of existing regulations, lack of services and environmental pollution. It notes with concern the serious absence of specific policies in all these areas, including on family planning and preventing the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. The Committee is also concerned that women's work in rural areas is not considered productive labour and that they are hardly represented at all in local government bodies...

66. The Committee urges the State party to give full attention to the needs of rural women, including older women, particularly Amerindian and Maroon women, to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes in all areas, in particular access to health, education, social services and decision-making...

- Tunisia, CEDAW, A/57/38 part II (2002) 102 at paras. 187, 202 and 203.

187. ...The Committee... notes that rural women are enjoying an overall improvement in the quality of rural life due to a combination of regional development and overall sectoral policies, and that these women are benefiting from technical and financial support through the efforts of the economic and financial authorities in Tunisia.

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202. While noting the reduction in the general illiteracy rate of women, the Committee is concerned that the rate is still high among certain groups of women, particularly rural women and older women.

203. The Committee encourages the State party to further implement programmes specifically designed to reduce female illiteracy, particularly among rural and older women.

- Zambia, CEDAW, A/57/38 part II (2002) 107 at paras. 242, 243, 246 and 247.

242. While noting that the State party has made progress in addressing the basic health needs of women in Zambia, the Committee expresses concern at the high level of maternal

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and infant mortality, low life expectancy, very high teenage pregnancies and unsafe abortions and lack of adequate healthcare facilities and family planning services, particularly in the rural areas.

243. The Committee... recommends that national reproductive health programmes be designed and implemented in order to prevent early pregnancy and induced abortions in rural and urban areas.

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246. Despite the State party's effort in the area of education, the Committee is concerned at the low rate of female literacy, the low enrolment of girls in school in rural and urban areas and the high dropout rate of girls due to pregnancies...

247. The Committee urges the State party to strengthen its efforts to improve the literacy level of girls and women in rural and urban areas, to ensure equal access of girls and young women to all levels of education and to prevent girls dropping out of school...

- Armenia, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 150 at paras. 58 and 59.

58. The Committee expresses concern regarding the situation of rural women, including their access to health-care services and income-generating activities.

59. The Committee encourages the State party to develop special policies and programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women and their access to health-care services.

- Uganda, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 164 at paras. 147, 148, 151 and 152.

147. The Committee is... concerned at the high rate of maternal mortality among teenage girls, particularly in the rural areas, frequently as a result of clandestine abortion.

148. The Committee recommends that the State party design and implement national health, including reproductive health, programmes to prevent early pregnancies and induced abortions in rural and urban areas. The Committee also urges the State party to reinforce programmes of sexual and reproductive health education for both girls and boys. It also calls on the State party to provide safe and affordable contraceptives.

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151. The Committee expresses concern at the situation of rural women, who constitute the majority of the female population in the country. The Committee also expresses concern that customs and traditional practices, prevalent in rural areas, prevent women from inheriting or acquiring ownership of land and other property.

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152. The Committee urges the State party to pay increased attention to the needs of rural women so as to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes adopted in all spheres, as well as participate in decision-making, have full access to education and health services and credit facilities. The Committee also urges the State party to eliminate all forms of discrimination with respect to the ownership, co-sharing and inheritance of land. It also urges the introduction of measures to address negative customs and traditional practices, especially in rural areas, which affect full enjoyment of the right to property by women.

- Guatemala, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 171 at paras. 192 and 193.

192. The Committee expresses concern about the high rate of infant and maternal mortality in Guatemala.

193. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to increase access to health-care facilities and medical assistance by trained personnel, particularly in rural areas and especially in the areas of pre- and post-natal care.

- Argentina, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 196 at paras. 356 and 357.

356. The Committee is concerned at the situation of women resulting from the growing increase in poverty, and extreme poverty, which has spread to more than half the population, and which can have a disproportionately heavy impact on the female population. Of special concern are women heads of household who are living in poverty and unemployed, with dependent children, and women from rural areas, indigenous populations and the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

357. The Committee recommends that the State party should pay special, ongoing attention to the situation of women and should take the necessary measures to prevent women, especially those from rural areas, indigenous populations and the most vulnerable sectors of the population, from bearing the heaviest burden of the crisis...

- Yemen, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 200 at paras. 386, 387, 400 and 401.

386. While acknowledging the statement made by the State party that education is a cornerstone for development and a key element in the improvement of the status of women and the achievement of equality between women and men, the Committee notes with concern the high levels of illiteracy among women and girls, particularly in rural areas, and the high rate at which girls drop out of school.

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387. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen its efforts to eradicate female illiteracy, especially among girls, particularly in rural areas, and to take general as well as temporary special measures to ensure primary and secondary education for girls and lower the high dropout rate among girls...

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400. In view of the fact that rural women constitute the majority of women in Yemen, the Committee notes with concern that the traditional division of labour in agricultural production disadvantages women and that, for cultural and social reasons, women do not control the means of production and face difficulties in obtaining loans. The Committee is concerned that rural women have little or no access to health-care services.

401. The Committee urges the State party to take special measures to support the integration of rural women in all sectoral policies and programmes and to eliminate discriminatory practices through awareness-raising and educational programmes targeted at women and men. The Committee also recommends the State party to take urgent measures to increase rural women's access to health-care services.

- Mexico, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 205 at paras. 433 and 434.

433. The Committee is concerned that while the State party has implemented poverty reduction strategies, poverty constitutes a serious obstacle to enjoyment of rights by women, who make up the majority of the most vulnerable sectors, especially in rural and indigenous areas.

434. The Committee calls on the State party to give priority to women in its poverty eradication strategy, with special attention to women in rural and indigenous areas; in this context, measures and specific programmes should be adopted to ensure that women fully enjoy their rights on an equal footing in the areas of education, employment and health, with special emphasis on joint work with non-governmental organizations and on women's participation not only as beneficiaries, but also as agents of change in the development process.

- Peru, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 212 at paras. 475, 490 and 491.

475. The Committee recommends that the State party include a gender perspective in poverty eradication strategies and programmes and, when appropriate, introduce temporary special measures, in conformity with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, with a view to eradicating poverty among women, especially rural women.

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490. Despite the reduction in the general illiteracy rate, the Committee expresses its concern

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at the high rate of illiteracy in the female population, especially in rural areas. Another matter of concern to the Committee is the high number of school dropouts among girls and adolescents in rural areas.

491. The Committee requests the State party to set up programmes specially designed to reduce female illiteracy, in particular among women and girls in rural areas, and to keep girls in school.

- Albania, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 13 at paras. 76 and 77.

76. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, as the majority of the female population, who are discriminated against in practice with respect to owning and inheriting property, and who are disadvantaged by poverty, poor infrastructures, lack of credit, and limited access to education, health-care services and social insurance. Noting the decrease in the school dropout rate of girls, the Committee remains concerned about this continuing problem. The Committee is also concerned that rural women are hardly represented in local government bodies.

77. The Committee urges the State party to give full attention to the needs of rural women and to develop comprehensive policies and programmes aimed at their economic empowerment, ensuring their access to productive resources, capital and credit, as well as education, health-care services, social insurance and decision-making. The Committee requests the State party to undertake a study of the ownership and inheritance of land by rural women and of their general economic, educational and social situation...

- Congo, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 29 at paras. 174, 175, 178 and 179.

174. ...The Committee is...concerned at the low contraceptive prevalence rate among women and men and the lack of access of women to adequate pre-natal and post-natal care and family planning information, particularly in rural areas.

175. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to raise awareness of and increase access to health-care facilities and medical assistance by trained personnel, particularly in rural areas and particularly in the areas of post-natal care...

...

178. The Committee expresses concern about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to health, education, credit facilities and community services.

179. The Committee urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural

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women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making and have full access to education, health services and credit facilities. The Committee also urges the State party to take appropriate measures, including review of legislation, in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination with respect to ownership, co-sharing and inheritance of land.

- Kenya, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 35 at paras. 219, 220, 223 and 224.

219. The Committee expresses concern that, despite the laws and sanctions in place, prostitution continues to thrive, particularly in urban areas. The Committee is particularly concerned about the lack of information on the extent of the exploitation of prostitution and the lack of measures to combat this, including the lack of adequate penalties for those who exploit prostitutes.

220. The Committee requests the State party to study the phenomenon of prostitution and to take appropriate measures to combat the exploitation of prostitution in urban areas. It recommends that a holistic approach be pursued in order to facilitate the reintegration of prostitutes into Kenyan society and urges the State party to provide rehabilitation and other programmes to women exploited in prostitution. It also recommends prosecution and punishment for those who profit from the sexual exploitation of women and girls.

...
223. Despite the State party's National Policy on Gender and Development to implement existing land and inheritance laws concerning women's rights in rural areas, the Committee is concerned that discriminatory customs and traditional practices remain prevalent in rural areas, thus preventing women from inheriting or acquiring ownership of land.

224. The Committee urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making and have full access to education, health services and credit and marketing facilities. The Committee also urges the State party to take appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination with respect to ownership, co-sharing and inheritance of land.

- El Salvador, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 41 at paras. 259-264.

259. The Committee observes with concern the lack of necessary sex education programmes and their dissemination and the resulting impact on the high rate of teenage pregnancy, in particular in rural areas, and on the increase in the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS...

260. The Committee recommends to the State party that it adopt measures to guarantee and expand access to health-care services, paying special attention to the implementation of

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programmes and policies for disseminating and raising awareness of sex education, particularly among adolescents, including information on contraceptives and their availability in society as a whole, taking into account that family planning is the responsibility of the couple and placing special emphasis on preventing and combatting sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS.

261. The Committee is concerned at the high level of poverty among women, especially rural and indigenous women.

262. The Committee urges the State party to develop a poverty eradication strategy that gives priority attention to rural and indigenous women through the allocation of budgetary resources, and to take appropriate measures to inform itself about their situation with a view to formulating effective specific programmes and policies to improve their socio-economic situation and ensure that they receive the services and support they need.

263. Although the overall illiteracy rate has declined, the Committee is concerned that the problem persists, especially in rural areas. It is also concerned at the high drop-out rates among girls, especially in rural and indigenous areas.

264. The Committee recommends that efforts to address this problem should be intensified, through sustainable plans and programmes, particularly in rural and indigenous areas.

- Costa Rica, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 86 at paras. 62, 63, 66 and 67.

62. The Committee...notes with concern the precarious working and living conditions of women domestic workers, including migrant workers, as well as of salaried women workers, rural women, women in the informal sector and indigenous women.

63. The Committee...requests the State party to adopt the legislative, administrative or other measures needed to ensure that women domestic workers, including migrant workers, temporary wage earners, women in the informal sector and rural and indigenous women have access to social security and other employment benefits, including paid maternity leave.

...

66. The Committee notes with concern that the impact of poverty is greater among women and that the State does not apply the gender perspective in its national activities to combat poverty.

67. The Committee requests the State party to pay specific attention to households headed by women and to groups of women in a vulnerable situation, as well as to rural women, older women, indigenous women and disabled women, in drawing up and implementing programmes to combat poverty, and to seek to ensure their access to production resources,

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education and technical training.

- Morocco, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 101 at paras. 170-177.

170. While noting the efforts made by the State party to set concrete targets and develop a national strategy on education, the Committee notes with concern the continuing high levels of illiteracy of women and girls, in particular in rural areas.

171. The Committee calls upon the State party to develop gender-sensitive measures to eradicate female illiteracy, in particular in rural areas, and to strengthen measures to create an environment that increases the enrolment and retention rates of girls in schools at all levels, through increased training and employment of teachers, the development of gender-sensitive educational materials and the monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved towards time-bound targets.

172. Although progress has been made in reducing maternal and infant mortality rates and in increasing access to means of family planning, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient number of health-care facilities and particularly about the situation of rural women who have little or no access to health-care services and health-care professionals.

173. The Committee calls upon the State party to increase women's access to primary health-care services, including reproductive health care, particularly for rural women, and to further increase access to affordable means of family planning for women and men...

174. ...The Committee notes...with concern that women are discriminated against in their access to loans and other forms of financial support as well as in the enjoyment of their right to property.

175. The Committee...calls on the State party to ensure that women, particularly in rural areas, have full and equal access to loans and other forms of financial support and that they face no obstacles in the enjoyment of their right to ownership of land.

176. The Committee notes that, although they constitute a large proportion of the population, rural women and girls continue to be marginalized in their access to government services.

177. The Committee urges the State party to take special measures to ensure that the needs and concerns of rural women are fully integrated in the formulation and implementation of all sectoral policies and programmes and to ensure that rural women and girls have full access to education and health-care facilities.

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- Ecuador, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 122 at paras. 307, 308 and 317-320.

307. The Committee is concerned at the high levels of poverty and extreme poverty among women, and notes in particular the situation of rural and indigenous women. Despite the existence of isolated anti-poverty plans, the Committee is concerned at the lack of a general and comprehensive poverty eradication policy specifically targeting rural and indigenous women.

308. The Committee urges the State party to develop a general poverty eradication policy incorporating a gender perspective and focusing particularly on rural and indigenous women.

...

317. ...The Committee is...concerned at the high rate of pregnancy and abortion among teenagers, particularly in rural areas.

318. The Committee...requests the State party to continue strengthening support programmes for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers and sexual education programmes to prevent pregnancies among the teenage population...

319. The Committee is concerned at the persistent problem of illiteracy, especially in rural areas, and the high rate of school dropouts among the female population, in particular in rural and indigenous areas.

320. The Committee recommends that efforts to address this problem should be stepped up, through the sustained implementation of programmes and plans, especially in rural and indigenous areas.
- Bhutan, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 21 at paras. 117 and 118.

117. Noting that the overwhelming majority of women live in rural areas, the Committee is concerned about their situation, in particular with regard to their access to education and vocational training. It is particularly concerned about the continuing high rates of illiteracy among rural women, and about their limited representation in rural leadership positions and limited participation in agricultural and animal husbandry training programmes.

118. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the rights, needs and concerns of rural women are given greater attention and visibility, and that rural women participate fully in the formulation and implementation of all sectoral policies and programmes. It also recommends that the State party ensure that rural women and girls have full access to education and vocational training in the areas where they live.

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- Nepal, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 34 at paras. 204, 205, 212 and 213.

204. While recognizing that education is a national priority of the State party and that substantial progress has been made, including a decline in the overall illiteracy rate, the Committee is concerned about the continuing significant gap between the literacy rates of women and men...The Committee is also concerned that educational opportunities are fewer for women in rural areas and for women of different castes and ethnic groups.

205. The Committee urges the State party to intensify its efforts to address the literacy gap between men and women so that the goals established in the National Plan on Education in regard to equality in education can be achieved, particularly in rural areas and among disadvantaged castes and ethnic groups. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to ensure equal access of girls and women to all levels of education and to take all appropriate measures to prevent girls from dropping out of school...

...

212. The Committee is concerned at the status of women's health, particularly rural women. The Committee is concerned that women have a lower life expectancy than men and that there are high maternal and infant mortality rates. It is also concerned that women's health is adversely affected by factors such as early marriage and early pregnancy, inadequate family planning services and illiteracy, which is an obstacle to obtaining and effectively using health-related information...

213. The Committee recommends that the State party take further measures to improve the access of women, particularly rural women, to health-related services and information, including in regard to sexual and reproductive health, in an effort to reduce maternal mortality. It also recommends that programmes and policies be adopted to increase knowledge of and access to contraceptive methods, bearing in mind that family planning should be the responsibility of both partners. It further recommends that sex education be widely promoted, particularly targeting boys and girls, with special attention to the prevention and further control of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS...

- Ethiopia, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 42 at paras. 250, 259 and 260.

250. The Committee urges the State party to strengthen its efforts to improve the literacy rate of girls and women in rural and urban areas, to ensure equal access of girls and young women to all levels of education and to take measures to reduce and eliminate the high drop-out and repetition rates of girls. It encourages the State party to introduce temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendation 25 at primary and secondary levels of education, including incentives for parents to send girls to school. It also recommends that the State party take steps to ensure that rural women and girls have full access to education and vocational training.

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...

259. The Committee, while welcoming the implementation of the Women's Development Initiative Project and the Ethiopian Women's Development Fund, is concerned that the Fund currently reaches only a small percentage of women, and that poverty among women, in particular rural women, continues to persist at a high level.

260. The Committee urges the State party to expand its specific programmes aimed at enhancing the socio-economic well-being of women and step up its efforts to fully integrate gender perspectives in its sustainable development and poverty reduction programme. It also urges the State party to take measures to ensure that the rights, needs and concerns of rural women are given greater attention and visibility and that rural women participate fully in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all sectoral policies and programmes. It calls upon the State party to put in place policies to protect women's right to property and to ensure that women have access to land and water resources on an equal basis with men.

- Nigeria, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 49 at paras. 303 and 304.

303. The Committee expresses concern at the low enrolment rates and educational achievement of girls and women, the continuing high rates of illiteracy of women and girls, in particular in rural areas, and the decline in the quality of education.

304. The Committee urges the State party to ensure full implementation of its Universal Basic Education Policy, launched in 1999, and the educational objectives contained in the National Policy on Women, including with the support of the international community. It calls on the State party to further prioritize action in the field of girls' and women's education and to raise awareness about the importance of education as a fundamental human right and the basis for the empowerment of women. It urges that targeted measures with a concrete time frame be taken, in accordance with general recommendation 25, to increase the literacy level of girls and women, in particular in rural areas, to ensure equal access of girls and young women to all levels of education, to prevent girls from dropping out of school, in particular because of early pregnancy, and to overcome traditional attitudes that constitute obstacles to girls' education...

- Belarus, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 55 at paras. 353 and 354.

353. The Committee is concerned about the feminization of poverty, particularly among vulnerable groups of women, such as those heading households, older women and rural women.

354. The Committee requests the State party to ensure that all poverty alleviation

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programmes fully benefit women, according to their needs...

- Latvia, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 103 at paras. 67 and 68.

67. The Committee notes with concern that, despite law reform in the field of employment, the position of women in the labour market remains disadvantaged and is characterized by strong occupational segregation, a substantial wage gap, *inter alia*, between rural and urban areas, higher unemployment than that among men, and hidden gender discrimination in the workplace and in remuneration.

68. The Committee recommends that efforts be made to eliminate occupational segregation and to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market in rural as well as in urban areas through, *inter alia*, the use of gender bias-free job evaluation and wage-setting schemes and temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention. The Committee recommends that the State party design and implement special training and retraining programmes for different groups of unemployed women...

- Angola, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 118 at paras. 148, 149, 158, 159 and 163-165.

148. While recognizing the efforts undertaken by the State party aimed at the reconstruction of the country and its socio-economic fabric after the long years of armed conflict, including repatriation, rehabilitation and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, the majority of whom are women, the Committee is concerned that the widespread poverty among women and the poor socio-economic conditions are among the causes of the violation of women's human rights and discrimination against them. The Committee is especially concerned about the situation of women in rural areas, women heads of households, women refugees and internally displaced women returning to their places of origin or migrating to the cities, who often lack access to health, education, services and means and opportunities for economic survival.

149. The Committee urges the State party to make the promotion of gender equality an explicit component of all its national development strategies, policies and programmes, in particular those aimed at repatriation, rehabilitation and resettlement, as well as those aimed at poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural women, women heads of household, refugee women and internally displaced women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have access to health, education, services and income-generation projects. The Committee also invites the State party to place emphasis on the promotion and protection of women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors so as to address the socio-economic causes of discrimination against

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women.

...

158. The Committee is concerned at the poor educational infrastructure, as reflected in the very low budgetary allocation; the lack of, or insufficient number of, schools and teachers; and the poor quality of education. The Committee is concerned that these shortcomings result in a high rate of illiteracy among girls and women, their low enrolment rates in primary, secondary, vocational and higher education, in both urban and rural areas, and in their high drop out rates. The Committee notes that education is a key to the advancement of women and that the low level of education of women and girls remains one of the most serious impediments to their full enjoyment of human rights and the achievement of women's empowerment.

159. The Committee urges the State party to increase its investment in education as a fundamental human right and as a basis for the empowerment of women. It recommends that the State party continue and further prioritize efforts to: improve the literacy level of girls and women; ensure equal access of girls and women to all levels of education in both urban and rural areas; increase the enrolment rates for girls; and take measures to retain girls in school, including through temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and its general recommendation 25, so as to implement article 10 of the Convention.

...

163. The Committee urges the State party to continue its efforts to improve the country's health infrastructure...In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake appropriate measures to improve women's access to health care and health related services and information, including access for women who live in rural areas...

164. Noting that the majority of women live in the rural areas, the Committee is concerned that many live in extreme poverty and lack access to education and vocational training, health care and income-generation opportunities. It is particularly concerned that the State party's rural development strategy does not seem to include attention to the situation of rural women.

165. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the rights, needs and concerns of rural women are given greater attention and visibility in the country's rural rehabilitation and development strategy. It also calls on the State party to ensure that rural women can participate fully in decision-making in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in rural areas. It urges the State party to ensure that rural women and girls have full access to health-care services, education and vocational training, as well as to income-generation opportunities.

- Equatorial Guinea, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 126 at paras. 189, 190, 205 and 206.

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189. The Committee is concerned that widespread poverty among women and poor socio-economic conditions are among the causes of the violation of women's human rights and discrimination against women. The Committee is especially concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to health care, education, credit facilities and community services.

190. The Committee urges the State party to make the promotion of gender equality an explicit component of its national development plans and policies, and in particular those aimed at poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have full access to education, health services and credit facilities. The Committee also urges the State party to take appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women with respect to ownership and inheritance of land. The Committee invites the State party to place emphasis on women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors so as to address the socio-economic causes of discrimination against women, including those impacting women in rural areas, through all available sources of support.

...

205. The Committee expresses concern about the lack of access of women and girls to adequate health-care services, including pre-natal and post-natal care and family planning information, particularly in rural areas. The Committee is also concerned about the alarming rate of teenage pregnancy, which presents a significant obstacle to girls' educational opportunities and economic empowerment.

206. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to raise awareness of and increase access to health-care facilities and medical assistance by trained personnel, particularly in rural areas, and in pre- and post-natal care. The Committee urges the State party to take immediate steps to make family planning information available to women and girls, including in rural areas.

- Bangladesh, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 134 at paras. 259 and 260.

259. The Committee is concerned about the impact of the arsenic poisoning of water, which is disproportionately affecting rural women of reproductive age.

260. The Committee urges the State party to put in place measures for ensuring that safe drinking water is available to all, and particularly to affected rural women and their families. The Committee calls on the State party to prepare without delay a plan of action containing preventative and remedial measures, and prioritizing technologies favoured by rural women, their families and local communities that are risk-free, cost-effective and provide alternatives

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to underground water withdrawal. The Committee recommends that the State party launch an awareness campaign and proactive health, nutrition and social programmes for affected rural women, their families and local communities. The Committee also calls on the State party to encourage all other actors, who directly or indirectly caused the arsenic crisis, to share in the financial burden of compensating the victims.

- Dominican Republic, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 141 at para. 309.

309. The Committee recommends the adoption of measures to ensure that women, especially young women, the disabled and women living in rural areas, have access to information and health services, particularly those relating to sexual and reproductive health and cancer prevention. Such measures are essential in order to reduce the rate of maternal mortality, prevent women from resorting to unsafe abortion and protect women against the negative effects on their health...

- Argentina, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 155 at paras. 376 and 377.

376. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to health care, education, credit facilities and community services.

377. The Committee urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have full access to education, health services and credit facilities.

- Lao People's Democratic Republic, CEDAW, A/60/38 part I (2005) 16 at paras. 92-97, 104, 105, 108 and 109.

92. While noting that 80 per cent of the population lives in rural areas, the Committee is deeply concerned about the pervasive poverty and underdevelopment of women, especially in rural and ethnic minority communities. The Committee is also concerned that ethnic minority women, having no alternative sources of income, depend on the production of opium poppies for their livelihood. While welcoming the reinvestigation into the matter of land titling, the Committee is concerned that the current reinvestigation and the reissuance of land titles are limited to nine provinces. The Committee is also concerned that, while rural women carry out more than half of total agricultural production in every field, the additional workloads of housework and child-rearing also fall primarily on their shoulders. The Committee is very concerned that rural women are not fully represented in important decision-making regarding development programmes, nor on the village council.

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93. The Committee urges the State party to accelerate its plan to eradicate poverty among women, especially rural and ethnic minority women, by more actively seeking international assistance and at the same time by applying gender perspectives in all development programmes and fully integrating women into decision-making on those programmes, as well as in their implementation processes. The Committee also urges the State party to step up its efforts to provide ethnic minority women who depend on opium poppy production with alternative and sustainable means of livelihood. The Committee recommends that the reinvestigation and re-registration of land titles be carried out in all provinces, with the expected result of eradicating discrimination against women...The Committee also recommends that the State party take measures to ease the double burden of women, including by providing new technologies for women farmers and educating men regarding the sharing of family responsibilities. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party ensure the full and equal representation of rural women on the various committees at the village level.

94. Despite some progress, the Committee is alarmed at the still very high illiteracy rate of women, 40 per cent, and the large discrepancy between male and female literacy rates and between urban and rural women's education. The Committee is especially concerned at the extremely low literacy rate among ethnic minority women. The Committee is concerned that the initial plan to make primary education compulsory was postponed from 2000 to 2010.

95. The Committee urges that the State party immediately take all appropriate measures, including temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 25 on temporary special measures, to reduce the illiteracy rate of women and to provide education, both formal and informal, to women, including ethnic minority women, especially in rural areas. The Committee also recommends that free and compulsory primary education at the national level be implemented as soon as possible. It further recommends that the State party consider seeking international assistance for these purposes.

96. While noting improvement during the past few years, the Committee is seriously concerned about the very high maternal and infant mortality rates and the high fertility rate, especially among women in rural and remote areas and among ethnic minorities. The Committee is concerned about the lack of health-care facilities and medical professionals in rural villages and remote areas as well as the lack of awareness among women and adolescents regarding reproductive health and family planning, including the use of contraceptives and birth spacing.

97. The Committee recommends that the State party accelerate the implementation of its national population policy, focusing on expanding its network of health-care facilities and personnel throughout the nation and reaching out to rural and remote areas, *inter alia* to the benefit of ethnic minority women; that it enhance its educational programmes, not only for

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women, but also for men and adolescents, on reproductive health and family planning; and that it make contraceptives easily available.

...

104. The Committee is concerned about the generally low representation of women in the administration, at both the national and local levels, and in the judiciary. Considering the fact that 80 per cent of the population lives in rural areas and that the village chiefs and the village councils handle most everyday matters, the Committee is very concerned that less than 1 per cent of the village chiefs are women and only one member of the Lao Women's Union represents women in the village council.

105. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to increase the representation of women in administrative and judicial organs at the national, provincial and village levels, in accordance with the Committee's general recommendation 23 on women in political and public life. It also recommends that the State party introduce temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 25 on temporary special measures, to increase the percentage of women at all levels of decision-making and to make sure that the interests of women are fully reflected and that gender equality is guaranteed at all levels of decision-making. The Committee urges the State party to take measures to empower village women so that they can participate equally in village matters.

...

108. ...The Committee is...concerned that traditional attitudes on gender-role stereotyping keep women and girls in a subordinate position, preventing them from getting equal education and life opportunities, especially in rural areas.

109. ...The Committee...recommends that the State party take more active and proactive measures to bring about changes in the traditional patriarchal attitudes on gender-role stereotyping...

- Algeria CEDAW, A/60/38 part I (2005) 23 at paras. 159 and 160.

159. The Committee notes that insufficient information was provided on the situation of rural women.

160. The Committee requests the State party to ensure that the needs and concerns of rural women are fully integrated in the formulation and implementation of sectoral policies and programmes, and that temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendation 25 are applied whenever necessary so as to accelerate the realization of the substantive equality of rural women...

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- Gabon, CEDAW, A/60/38 part I (2005) 37 at paras. 247 and 248.

247. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their geographic isolation and lack of access to adequate nutrition and sanitation, health care, education and income-generating opportunities. This situation leads to multiple forms of discrimination against rural women...

248. The Committee urges the State party to implement, on a priority basis, measures to ensure that rural women have full access to adequate nutrition and sanitation, health-care services, education and income-generating opportunities. The Committee invites the State party, as necessary, to seek assistance from relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations to improve the standard of living of rural women.

- Paraguay, CEDAW, A/60/38 part I (2005) 44 at paras. 289 and 290.

289. The Committee remains concerned about the situation of rural women, who continue to have limited access to land ownership and to credit facilities and extension services, thus perpetuating their poor social and economic conditions, notwithstanding the adoption of the Agrarian Act. It is also concerned about the extensive use of fertilizers and pesticides, which, when improperly used, are harmful to the health of rural women and their families.

290. The Committee urges the State party to address the rights, needs and concerns of rural women through the effective implementation of the Agrarian Act without delay and to implement vocational training programmes for rural women to ensure equal opportunities and access to the labour market. It further encourages the State party to ensure the participation of rural women in the development of policies aimed at benefiting rural areas and to enhance their access to environmentally sound technologies that are not harmful to their health.

- Democratic People's Republic of Korea, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 101 at paras. 59 and 60.

59. In the light of the widespread famine and natural disasters that have affected the country from the mid-1990s, the Committee expresses concern about the insufficient explanation provided with respect to the impact of those phenomena on women, in particular on women from rural areas, on women who are the main providers of the household and on young girls. The Committee is concerned that they may become vulnerable to trafficking and other forms of exploitation, such as prostitution.

60. The Committee urges the State party to introduce specific poverty alleviation measures

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aimed at improving the situation of women to eliminate their vulnerability. The Committee recommends that the State party seek international assistance in guaranteeing that women, particularly women from rural areas, have equal access to food supplies. It urges the State party to assist women economic returnees who went abroad without valid travel permits to reintegrate into their families and society and to protect them from all forms of violations of their rights. It calls on the State party to train law enforcement officials, migration officials and border police on the causes, consequences and incidence of trafficking and other forms of exploitation so as to enable them to render support to women who might be at risk of becoming victims of trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation. It also recommends that the State party conduct nationwide awareness-raising campaigns on the risks and consequences of trafficking targeted at women and girls. The Committee further urges the State party to evaluate those phenomena and systematically compile information on them with a view to formulating a comprehensive strategy that includes measures of prevention, prosecution and punishment of offenders, as well as measures to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims. The Committee also urges the State party to intensify its efforts to deal with these phenomena through increased international, regional and bilateral cooperation...

- Lebanon, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 109 at paras. 111, 112, 117 and 118.

111. While welcoming the incorporation of reproductive health services into the primary health-care system, the Committee remains concerned that not all women have access to such services, especially in the rural areas. It is also concerned about women's deaths resulting from clandestine abortions.

112. The Committee urges the Government to strengthen, especially in the rural areas, the implementation of programmes and policies aimed at providing effective access for women to health-care information and services, in particular regarding reproductive health and affordable contraceptive methods, with the aim also of preventing clandestine abortions. The Committee further urges the State party to decriminalize abortion where there are mitigating circumstances. The Committee recommends the implementation of measures to protect women from the negative effects on their health of unsafe abortions, in line with the Committee's general recommendation 24 on women and health and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

...

117. While noting the reduction in the general illiteracy rate of women, the Committee is concerned that the illiteracy rate remains high among rural women. The Committee is also concerned about the insufficient legislative protection of the status of rural women.

118. The Committee encourages the State party to implement further programmes specifically designed to reduce illiteracy rates among rural women and to introduce new laws relating to this group of women, so as to ensure the full implementation of article 14 of the

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Convention.

- Benin, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 116 at paras. 157 and 158.

157. While noting the efforts made by the State party to improve reproductive health care to women, the Committee remains concerned about the lack of access to adequate health care for women and girls, particularly in rural areas. It is concerned about the causes of morbidity and mortality in women, particularly the number of deaths due to illegal abortions, and about inadequate family planning services and the low rates of contraceptive use. The Committee expresses its concern that women require the permission of their husbands to obtain contraceptives and family planning services.

158. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures, in accordance with general recommendation 24 on women and health, to improve and increase women's access to health care and health-related services and information, particularly in rural areas. It calls on the State party to improve the availability of sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, with the aim also of preventing clandestine abortions, and to make available, without requiring the permission of the husband, contraceptive services to women and girls...

- Gambia, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 122 at paras. 207, 208, 211 and 212.

207. While noting the efforts made by the State party to revise its policy on education in order to address the needs of the girl child, the Committee expresses its concern about the low enrolment of girls in school, especially at the secondary and higher levels, and their high dropout rates. The Committee is particularly concerned that, according to the 1993 census, only 27 per cent of women in the Gambia are literate and that in the rural areas the proportion is only 18.3 per cent.

208. The Committee urges the State party to take measures on the importance of realizing women's and girls' right to education as a fundamental human right, including for the empowerment of women. It also calls upon the State party to strengthen measures to create an environment that increases the enrolment and retention rates of girls in school at all levels, including through the development of gender-sensitive educational material. The Committee calls upon the State party to step up its efforts to eradicate female illiteracy, particularly in rural areas, including through comprehensive education programmes at the formal and non-formal levels, as well as programmes specifically targeting adult women. The Committee encourages the State party to use temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 25, in order to accelerate the improvement of women's and girls' education.

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...

211. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, many of whom live in extreme poverty and lack access to health care, education, vocational training, credit facilities and income-generation opportunities. It is particularly concerned that the State has not yet designed a gender-sensitive rural development strategy.

212. The Committee urges the State party to design and implement a gender-sensitive rural development strategy. It calls upon the State party to ensure that rural women can participate fully in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in rural areas. It urges the State party to ensure that rural women and girls have full access to health-care services, education and vocational training, as well as credit facilities and income-generating opportunities.

- Guyana, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 136 at paras. 291, 292, 303, 304, 307 and 308.

291. While welcoming laws to eliminate discrimination against women, including the Equal Rights Act of 1990 and the Prevention of Discrimination Act of 1997, the Committee is concerned about the lack of systematic enforcement of existing legislation, of mechanisms to monitor and ensure compliance, and of effective remedies in case of breach. The Committee is also concerned about the insufficient availability of legal aid to women, in particular women living in rural areas and hinterlands; their lack of awareness about legislation aimed at eliminating discrimination against women; and continuing reluctance, or inability of women to seek legal redress in cases of discrimination.

292. The Committee urges the State party to strengthen its efforts to protect women against any act of discrimination, including strengthening existing complaints mechanisms such as the Ombudsman and Chief Labour Officer, and putting in place sanctions for acts of discrimination against women. The Committee further urges the State party to ensure full compliance by public authorities and institutions with legislation aimed at prevention of discrimination against women, increase the availability of legal aid to women in all parts of the country and sensitize the judiciary and law enforcement personnel to gender equality issues. The Committee urges the State party to take special measures to enhance women's awareness of their rights and legal literacy so that they can better avail themselves of available remedies and mechanisms of redress against violations of their rights under the Convention.

...

303. The Committee recognizes the efforts of the Government to put in place comprehensive health structures. However, the Committee is concerned that women's access to health services is not monitored and there is no data to establish the *de facto* impact of such measures.

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304. The Committee recommends that a broad framework for health services in line with the Committee's general recommendation 24 on article 12, on women and health, be put in place and that access to them by women, especially Amerindian women and other women living in rural and hinterland areas, be monitored...

...

307. While noting that women are disproportionately affected by poverty, and noting the existence of the National Development Strategy and a poverty reduction strategy paper, the Committee is disappointed that these policies insufficiently address the gender dimensions of poverty and do not target women specifically, notwithstanding the participation of women's groups in consultations for their preparation. The Committee is especially concerned about the consequences of this omission for Amerindian women and women living in rural and hinterland areas.

308. The Committee urges the State party to make the promotion of gender equality an explicit component of its national development strategies, in particular those aimed at poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It encourages the State party to include programmes that target vulnerable groups of women, such as Amerindian women and poor women living in rural and hinterland areas. The Committee invites the State party to strengthen these policies so as to enhance compliance with the Convention, especially article 14 on rural women. It encourages the State party to place emphasis on implementation of the Convention and women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors. It recommends that the State party channel resources available through the highly indebted poor countries initiative towards the empowerment of women, especially Amerindian women and women in rural and hinterland areas...

- Burkina Faso, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 144 at paras. 341, 342, 347 and 348.

341. While welcoming legislation prohibiting female genital mutilation, forced and early marriage, levirate and sororate, dowry and practices that prevent women from owning land and inheriting from their husbands, the Committee remains concerned about the continuing strong prevalence of patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes and of customs and traditions that discriminate against women, particularly women in rural areas, and constitute violations of their human rights. The Committee is concerned that these practices persist in contravention of the provisions of the Convention, as well as national legislation. The Committee is also concerned that women are not informed of remedies under relevant legislation.

342. The Committee calls upon the State party to take all necessary measures to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the Convention, the Individual and Family Code, the Penal Code and other laws in regard to harmful traditional or customary practices that violate

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women's rights. The Committee recommends that these efforts be undertaken in combination with educational programmes designed to raise awareness and challenge discriminatory customs and traditions and stereotypic attitudes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women in the family and society, as required under articles 2 (f) and 5 (a) of the Convention. The Committee encourages the State party to undertake these efforts in collaboration with civil society and women's and human rights organizations, and target women and men in all segments of society, including public officials at all levels of government and community and traditional leaders, as well as the general public. It also urges the State party to improve women's access to remedies, including through awareness-raising efforts and measures to enhance women's legal literacy.

...

347. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to adequate nutrition and sanitation, health care, education and income-generating opportunities. This situation leads to multiple forms of discrimination against rural women...

348. The Committee urges the State party to pay special attention to the situation of rural women so as to enhance compliance with article 14 of the Convention. In particular, the Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that rural women have full access to education, health services and credit facilities, and can fully participate in decision-making processes. The Committee also urges the State party to implement provisions of the Agrarian and Land Reform that give women equal access to arable land and housing and provisions of the Individual and Family Code so as to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women with respect to ownership and inheritance of land. It also urges the State party to place emphasis on women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors so as to address the socio-economic causes of discrimination against women and sociocultural causes of poverty of women, especially those affecting women in rural areas, through all available sources of support. The Committee urges the State party to put into operation the principle of gender equality as a key factor in eradicating poverty as outlined in the strategic and regional frameworks for poverty reduction...

- Ireland, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 151 at paras. 392 and 393.

392. While recognizing that the second National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion and the National Anti-Poverty Strategy provide for an integrated focus on addressing the needs of specific groups, including women, the Committee is concerned at the situation of vulnerable groups of women who are considered to be at high risk of consistent poverty and social exclusion, including rural women, older women, Traveller women, women who are single parents and women with disabilities. The Committee is particularly concerned at the barriers faced by those vulnerable groups in relation to access

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to education, employment, health care and other social services.

393. The Committee recommends that the State party closely monitor the situation of poverty and social exclusion of women in the most vulnerable groups and implement effective measures and training programmes that will allow them fully to enjoy the benefits of the State party's prosperity. The Committee also recommends that a gender impact analysis of all social and economic policies and anti-poverty measures be conducted regularly. It further recommends that the State party consider allowing for the Homemaker's Scheme (1994) to be applied retroactively so as to benefit older women.

CAT

- Cambodia, CAT, A/58/44 (2003) 40 at para. 99.

99. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(g) Take all the necessary measures to guarantee access to justice for all the people of Cambodia, particularly the poor and the inhabitants of rural and remote areas of the country;

...

CRC

- Mauritania, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 8 at paras. 40, 41, 54, 55, 64, 65 and 70-73.

40. The Committee notes with concern that budgetary allocations for children are insufficient to respond to national and local priorities for the protection and promotion of children's rights and to overcome and remedy existing disparities between rural and urban areas with respect to services provided to children.

41. In light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to reduce poverty and its impact on children;

(b) Identify clearly its priorities with respect to child rights issues in order to ensure that funds are allocated to the "maximum extent of available resources" for the implementation of the rights recognized in the Convention, including the economic, social and cultural rights of children, in particular at local level and for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society; and

(c) Take the necessary measures to identify the amount and proportion of the budget spent

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on children at the national and local levels, including the resources from international aid programmes, in order to adequately evaluate its impact on children.

...

54. While noting Act No. 96/020 of 19 June 1996 on the obligation to register every child's birth and the establishment of a Secretariat of State for Civil Registration, the Committee is nevertheless concerned at the difficulties that are still experienced in registering, organizing and keeping civil registry records, in particular in rural areas.

55. In light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue to develop more widespread awareness among the population, including through public information campaigns, of the importance of immediate birth registration; and

(b) Improve the registration procedures and system in order to reach all families, in particular in rural and remote areas, and facilitate the registration of the births of their children.

...

64. The Committee is concerned at the poor situation of maternal, child and the reproductive health and the limited access to health care. In particular, it notes the lack of qualified medical and paramedical staff and the shortage of medicines and equipment in rural areas. It further notes that infant, child and maternal mortality rates, as well as abortion and malnutrition rates, are particularly high in rural areas and in poor urban areas. The Committee also takes note of the low immunization rates and of the resurgence of tuberculosis.

65. In light of article 24 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of all children without discrimination, in particular by focusing more on primary care and further decentralizing the health care system;

(b) Reduce child mortality and morbidity by providing adequate antenatal and postnatal health care services;

(c) Develop campaigns to inform parents of basic knowledge about child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation; and

(d) Look to international cooperation for the full and efficient implementation of the immunization programme.

...

70. While noting the measures taken by the State party to combat the traditional practices of female genital mutilation and forced feeding, the Committee is nevertheless concerned

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at the continuing use of these practices, especially in rural areas.

71. In light of article 24 (3), of the Convention, the Committee urges the State party:

- (a) To prohibit, and take action to end, the practices of female genital mutilation and forced feeding;
- (b) To raise awareness of their harmful effects;
- (c) To seek assistance from UNICEF and WHO in this regard; and
- (d) To take advantage of the efforts in this regard made by other States in the region.

72. While noting the increase in the number of schools and classrooms, the Committee is nevertheless concerned that only approximately 60 per cent of children attend school and that there are great gender and regional disparities. It further notes with concern the high drop-out and repeating rates; the inadequacy of the school curriculum; the high teacher-pupil ratio, especially in the capital, Nouakchott; the low enrolment rate in secondary schools; the inadequate school infrastructure; and the low number of children receiving pre-school education. Furthermore, the Committee expresses its concern at the lack of play space and recreational facilities for children, especially in rural areas.

73. In light of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Enforce the act that makes basic education compulsory for all children between the ages of 6 and 14;
- (b) Undertake appropriate measures to ensure regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates, in particular among girls;
- ...
- (g) In light of article 31 of the Convention, seek to ensure the, right of the child to rest and leisure and to engage in play and recreational activities, *inter alia* by educating parents on the importance of these activities for the development of the child and by developing appropriate facilities, in particular in rural areas.

See also:

- Turkey, CRC, CRC/C/108 (2001) 18 at paras. 131 and 132.
- Kenya, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 21 at paras 108, 109, 112, 113, 132 and 133.

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108. The Committee notes that the State party has established various programmes under the National Programme of Action for Children to ensure the survival and development of children. However, it is concerned that the Programme has not been sufficiently implemented and that the impact of HIV/AIDS, mounting economic challenges and other socio-economic difficulties continue to threaten the right to life, survival and development of children in the State party, especially those living in rural areas and increasingly those living in crowded urban centres.

109. The Committee encourages the State party to reinforce its efforts to provide greater protection and support to children whose right to life, survival and development is unduly threatened by the difficult socio-economic realities of the State party. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party take all effective measures to strengthen [its technical cooperation with, *inter alia*, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNDP and WHO.

...

112. The Committee notes that the law provides for the registration of children at birth and that the State party has initiated campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of birth registration. However, it is concerned that many children are not registered, particularly those born at home and those living in rural communities.

113. In the light of articles 7 and 8 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to raise awareness among government officers, midwives, community and religious leaders, and parents themselves, to ensure that all children are duly registered at birth. The Committee also recommends that the State party make the birth registration procedure less costly and more accessible.

...

132. The Committee is concerned about widespread poverty and the increasingly high numbers of children in the State party who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living, including children belonging to poor families, AIDS orphans, street children, internally displaced children, children of ethnic minorities and children living in remote rural communities.

133. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party reinforce its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children in the implementation of the Poverty Eradication Plan, the Poverty Reduction Strategy and all other programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to coordinate its efforts with civil society and local communities.

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- Oman, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 36 at paras. 174 and 175.

174. The Committee is concerned at the disparities in the enjoyment of economic and social rights, particularly the rights to health and education, experienced by non-national children and children living in rural areas, such as al-Wusta.

175. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all necessary measures to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, in accordance with article 2;

(b) Continue to prioritize and target resources and social services for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, especially in areas which lack basic services; and

...

See also:

- Qatar, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 59 at paras. 295 and 296.

- Cameroon, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 71 at paras. 367 and 368.

367. While taking note of the adoption of several national programmes relating to child survival, and the establishment of a sub-department for family health within the Ministry of Public Health, the Committee is deeply concerned at the high and increasing infant and under-five mortality rates and low life expectancy in the State party. The Committee also remains concerned that health services in the districts and local areas continue to lack adequate resources (both financial and human). In addition, the Committee is concerned that the survival and development of children in the State party continue to be threatened by early childhood diseases, such as acute respiratory infections and diarrhoea, and by chronic malnutrition. Concern is also expressed at the poor state of sanitation and at the insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities.

368. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Reinforce its efforts to allocate appropriate resources and develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas;

(b) Facilitate greater access to primary health-care services; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; promote proper breastfeeding practices; and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

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(c) Pursue additional avenues for cooperation and assistance for child health improvement with, *inter alia*, WHO and UNICEF.

See also:

- Malawi, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 104 at paras. 422 and 423.

- Cape Verde, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 135 at paras. 640 and 641.

640. While noting the significant progress made, the Committee remains concerned at health problems among children such as the deaths of infants and children caused by diarrhoeal diseases, respiratory infections and malnutrition. The Committee is concerned, in particular, by the limited access to health services of children living in rural communities, and particularly on more remote islands, and the threat of HIV/AIDS.

641. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Pursue and strengthen its efforts to improve access to health care, including primary health care, giving particular attention to major causes of infant and child mortality and to major illnesses and diseases;

(b) Give particular attention to children living in rural areas and on remote islands and to the prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS.

- Lebanon, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 11 at paras. 52 and 53.

52. The Committee welcomes the information on regional policies to eliminate social disparities and promote equal opportunities. However, it is concerned that the principle of non-discrimination (article 2 of the Convention) is not fully implemented for girls, refugee and asylum-seeking children, Palestinian children, children with disabilities, and children living in less advantaged regions and rural areas, especially with regard to their access to health and adequate educational facilities.

53. In accordance with article 2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Make concerted efforts at all levels to address discrimination, notably discrimination based on gender, disability, religion, and national, ethnic, or social origin, through a review and reorientation of policies, including increased budgetary allocations for programmes targeting the most vulnerable groups;

...

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- Gabon, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 47 at paras. 227 and 228.

227. The Committee notes the challenging socio-economic situation and the sixth debt-rescheduling deal with the Paris Club (December 2000). However, it is concerned at the poor situation of sanitation and insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities and suburban areas, and at the increasingly high number of children who do not enjoy their right to an adequate standard of living, including children belonging to poor families, AIDS orphans, street children, and children living in remote rural areas. In addition, the Committee is concerned at the deterioration of the social security system, which no longer ensures free access to health services for children.

228. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Reinforce its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, notably in suburban and rural areas, and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living;
- (b) Cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society and local communities;
- (c) Provide adequate financial resources to the social security system to restore free access to health services for children; and
- (d) Provide information to families on their social rights.

- Mozambique, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 65 at paras. 283-286, 305-308, 311 and 312.

283. The Committee is concerned that:

...

- (b) Access to birth registration facilities among rural populations is extremely limited by distance, the time delay for registration and sometimes by cost;

...

284. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

- (b) Ensure that registration is free, explore the use of mobile registration facilities to facilitate access for rural populations and pursue current efforts relating to extending the period within which registration must be completed;

...

285. The Committee is concerned that:

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(a) Children have insufficient access to appropriate information;

(b) Children living in rural communities are particularly disadvantaged;

...

286. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue and strengthen its efforts to ensure that all children have access to appropriate information, for example through further elaboration of radio programmes for children, the provision of radios and newspapers for use by groups of children in schools and other contexts, and through itinerant theatre presentations;

...

305. While noting the State party's significant efforts in this domain, including the construction or renovation of many primary schools in the 1990s, the provision of free school materials to many children, increases in primary school enrolment rates, efforts to improve the access to education of girls and to train teachers, the fall in the repetition and drop-out rates, the Committee remains concerned that:

...

(d) Enrolment in formal education, at 81.3 per cent (as quoted by the State party for 1998 in its initial report), remains low and is particularly low in certain regions of the country, and that only a very small proportion of children enrol in, and complete, secondary education;

...

306. Noting the State party's own recommendations in its initial report, the Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Strengthen the institutional capacity and infrastructure of State education, including with regard to administration, management, educational planning, the training of teachers and other staff, the construction of additional schools in isolated regions, and the provision and quality of textbooks and other school materials and equipment;

(c) Increase the rate of child enrolment in primary school and completion of compulsory education, *inter alia* by making every effort to ensure that compulsory education is free for all children, including with regard to textbooks, uniforms and transportation to school for disadvantaged children and families;

...

307. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Children living in urban centres have very few areas, such as parks, in which they can play safely;

(b) As noted in the State party report, "there is no mandatory allocation and conservation of recreational areas for children in urban development plans [and] the number of such places has declined or is virtually non-existent in large towns".

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308. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Provide areas, such as parks, urban centres, which can be used by children for leisure activities;
- (b) Consider adopting legislation or administrative rules and making an appropriate budgetary allocation, in order to ensure that leisure areas for children remain a priority in urban planning decisions.

...

311. The Committee joins the State party in expressing concern that:

...

- (b) There are still a large number of adolescents and young people, in both urban and rural areas, affected by the conflict who lack appropriate education and/or employment opportunities.

312. Acknowledging the significant efforts made in this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Continue to give attention to the needs of children affected by the war and end the reconscription of children;
- (b) Give particular attention to providing education and/or employment opportunities for adolescents and young people, in both urban and rural areas.

- Malawi, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 104 at paras. 434 and 435.

434. ...The Committee is also concerned at the gender and regional disparities in enrolment in schools...

435. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

- (c) Progressively ensure that girls and boys, as well as children from urban, rural and least developed areas, have equal access to educational opportunities;

...

See also:

- Burkina Faso, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 103 at paras. 477 and 478.
- Guinea-Bissau, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 12 at paras. 76, 77 and 82-85.

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76. The Committee is concerned that children living in urban centres have very few areas, such as parks, in which they can play safely and that the State party report itself notes in its report the absence of parks in the country (para. 230).

77. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure the existence of areas, such as parks, within urban centres, which may be used by children for leisure activities;

(b) Consider the adoption of legislation or administrative rules, and the allocation of an appropriate budget, to ensure that leisure areas for children are maintained as a priority in urban planning decisions.

...

82. The Committee is concerned at the number and situation of street children in urban regions of the country.

83. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to provide assistance to these children and to address the causes leading children to live on the streets.

84. The Committee is concerned at the lack of information regarding the activities of the very high proportion of children who do not go to school. There are indicators that these children may, in urban areas, be involved in prostitution or may spend much time on the street, where they are vulnerable to many kinds of exploitation (for example, in drug-trafficking, sexual exploitation, drug abuse).

85. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Undertake a study to assess the situation of children not attending school and to implement, based on the results of the study, all appropriate measures to protect effectively children from all forms of exploitation, including through prevention and the rehabilitation and recovery of child victims;

...

- Niger, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 37 at paras. 161 and 162.

161. The Committee is concerned at the breakdown of family structures, notably in suburban areas, due to large families, the existence of polygamy, and lack of education, poverty and unemployment which negatively affect the upbringing and development of the child, particularly in the many larger families.

162. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to

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reinforce the capacities of families, especially families in the most precarious situation, in order to support them in bringing up their children, in the light of article 18.2 of the Convention, and to emphasize the role of fathers in that regard. In addition, the Committee recommends that the State party raise awareness in society at large concerning forced marriage and undertake a study to assess the effect of polygamy on the upbringing and development of the child.

- Tunisia, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 68 at paras. 278, 279, 293 and 294.

278. ...The Committee is deeply concerned that the principle of non-discrimination is not fully implemented in practice with respect to certain groups.

279. In accordance with article 2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Make concerted efforts at all levels to address discrimination, notably discrimination based on the political and human rights activities, expressed opinions or beliefs of children or their parents, legal guardians or family members; disability; national, ethnic, or social origin, by means of a review and reorientation of policies, including increased budgetary allocations for programmes targeting the most vulnerable groups;

(b) Enhance efforts to close gaps in the enjoyment of rights between different regions, and between urban and rural communities;

...

293. The Committee notes the sustained commitment by the State party to implement its primary health policies and the ensuing achievements in the area of health care, notably the decrease by 40 per cent of infant and under-5 mortality rates over the past decade, and achievements in the area of vaccinations, among others. While noting the delegation's statement that a plan has been formulated to address the issue of persisting regional and urban/rural disparities in the availability and quality of maternal and child health-care services, the Committee nevertheless remains concerned at the persistence of this problem as well as challenges regarding the provision of health services dealing with the specific needs of adolescents.

294. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) To reinforce its efforts to allocate appropriate resources, and develop and adopt policies and programmes to improve and protect the health situation of children, particularly in the rural regions showing the highest mortality indicators;

...

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- Argentina, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 8 at paras. 44, 45, 71, 72, 81 and 82.

44. The Committee expresses its concern that budgetary allocations for children are still insufficient to respond to federal, provincial and local priorities for the protection and promotion of children's rights and to overcome and remedy existing disparities between rural and urban areas, as well as within urban areas, in particular Buenos Aires, with respect to public services provided to children. It notes with deep concern that, according to recent statistics mentioned by the State party in its reply to the list of issues, 69.2 per cent of children in Argentina live in poverty, of whom 35.4 per cent live in extreme poverty.

45. In light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party:

(a) To review economic and social policies and the allocation of resources in the budget with a view to ensuring that the maximum amount of available resources is allocated to promoting and protecting the rights of the child at the federal, regional and local levels, especially in the fields of health, education, social welfare and security, as previously recommended ([CRC/C/15/Add.36], para. 16);

(b) To identify the amount and proportion of resources spent on children at the national and local levels in order to evaluate the impact of expenditures on children.

...

71. While noting the decrease in the infant, child and maternal mortality rates, the Committee is nevertheless concerned that the rates remain high and that there are great disparities in these rates, in particular with regard to children from a lower socio-economic background, those living in rural areas, in particular in the northern provinces, and indigenous children. It also notes that 6 out of 10 infant deaths could be avoided by low-cost actions.

72. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of all children without discrimination, in particular by focusing more on health promotion and prevention;

...

(c) Provide adequate antenatal and post-natal health-care services and develop campaigns to inform parents about basic child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation, family planning and reproductive health, especially in the provinces.

...

81. The Committee, while noting the increase in school enrolment for both primary and secondary education, remains concerned at the limited access to education and at the high

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drop out and repetition rates, especially at secondary school level, which affect, in particular, children from marginalized urban and rural areas, indigenous children and children from migrant families, particularly illegal migrants. It further notes with concern the reduction in education spending which affects, in particular, poorer children.

82. In light of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Enforce the Social Plan of Education in order to ensure regular attendance at school and the reduction of drop out rates, especially with regard to the most vulnerable children;

...

- Ukraine, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 70 at paras. 353 and 354.

353. The Committee welcomes the efforts undertaken by the State party to improve the education system with the introduction of the Act “On education”, which includes such aims as ensuring the delivery of compulsory secondary education to all children of school age. The Committee also welcomes the adoption of State standards for higher education. The Committee remains concerned, however, that:

...

(e) There are important regional disparities in the number of education establishments and in the quality of education available, with rural areas being at a particular disadvantage, and that children of small national minorities such as Roma do not get quality education, including in their own language;

...

354. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure the availability of free primary education and accessibility for all children in the State party, giving particular attention to children in rural communities, Roma children, Crimean Tartar children and children of other minorities, as well as children from disadvantaged backgrounds, to good quality education, including in their own language;

...

- Burkina Faso, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 103 at paras. 465 and 466.

465. ...[T]he Committee is concerned that the survival and development of children in the State party continue to be threatened by early childhood diseases, infectious diseases, diarrhoea and malnutrition. Concern is also expressed at the poor state of sanitation and at the insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas.

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466. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Reinforce its efforts to allocate adequate resources and develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes, including the strengthening of the expanded programme of immunization, to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas;

...

(d) Pursue additional avenues of cooperation and assistance for the improvement of child health with, among others, WHO and UNICEF.

...

- Poland, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 120 at paras. 510, 511, 537 and 538.

510. The Committee notes with concern that allocations for children from the central budget declined from 2000 to 2001 and are insufficient to respond to national and local priorities for the protection and promotion of children's rights and to overcome and remedy existing disparities between rural and urban areas with respect to services provided to children.

511. While recognizing the difficult economic conditions, the Committee recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children "to the maximum extent of ... available resources". Noting the State party's efforts at administrative reform and the decentralization of service provision, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen, to the maximum extent of available resources, the capacity of local governments in rural and urban areas equally to implement the economic, social and cultural rights of children.

...

537. The Committee notes the new initiatives to provide textbooks to children from poor families and provide all schools with computers, yet it remains concerned at the increasing disparities in access to education, the material condition of schools and the quality of education between rural and urban areas, particularly with regard to kindergartens and extracurricular programmes and activities.

538. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that children in rural areas have equal opportunities for a quality education which provides them with the skills to enter the labour market or university-level education based on their merit, by:

(a) Seeking innovative means for promoting the cognitive, social and emotional development of children, through, *inter alia*, programmes that foster interaction between children and their peers and parental education programmes on the benefits of early childhood education, ensuring that there are sufficient and appropriate kindergarten facilities

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for all children in rural areas; orienting the education system towards achieving the aims mentioned in article 29, paragraph 1, of the Convention and in the Committee's General Comment No. 1 on the aims of education; and introducing human rights, including children's rights, into the school curricula;

(b) Ensuring that rural areas and poorer communities are provided with additional funds to allow them to provide the same quality of education and level of extracurricular programmes as urban schools;

(c) Ensuring that students from poor families or those in rural areas have access to scholarships or other forms of financial support that allow them to attend general secondary schools in preparation for university.

- Romania, CRC, CRC/124 (2003) 49 at paras. 211, 212, 242, 243, 250 and 251.

211. The Committee is concerned that budget allocations for health and education remain low and that children living in rural areas may be disproportionately affected. In particular, it notes that some counties and communities are economically disadvantaged *vis-à-vis* others and are therefore unable to provide their children with an adequate level of services.

212. In the light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Increase the budget for the implementation of children's rights, prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, in particular those from socially marginalized groups, to the maximum extent of its available resources;

(b) In view of the decentralization in the provision of social services and taking into account article 2 of the Convention, ensure sufficient resource allocation (human and financial) for the full implementation of the Convention throughout the State party, especially for disadvantaged counties and communities.

...

242. The Committee is encouraged by the adoption of a national strategy for the health sector by the Ministry of Health and Family in December 2001 and by its aims and goals as noted in the written replies to the list of issues. It further welcomes the cooperation of the State party with international organizations in the domain of health care. Nevertheless, the Committee is deeply concerned:

(a) At the poor quality and accessibility of primary health-care services, especially in rural areas, and for poor households;

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(b) At the high infant mortality rate, particularly in rural areas;

...

243. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to implement the national strategy for the health sector through adequate and sustainable allocation of resources (human and financial), including training of sufficient numbers of health-care professionals, provision of adequate salaries for health-care workers and investments in health-care infrastructure, especially in the most disadvantaged areas;

(b) Improve the effectiveness of antenatal care, maternal health education and immunization programmes;

...

250. The Committee notes the initiatives to launch special programmes and provide free textbooks and school materials, as well as meals, to encourage school enrolment and attendance. However, the Committee is concerned that:

(a) The number of children from rural areas and the percentage of girls dropping out of school are disproportionately high;

...

251. The Committee recommends that the State party, taking into account the Committee's general comment No. 1 on the aims of education:

(a) Make every effort to increase the length of compulsory education;

(b) Make every effort to ensure that compulsory education, and possibly secondary education, is free for all children;

...

(e) Take steps to strengthen education infrastructure and resources, including with a view to reducing disparities between urban and rural areas;

...

- Viet Nam, CRC, CRC/C/124 (2003) 67 at paras. 296, 297, 300, 301, 312, 313, 316 and 317.

296. While welcoming the State party's many efforts in this regard, the Committee is concerned that all children are still not registered at birth and that there are, in particular, problems with the birth registration of children living in remote and mountainous regions, where parents are not always aware of birth registration requirements.

297. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to secure the registration at birth of all children, giving particular attention to children living

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in rural and mountainous areas.

...

300. The Committee notes with deep concern that, as recognized in the State party's report, family disintegration, including divorce, is on the rise and contributes to the increasing numbers of children in conflict with the law and of those living on the street and abusing drugs. The Committee is further concerned at the growing gap between rich and poor families, and that poverty puts children at greater risk of exploitation and abuse.

301. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Consider increasing financial support for economically disadvantaged families, particularly within development and poverty reduction plans for rural and remote areas.

...

312. While noting the State party's efforts to achieve universal enrolment at primary school level, the Committee is concerned that there are significant gaps in access to and quality of education between urban and rural or mountainous regions, and that the school system still suffers from a shortage of well-trained teachers and educational materials...

313. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all appropriate measures to increase enrolment in pre-primary education, in particular for girls and in rural areas, and ensure the right to quality, free primary education for all children;

(b) Increase the financial assistance provided to students from economically disadvantaged families at all levels, including pre-primary, particularly in rural areas;

(c) Recruit and train a greater number of teachers from all ethnic minority groups and continue to provide incentives to teachers working in remote and mountainous regions;

(d) Prioritize rural areas and remote and mountainous regions in existing programmes to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum, and in the construction and development of school infrastructure.

...

316. The Committee welcomes the State party's ratification of ILO Convention No. 182, concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. However, it remains concerned that the incidence of the economic exploitation of children remains widespread in the agricultural sector as well as in gold mines, timber operations, the service sector and other private sector enterprises...

317. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

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(b) Develop and implement a comprehensive child labour monitoring system for both rural and urban areas in collaboration with NGOs, community-based organizations, law enforcement personnel, labour inspectors and the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC);

...

- Haiti, CRC, CRC/124 (2003) 95 at paras. 436, 437, 444 and 445.

436. ...The Committee...remains concerned that access to health services in the rural areas is limited, and that the survival and development of children in the State party continue to be threatened by early childhood and infectious diseases, diarrhoea and malnutrition. The Committee is further concerned at the poor state of sanitation and at the insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas.

437. The Committee recommends that the State party, by, *inter alia*, implementing as soon as possible its National Health Plan:

(a) Reinforce its efforts to allocate appropriate resources and develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas;

(b) Facilitate greater access to primary health services, notably in rural areas; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; and continue to promote proper breastfeeding practices;

...

444. The Committee notes the adoption of the National Education and Training Plan and the establishment of a pilot committee for its implementation. The Committee further welcomes the increasing budget allocated to education, as well as the establishment of the National Committee for the Education of Girls. However, the Committee is concerned at the still low enrolment ratios, and the disparities in enrolment between girls and boys and between rural and urban areas...

445. In the light of articles 28 and 29 and other relevant provisions of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Continue its efforts to ensure that all children, especially girls, have equal access to educational opportunities, paying special attention to those living in rural and remote areas;

...

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- Zambia, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 32 at paras. 197, 198, 207 and 208.

197. The Committee notes the efforts of the State party to improve health care for children through, *inter alia*, the National Health Strategic Plan 2000-2005 and the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses. However, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient number of trained medical personnel; the weakness of family planning services; the high maternal, child and infant mortality rates; the high incidence of malaria and acute respiratory infections; the fact that, in some instances, male circumcision is carried out in unsafe medical conditions; and the poor sanitation and limited access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas.

198. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to allocate appropriate resources and develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas;

(b) Facilitate greater access to free primary health services; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; reinforce family planning services; ensure the health of boys and protect them against unsafe circumcision; and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(c) Pursue additional avenues for cooperation and assistance for child health improvement with, among others, WHO and UNICEF.

...

207. ...The Committee is...concerned at the decreasing budget allocation to education, gender and regional disparities in enrolment in schools, absenteeism, the high dropout (especially among girls) and repeat rates, the poor quality of education, the insufficient number of trained teachers, insufficient schools and classrooms, the lack of relevant learning material and the limited access to pre-school education, notably in rural areas...

208. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Progressively ensure that girls and boys, as well as children from urban, rural and least developed areas, have equal access to educational opportunities;

...

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- Sri Lanka, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 48 at paras. 269 and 270.

269. The Committee is encouraged by the education reforms initiated by the State party in 1999, which focus on improving the quality of education and also emphasize early childhood development. At the same time, the Committee is concerned that all principals, teachers and parents, particularly in rural areas, are not fully aware of the objective of these reforms, that their implementation is not uniform across all regions and that there is no mechanism for monitoring and evaluating their implementation.

270. In light of articles 28, 29 and 31 of the Convention, as well as general comment No. 1 on the aims of education, the Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Provide additional information on the reforms and adequate material resources for their implementation to principals, teachers and parents in rural and conflict-affected areas;

(c) Establish a participatory mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the education reforms which involves principals, teachers, parents and students;

(d) Ensure that there is a sufficient number of trained teachers in rural and conflict-affected areas;

(e) Include human rights education as part of the curriculum.

- Morocco, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 100 at paras. 508 and 509.

508. ...[T]he Committee is concerned at the high dropout and repetition rates, gender and regional disparities in the education system, the cost of primary education (supplies, textbooks, etc.) and the decreasing enrolment in early childhood education...

509. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Progressively ensure that girls and boys, from urban, rural and least developed areas, all have equal access to educational opportunities, without any financial obstacles;

...

- Syrian Arab Republic, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 116 at paras. 551, 552, 566 and 567.

551. The Committee is concerned that both direct and indirect discrimination against the child or his or her parents or legal guardians persists, contrary to article 2 of the Convention, particularly with respect to:

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...

(b) Disparities in access to health and educational services between rural and urban areas, and particularly that the rural north and north-east of the country lag behind in social indicators.

552. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take effective measures, for example by enacting or rescinding legislation where necessary, and implementing disparity-reduction programmes to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, in accordance with article 2;

...

566. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses strategy and the State party's support for various initiatives, such as the Community School Initiative and "healthy villages" and notes the achievements in child and maternal health, as indicated in recent multiple indicator cluster surveys. But it is still concerned:

...

(f) About the inadequate access to safe drinking water and sanitation in rural areas.

567. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that its commitment to public primary health care is matched by adequate allocations of human and financial resources and that all children, especially in rural areas, have access to health care;

...

- Kazakhstan, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 129 at paras. 637 and 641.

637. While welcoming the efforts made in 2002 to increase the accessibility of health services in rural areas, the Committee remains concerned at the reduced quality and accessibility of health-care services, particularly affecting children in rural areas, as noted in the State party's report...

641. The Committee urgently recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that all children, especially from the most vulnerable groups and in rural areas, have access to primary health care, and encourages the State party to pursue its efforts in this respect and to implement the recommendations of CEDAW as they relate to children;

...

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- Pakistan, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 37 at paras. 218 and 219.

218. ...[T]he Committee is extremely concerned at the very poor health situation of children and the unavailability of health-care services in the State party for them. Particular matters of concern are:

...

(e) The poor provision of health care, particularly in rural areas, owing to lack of necessary support structures such as education, communication, transport and other facilities, as well as reports of corruption within the framework of projects supported by international organizations;

...

219. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(e) Improve access to health care, especially in rural areas, through coordinated and comprehensive health-care strategies, as well as transparent allocation and distribution of donor funds and other forms of international assistance;

...

- Madagascar, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 56 at para. 299.

299. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Increase the allocation of adequate human and financial resources and develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes, in particular strengthening the expended programme of immunization, the Bamako Initiative, the baby-friendly hospital Initiative and the nutritional programme to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas;

...

- Bangladesh, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 93 at paras. 444, 445, 483 and 484.

444. The Committee notes with appreciation the legislative measures that have been undertaken by the State party in order to ensure the implementation of the Convention. Nevertheless, the Committee remains concerned that domestic legislation and customary law are not fully compatible with all the principles and provisions of the Convention and that laws implementing the Convention are frequently not applied, particularly in rural areas.

445. The Committee recommends that the State party take all effective measures to harmonize its domestic legislation fully with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in particular with regard to existing minimum ages of criminal responsibility and of

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marriage, child labour and harmful traditional practices affecting children.

...

483. The Committee notes with appreciation the efforts undertaken and the achievements made by the State party to reduce infant and under-5 mortality rates, as well as the eradication of polio and the improved immunization coverage. Nevertheless, the Committee remains deeply concerned:

...

(d) At the low level of awareness among the population, particularly in rural areas, of the need to use hygienic, sanitary practices;

...

(f) At the lack of infrastructure for access to health facilities, notably in rural areas.

484. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(d) Enhance the efforts to educate the population in hygienic, sanitary behaviour, notably through awareness-raising campaigns and programmes;

...

- Indonesia, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 8 at paras. 77 and 83.

77. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure universal access to primary health care, especially maternal and child health-care services and facilities, including in rural and conflict-affected areas;

...

83. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Progressively ensure that girls and boys, from urban, rural and least developed areas, have equal access to educational opportunities, without any financial obstacles;

...

(i) Continue its cooperation with UNESCO, UNICEF, the Asian Development Bank and the civil society to improve the education sector.

- Guyana, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 26 at paras. 162 and 163.

162. ...The Committee is...concerned at the decrease in the quality of education, teacher availability and training and at the widening of educational disparities in the hinterland regions.

163. The Committee recommends that the State party:

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...

(c) Develop and use indicators for quality education, especially in the hinterland regions;

...

- India, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 75 at paras. 403, 404, 436, 437, 442 and 443.

403. In light of article 2 of the Convention, the Committee is deeply concerned at the widely disparate levels of enjoyment of the rights in the Convention by girls, children living in certain states, rural areas and slums, and children belonging to certain castes and tribal and indigenous groups.

404. The Committee recommends that concerted efforts at all levels be taken to address social inequalities by reviewing and reorienting policies, including increasing budgetary allocations for programmes targeting the most vulnerable groups, and that technical assistance be sought from, among others, UNICEF.

...

436. The Committee is deeply concerned at the existence of harmful traditional practices such as incidents relating to dowries and to devadasis.

437. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Reinforce its sensitization programmes, with the involvement of community leaders, practitioners and the general public, to change traditional attitudes and discourage harmful practices, in particular in rural areas.

...

442. ...While noting an increased enrolment rate, the Committee is seriously concerned that 60 million children do not attend primary school. The Committee is further concerned at the high, although decreasing, level of illiteracy and the striking disparities in terms of access to education, attendance at primary and secondary school and dropout rates between boys and girls. The Committee is also concerned that striking disparities regarding these rates also exist between different states, between rural and urban areas, and between the affluent and the poor and disadvantaged groups...

443. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Strengthen its efforts to progressively ensure that that all girls and boys, in urban, rural and least developed areas and children belonging to Scheduled Castes and Tribes, have equal access to educational opportunities;

- El Salvador, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004) 8 at paras. 71 and 72.

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71. The Committee welcomes the improvement of primary health care, which has led to a decrease in infant mortality from 35 per thousand live births in 1998 to 25 in 2003. It is, however, concerned that infant mortality rates and other health indicators are significantly worse in some departments of the State party. It also notes with concern that the incidence of anaemia has increased, affecting 19.8 per cent of children below the age of 5 and about 10 per cent of mothers, in particular in rural areas...

72. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to strengthen its efforts in improving the health situation of children in the State party and eliminating all restrictions on the access to quality health services in all areas of the country, in particular rural areas, so as to level out health disparities...

- Panama, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004) 23 at paras. 136, 137, 142, 143, 149 and 150.

136. The Committee welcomes the considerable reduction in levels of child mortality and the eradication of several communicable diseases, but is concerned that this progress has not been accompanied by a similar reduction in the rate of maternal mortality and that there is a significant discrepancy in the mortality indicators between urban and rural areas...

137. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party continue to strengthen its efforts in health reform, in particular with regard to primary health care, ensuring accessibility of quality health care in all areas in the country, including far-reaching programmes, training of local villagers in safe midwifery and providing adequate prenatal care...

...

142. The Committee notes with concern the persistent high rate of poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas, and the growing disparities between rich and poor.

143. The Committee recommends that the State party formulate a comprehensive national strategy to reduce poverty, targeting the most disadvantaged regions and groups and ensuring that the needs of all children are met, seeking international cooperation and assistance whenever necessary.

...

149. The Committee welcomes the efforts made by the State party to reduce child labour and the ratification of ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182. The Committee remains concerned about the high number of children involved in labour, mainly as domestic and rural workers (in sugar cane plantations), and that the State party has not adequately enforced child labour provisions.

150. The Committee recommends that the State party:

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(a) Ensures the full implementation of the child labour provisions and take all necessary measures to prevent child labour, in rural as well as urban areas (child domestic workers);
...

- Sao Tome and Principe, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004) 54 at paras. 290 and 291.

290. ...[T]he Committee is very concerned that:

...
(d) Children in remote areas do not have access to schools;

...
291. In the light of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

...
(c) Progressively ensure that girls and boys, from urban, rural and least developed areas have equal access to educational opportunities, without any financial obstacles;

- Myanmar, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004) 81 at paras. 410, 411, 426-429, 436 and 437.

410. The Committee notes that article 22 of the 1993 Child Law refers to access to information, but is concerned that many children, notably those living in remote and border areas, do not have adequate access to appropriate information.

411. In light of article 17, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that all children, in particular those in remote and border areas, are provided with adequate access to information.

...
426. The Committee notes the progress achieved by the National Health Plan 1996-2001, notably the good immunization coverage through routine vaccinations supplemented by the National Immunization Days (NIDs), and notes the adoption of the 2001-2006 National Health Plan, but is concerned at the high infant and under-5 mortality rates and the low life expectancy in Myanmar. The Committee is also concerned that health services in the remote areas continue to lack adequate human and financial resources and are often inaccessible, especially during the rainy season, resulting in a significant difference in the availability of services between rural and urban areas and consequently much higher mortality figures in rural areas...

427. In line with its previous recommendations ([CRC/C/15/Add.69], para. 38), the Committee recommends that the State party:

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(a) Reinforce its efforts to allocate appropriate resources as well as develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes, in particular the 2001-2006 National Health Plan, to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas;

...

(c) Facilitate greater access to primary health-care services;

...

428. In spite of the progress achieved regarding access to drinking water and safe excreta disposal, as indicated in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys held in 2000, the Committee is concerned that a large number of children, notably those living in rural areas, still do not enjoy adequate access to clean drinking water and sanitation systems.

429. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure access by all children, in particular those in remote and rural areas, to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation systems.

...

436. The Committee welcomes the launching in 2000 of the Special Four-Year Plan for Education (2000/01-2003/04) aimed at promoting the basic education sector, and of the "Education for All" National Action Plan introduced in 2003 which is aimed specifically at the "access, quality and relevance" of education, but is seriously concerned at the following problematic aspects of the existing education system:

...

(b) The significant variation in school enrolment between urban and rural areas, and the particularly low level of enrolment of children belonging to minority groups;

...

437. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(e) Strengthen its efforts to progressively ensure that girls as well as boys, from urban, rural and remote areas, and children belonging to minority groups all have equal access to educational opportunities;

...

- Brazil, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 10 at paras. 77 and 78.

77. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to improve Brazil's health level, in particular the establishment of the Minimum Healthcare Allocation (PAB) in 1998. The Committee further notes the reduction of the incidence of child mortality as well as the positive changes observed in the child profile and in the HIV/AIDS incidence... The Committee is...concerned about health conditions, particularly of children who reside in rural

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areas, resulting in marked disparities in the quality of health services provided and of the lower socio-economic segments of the population in the North and North-east regions.

78. The Committee urges that the State party continue to develop the health system, ensuring the provision of the highest standard of health for all children, paying special attention to children in rural and geographically remote areas as well as those belonging to low-income families.

- Kyrgyzstan, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 50 at paras. 267 and 268.

267. The Committee is...concerned at the increasing discrimination against the girl child, in particular girls living in rural areas, due to re-emerging trends such as bridal kidnappings and forced marriages.

268. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to ensure implementation of existing laws guaranteeing the principle of non-discrimination and full compliance with article 2 of the Convention, and adopt a proactive and comprehensive strategy to eliminate discrimination on any grounds and against all vulnerable groups. The Committee urges the State party to pay particular attention to the situation of the girl child, in particular girls living in rural areas, in order to halt the practices of forced marriage and bridal kidnapping, which prevent the girl child from fully enjoying the rights enshrined in the Convention.

- Angola, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 78 at paras. 427-430.

427. The Committee expresses its concern at the high and increasing number of children living in poverty and extreme poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas. It notes with particular concern the very poor living conditions of many internally displaced children and children living in so-called informal settlements.

428. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to provide acceptable living conditions for children and their families, in particular in view of the child's right to protection, health and education. Such efforts should include target measures to improve the living conditions of those children and families most in need.

429. The Committee notes with appreciation a number of initiatives, including the National Plan on Education for All, to rebuild the educational infrastructure and expand the educational system so as to enrol more children and improve pre-school education. The Committee...is...concerned about the marked disparities in enrolment between rural and urban areas, the high rates of non-attendance and repetition, overcrowded classrooms and

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teaching in two or three shifts, fees and extra payments charged in many schools, the low quality of education, the large number of untrained teachers, the insufficient in-service training and low salaries of teachers...

430. The Committee urges the State party to take all necessary measures:

...

(f) To prevent and eliminate gender and urban-rural disparities in school attendance and completion rates;

...

- Albania, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 19 at paras. 98 and 99.

98. ...[T]he Committee is concerned that discrimination persists in particular with respect to ethnic minorities, including Roma children, disabled children and children living in remote areas many of whom have reduced access to support and protection. The Committee regrets the lack of information on the efforts made by the State party to counter these forms of discrimination while noting statements that this is primarily a result of mentality and attitudes rather than lack of related legislation...

99. The Committee urges the State party to undertake concerted actions to develop and implement policies aimed at countering the various forms of discrimination in the country. This would include revision of existing legislation, introduction of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation and conducting educational campaigns to address discrimination against the Roma and other minorities, as well as discrimination on grounds such as disability, sex, birth status or others.

- Belize, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 59 at paras. 344, 345, 350, 351, 357 and 358.

344. ...While noting with appreciation the State party's efforts to improve the primary health care, including the establishment of the National Health Insurance Scheme and the School Health and Physical Education Services (SHAPES) programme, the Committee is nevertheless concerned at the regional disparities in accessibility to health services, the high number of infant deaths and regional differences in this respect, and the situation of malnutrition among infants and children. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation in the rural and most remote areas...

345. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Prioritize the allocations of financial and human resources to the health sector in order to ensure an equal access to quality health care by children in all areas of the country and to

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strengthen its efforts to implement the National Health Insurance Scheme;

(b) Continue its efforts to improve prenatal care, including training programmes for midwives and traditional birth attendants, and take all necessary measures to reduce infant mortality rates, especially in rural areas;

...

(d) Ensure access to safe drinking water and sanitation in all areas of the country;

...

(f) Seek international assistance, including from UNICEF and WHO, to that effect.

...

350. The Committee is concerned at the persistent high rate of children living in poverty, especially in rural areas. It notes the development and implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Committee also notes with appreciation the State party's efforts to facilitate access to nutrition, including through implementing a Food and Nutrition Security Policy for Belize and the feeding programmes of primary schools.

351. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. The Committee also recommends that the State party evaluate the impact of the Poverty Reduction Strategy on children and adolescents. The Committee further recommends that the State party increase its efforts to develop and implement the Food and Nutrition Security Policy for Belize and continue to implement the feeding programmes in primary schools.

...

357. The Committee welcomes the ILO-funded pilot project to address child labour problems, but remains concerned at the high rate of working children in Belize and the negative consequences resulting from the exploitation of child labour, such as school dropouts and the negative effects on health caused by harmful and hazardous work. The Committee notes with particular concern the high number of child rural workers and regrets the lack of adequate data on child labour in the country.

358. In the light of ILO Conventions No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and the relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure the full implementation of the child labour provisions, including the provision of non-formal education and training, in order to ensure the development of children to their full potential; take all necessary measures to prevent child labour, including in rural areas, *inter alia*, by extending the ILO-funded project to those parts of the country, as well as to urban areas; and improve the monitoring of child labour in the country. The Committee encourages the State party to strengthen its cooperation with ILO and its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in this respect.

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- Islamic Republic of Iran, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 88 at paras. 495 and 496.

495. The Committee is...concerned about the disparity that continues to exist between boys and girls; the high dropout rates of girls in rural schools upon reaching puberty; the lack of female teachers in rural areas; long distances between homes and schools, which keep girls at home, particularly after primary school; and the lack of mobile schools for nomadic children, as well as the remarkable differences in the personal and material equipment between schools in urban and rural areas and between the most and least developed provinces, resulting in unequal educational opportunities...

496. While welcoming the State party's initiatives with respect to youth, the Committee encourages the State party to continue its efforts to reach its goal of universal basic education and recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Eliminate all disparities in resources provided to schools in urban and rural areas in order to guarantee equal educational opportunities throughout the country;

(d) Better equip schools with textbooks, and other materials, and well-trained teachers, particularly female teachers, and introduce active, creative, and cooperative learning methods in schools to promote children's capacities in a knowledge-based economy and society;

...

- Togo, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 104 at paras. 563, 564 and 574.

563. While acknowledging the improvements in the health-care sector, in particular the establishment of clinics in rural areas and the activities implemented to improve the nutrition of children, the Committee is particularly concerned at the increasing infant mortality rate, the high child and maternal mortality rates, the low birth weight, child malnutrition, the low breastfeeding rate, the low rate of immunization, the prevalence of infectious diseases, mosquito-born diseases, including malaria, and the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The Committee is further concerned about the disparity between the number of health centres in rural and urban areas.

564. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Develop and implement a long-term comprehensive policy with a strong emphasis on early childhood development and community health in which measures will be taken:

(i) To decrease reduce significantly infant and maternal mortality rates;

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(ii) To ensure universal access to maternal and child health-care services and facilities, including in rural areas;

(iii) To strengthen its efforts to ensure that all children have access to basic health care, in both urban and rural areas;

(iv) To prioritize the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation services, especially in rural areas;

(v) To prevent malnutrition, malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases;

(vi) To immunize as many children and mothers as possible;

(vii) To promote exclusive breastfeeding until the age of 6 months;

(b) Seek in this regard technical assistance from, among others, UNICEF.

...

574. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Ensure that girls and boys, from urban and rural areas, all have equal access to educational opportunities, without any financial obstacles;

...

- Bolivia, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 121 at paras. 618, 619, , 638, 639 and 644-647.

618. The Committee is deeply concerned about the significant disparities in the State party in the implementation of the rights enshrined in the Convention, reflected in a range of social indicators like enrolment in and completion of education, infant mortality rates and birth registration, indicating persistent discrimination against indigenous children, girls, children with disabilities and children living in rural areas.

619. In light of article 2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of *de facto* discrimination against indigenous children, children with disabilities, girls and children living in rural areas.

...

638. ...The Committee...notes with concern the lack of public assistance and special education for children with disabilities; the large number of children with disabilities who do not attend any form of school education, especially in rural areas; and the lack of an integration policy in general for these children.

639. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures:

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(a) To address all issues of discrimination, including social discrimination and discrimination against children with disabilities in rural areas;

...

(d) To provide equal educational opportunities for children with disabilities, including by providing the necessary support and ensuring that teachers are trained to educate children with disabilities within regular schools.

...

644. While welcoming the formulation of Bolivia's poverty reduction strategy, which sets out a national plan of action up to 2015, the Committee notes with concern the persistent high rate of poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas.

645. The Committee recommends that the State party take the necessary measures to ensure the continuing implementation of the national poverty reduction strategy, targeting the most disadvantaged regions and groups and ensuring that the needs of all children are met and their rights duly protected. The State party is encouraged to seek international cooperation and assistance whenever necessary.

646. While welcoming the recent reform of the education system and the increase in coverage of both primary and secondary education achieved in the last years, the Committee is concerned at continuing low enrolment rates, especially among girls and indigenous children; the considerable disparities in the coverage and quality of education between urban and rural areas; and high dropout rates and persistently high illiteracy rates, particularly among rural and indigenous children and girls...

647. The Committee encourages the State party:

...

(b) To strengthen efforts to bridge the gaps in the coverage and quality of education throughout the country;

(c) To strengthen efforts to bridge the gender disparity in education, giving special attention to promoting the education of rural girls;

(d) To take measures to identify the causes of the high dropout rate in schools, particularly in rural areas, and to take steps to address the situation;

...

- Nigeria, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 135 at paras. 725 and 726.

725. The Committee welcomes that education was given the highest priority in the State party's annual budget. It also notes with appreciation the initiatives of some State Governments to facilitate children's access to education and to increase school enrolment,

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including the “school meal plus programme” and the development of the Strategy for Acceleration of Girls’ Education in Nigeria (SAGEN). The Committee also welcomes efforts made by the State party, in cooperation with the civil society, to implement early childhood education programmes. However, in the light of the Committee’s general comment No. 1 on article 29 (1) of the Convention (aims of education), the Committee remains concerned about the various number of problems in the State party’s education system, including:

...

(c) Generally low level of, and regional disparities in, the quality of education in the State party, especially with regard to resources, facilities and the level of teaching;

(d) Gender and regional disparities in school enrolment;

...

726. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Prioritize equal accessibility to educational opportunities for girls and boys from urban and rural areas;

(c) Take necessary measures to remedy the low quality of education and to ensure better internal efficiency in the management of education;

- Philippines, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 24 at paras. 134-137, 161-164, 169 and 170.

134. The Committee notes with appreciation the activities of the child helpline “Bantay Bata 163”, which is an important instrument for children to express their concerns and views and seek help and advice. However, the Committee is concerned at the fact that the helpline is only accessible to children living in the capital region and its expansion to the rural areas of the country lacks core funding.

135. The Committee recommends that the State party support the expansion of “Bantay Bata 163” child helpline by making it nationally accessible and toll-free and providing it with adequate human, technical and financial resources...

136. While noting the estimated increase in the birth registration rate and the measures taken by the State party in this respect, including the Unregistered Children Project conducted in collaboration with PLAN International and the National Statistics Office, the Committee remains concerned at the difficulties in ensuring timely birth registration of children, in particular children belonging to religious or other minority groups or indigenous peoples and children living in the remote areas of the country and at the fact that birth registration is not free of charge and not equally accessible to all parents in the entire territory of the State party...

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137. In order to secure the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by children and to achieve 100 per cent birth registration, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to develop an efficient and at all stages free of charge birth registration system, which covers its territory fully, including through using more effectively mobile birth registration units to reach the most remote areas of its territory. The Committee requests the State party to pay particular attention to improved access to an early birth registration for parents whose children were born out of wedlock and parents belonging to religious or other minorities or indigenous peoples.

...

161. ...Noting that 8 out of 10 births in rural areas are delivered without professional health facilities and that infant, under-five and maternal mortality rates are relatively high, the Committee expresses its deep concern about insufficient prenatal and post-natal health care, particularly in the rural areas of the country. The low prevalence of breastfeeding, malnutrition among children, including micronutrient malnutrition problems among schoolchildren and in general, children's limited access to quality health services in the remote areas of the country give cause for serious concern...

162. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Implement measures to guarantee access to quality prenatal and post-natal health services and facilities, including training programmes for midwives and traditional birth attendants, by paying particular attention to the rural areas of the country;

...

163. The Committee is concerned, despite the legislative and other measures taken by the State party, about environmental problems, such as air and water pollution and environmental degradation which have serious consequences for children's health and development. As regards access to safe drinking water and sanitation, the Committee is concerned about the regional disparities...

164. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue to strengthen its efforts to reduce pollution and environmental degradation by strengthening the implementation of domestic environmental laws, including Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (Republic Act No. 9003) and the Clean Air Act (Republic Act No. 8749);

...

(c) Take effective measures to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, particularly in the remote areas of the country, as well as raise awareness on hygiene among children and their parents.

...

169. The Committee notes with concern the high number of children living in households below the national poverty line and the wide disparities in wealth between different regions.

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The Committee is deeply concerned about difficulties faced by children living in poverty, as to the enjoyment of their human rights, including access to social and health services and education. The Committee is also concerned about the poor housing situation in the State party and families living, for example in urban slums and squatter communities without adequate infrastructure.

170. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take urgent efforts to raise the standard of living among its rural and urban population living in poverty, *inter alia*, through implementing a poverty reduction strategy and community development, including the participation of children. The Committee requests the State party to increase its efforts to provide material assistance and support to economically disadvantaged children and their families. Moreover, the State party should ensure that children living in poverty are provided with access to social and health services, education and adequate housing.

- Bosnia and Herzegovina, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 49 at paras. 258 and 261.

258. Despite some recent encouraging developments, especially through the adoption of legislative and other measures in the field of education - i.e. the Framework Law on primary and secondary education, the establishment of a nine-year cycle of compulsory education and the Action Plan for meeting educational needs of Roma and other national minorities - the Committee remains concerned at:

...

(d) The fact that, particularly in rural areas, children do not have access to preschool education.

261. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(d) Provide access to preschool education throughout the country, including to children living in rural areas;

...

- Nepal, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 66 at paras. 341, 343, 356 and 357.

341. The Committee welcomes the establishment of a working group to implement the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness strategy in 1997 and commends the State party's efforts in improving the immunization coverage for children under 5, including the recent completion of the comprehensive measles vaccination campaign. The Committee nevertheless shares the concerns of the State party that the health and social services are under tremendous resource constraints and that the overall quality and availability of health

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care available to children in the State party is seriously inadequate, in particular among poor families and in rural areas. In particular, the Committee is concerned about:

...

(d) Inadequate sanitation and access to safe and clean water, in particular in rural areas, which generally suffer from lack of services;

(e) Low awareness about health, hygiene and sanitation, particularly in rural areas and prevalence of traditional practices which could be harmful to the health of children, such as that of consulting witch doctors instead of modern medical facilities and withholding water from children suffering from diarrhoea.

...

343. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue taking all appropriate measures to improve the health infrastructure, including through international cooperation, in order to ensure access to basic health care and services adequately provided with appropriate resources, including basic medicines for all children, and targeting rural areas in particular;

(b) Continue strengthening its efforts to extend immunization coverage to all parts of the country;

...

356. ...The Committee is...concerned about the high dropout rate, and that significant inequality exists in access to education, in part due to the hidden costs associated with schooling, and that a large proportion of girls and children from disadvantaged backgrounds such as *Dalit* children and children with disabilities remain deprived of educational opportunities.

357. The Committee recommends that the State party carefully examine the budget allocations and measures taken within the field, with regard to their impact on the progressive implementation of the child's right to education and leisure activities. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(d) Take further measures to improve the accessibility, in particular for girls, to education of all children, with a view to eliminating the prevailing disparities between girls and boys, as well as between urban and rural areas;

...

(h) Continue to strengthen public provision of early childhood education, in particular in rural areas, and increase the number of trained preschool teachers, and raise awareness amongst parents about the value of early childhood education;

...

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- Ecuador, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 91 at paras. 437 and 438.

437. Despite the considerable efforts made by the State party in the area of health, in particular the reduction in infant mortality over the last 10 years, the Committee remains concerned at the increasing adolescent mortality rates as stated in the State party report ([CRC/C/65/Add.28,] para. 143). The Committee is also concerned at the high levels of malnutrition, in particular in rural areas.

438. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to improve the health situation of children in the State party and improve access to quality health services and address the issue of malnutrition, particularly in rural and remote areas...

- Mongolia, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 113 at paras. 556-559 and 564-568.

556. The Committee expresses its grave concern about the situation of children with disabilities and regrets that discrimination against them exists. While noting that the majority of services for children with disabilities exist in the urban area, the Committee is particularly concerned for children with disabilities living in rural areas of the country and the difficult socio-economic circumstances faced by them...

557. The Committee urges the State party, taking into account the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the recommendations adopted by the Committee on its day of general discussion on the rights of children with disabilities (see CRC/C/69):

...

(b) To collect adequate and disaggregated statistical data on children with disabilities and to use such data in developing policies and programmes to promote their equal opportunities in society, paying particular attention to children with disabilities living in rural areas of the country;

...

558. While noting with appreciation the State party's efforts to improve primary health care, in particular the prevention of infectious diseases such as measles, meningitis and diphtheria as a result of the successful implementation of the National Immunization Programme 1993-2000, the Committee is nevertheless concerned at the regional disparities in access to health services, the high rates of both maternal mortality and under-5 mortality and regional differences in this respect, and the prevailing situation of malnutrition among children... Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that children who have migrated from the rural areas of the country and are living without official registration in the capital have a very limited access to health and social services.

559. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party undertake all necessary

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measures:

(a) To prioritize the allocation of financial and human resources to the health sector, in order to ensure equal access to quality health services by children in all areas of the country, including children living in the most remote areas of the country;

(b) To continue its efforts to improve prenatal care and to significantly reduce maternal and under-5 mortality rates, paying particular attention to mothers and children living in remote areas of the country;

...

(d) To improve the nutritional status of children, for example through introducing a school nutrition programme, with particular attention to children in rural areas;

...

(f) To ensure access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation in all areas of the country and to protect children from the consequences of environmental pollution;

(g) To pay attention to the health situation of those children who have migrated from the rural areas of the country and who are living without official registration in the capital, in order to facilitate their equal access to all health and social services.

...

564. The Committee is deeply concerned at the persistent high rate of poverty in the State party. The Committee notes that, as a consequence of increasing migration from rural areas, poverty is becoming more urbanized and this change has created a range of new social issues, such as children living on the streets. While noting, *inter alia*, the adoption in 2004, of the “Money for hope” benefit system for children living in families with a minimum income and the State party’s efforts to implement its poverty-reduction plan, programmes and projects, the Committee reiterates its concern at the high number of children who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing and other basic services, both in urban and rural areas of the country.

565. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party continue to implement, as a matter of high priority, its national plan and programmes for poverty reduction, paying particular attention to economically disadvantaged families in need of support and material assistance, and to guarantee the rights of the child to an adequate standard of living.

566. While noting with appreciation the State party’s efforts to improve the standard of education and to secure access to education by implementing the revised Law on Education adopted in 1995, the Committee is concerned about the remaining difficulties encountered by children, especially in rural areas of the country, in their access to education and attendance in school. The high number of primary-school-aged children not enrolled in school, including gender and regional disparities in school enrolment, the increasing rates

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of illiteracy and the high rate of school drop-outs, especially in rural areas, give cause for serious concerns.

567. The Committee reiterates its concern about boys belonging to herder families and living in rural areas who are at a higher risk of dropout from school and being involved in child labour. The Committee notes with particular concern that the additional fees collected in schools cause financial obstacles for many children and deny them equal access to education...

568. The Committee recommends that the State party take immediate measures to allocate adequate financial and human resources in order:

(a) To progressively ensure that all children, without any distinction by gender, from all areas of the country, have equal access to quality education without any financial obstacles and to also consider the reinstatement of neighbourhood schools in order to facilitate children's access to education;

(b) To strengthen measures aimed at increasing enrolment rates in primary and secondary education without any regional disparities and to secure that all children have equal opportunities to complete their education;

(c) To strengthen its efforts to adopt and implement effective measures to decrease school dropout rates, especially among children living in rural areas;

...

- Nicaragua, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 132 at paras. 617, 618, 637-639, 644 and 646.

617. The Committee is concerned that the country's adult-centred culture and the high poverty levels, concentrated especially in rural, indigenous and Caribbean areas, prevent the full enjoyment of rights by children belonging to vulnerable groups, such as children with disabilities, indigenous children and children living in rural or remote areas.

618. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to ensure implementation of existing laws guaranteeing the principle of non-discrimination and full compliance with article 2 of the Convention, and adopt a proactive and comprehensive strategy to eliminate discrimination on any grounds and against all vulnerable groups throughout the country.

...

637. The Committee is extremely concerned about the persistence of a high degree of poverty in the State party, especially in the Caribbean/Atlantic region and in rural areas, which create grievous gaps in access to health and health services between rural and urban

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zones and the Caribbean/Atlantic region. Serious concern is expressed at the State party's information that about 2.38 million people (out of a total of about 5.37 million) are in a condition of poverty, while 15.1 per cent of the population is in a situation of extreme poverty.

638. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that:

(a) Only about two thirds of the population have access to clean drinking water and that there is a huge discrepancy between the rates of urban and rural population having access to clean drinking water;

...

639. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all possible actions to reduce poverty and equalize living conditions throughout the country, and ensure access to basic goods and services, such as clean drinking water, especially in remote and rural areas;

(b) Ensure basic health care and services to all children throughout the country and urgently address the problem of malnutrition, with special emphasis on rural and remote areas;

...

644. The Committee is concerned about:

...

(b) Socio-economic and regional disparities - e.g. between urban and rural areas and between the Central/Pacific and Caribbean/Atlantic regions - in the access and enjoyment of the right to education, including lack of facilities in isolated and remote areas;

...

646. The Committee encourages the State party to:

(a) Increase the efforts to eliminate any discrepancy in access to education between urban and rural areas and between the Central/Pacific and Caribbean/Atlantic regions;

...

- Costa Rica, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 149 at paras. 708, 709 and 714-717.

708. The Committee notes the steps taken by the State party to strengthen the access to health services and information for children with disabilities, and train professionals working in public health institutions on the rights of disabled children, as well as the efforts to include children with disabilities in regular school, the prenatal and post-natal screening programmes. The Committee remains concerned, however, at the limited coverage of this progress to the economically disadvantaged and rural populations.

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709. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to expand programmes for children with disabilities including the prenatal and post-natal screening programmes, and ensure their access, *inter alia* through mobile clinics, to economically disadvantaged people in rural areas. The Committee further recommends that the State party strengthen its policy to integrate children in regular schools.

...

714. The Committee takes note of the efforts made by the State party to increase the level of school infrastructure at the country level, and ensure that all children, including refugee children, have access to education... Although courses and institutions for technical and vocational training were expanded, the Committee regrets that not more children between the ages of 15 and 18 receive vocational training in order to facilitate their transition to qualified labour, and the low completion rate of secondary school, in particular in rural areas, especially of deprived children and indigenous children, as well as the lack of school infrastructure in remote areas of the country.

715. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to take effective measures to increase enrolment in primary and secondary school, reduce the high rate of drop-out students and repeaters, in particular in rural areas, and find ways to address the lack of school infrastructure in these areas, *inter alia* by finding alternative educational methods, e.g. vocational and apprenticeship programmes, which would take the specific needs of these populations into consideration. The State party should focus on the improvement of secondary education.

716. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of International Labour Organization Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); the measures taken by the State party to prohibit the economic exploitation of children; as well as the various projects implemented with the technical and financial assistance of the International Labour Organization/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour to eliminate child labour. The Committee also welcomes the State party's efforts to prohibit hazardous work for persons below the age of 18. The Committee remains concerned however at the large number of working children between the ages of 5 and 17 who work in the "informal" labour market and have consequently been excluded from the educational system, in particular in rural areas.

717. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to take effective measures, with the technical and financial assistance of International Labour Organization/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, to eliminate prohibited child labour, in particular in rural areas where the phenomenon is more prevalent, *inter alia* by designing special programmes aiming at combating child labour.

- Yemen, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 161 at paras. 762, 763, 774, 775, 785, 786, 793 and 794.

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762. ...[T]he Committee is concerned at the disparities in the enjoyment of rights and at the social discrimination experienced by children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, *inter alia*, children who are also addressed as *Akhdam* children, children born out of wedlock, children with disabilities, street children and children living in rural areas.

763. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, particularly with regard to girl children, in accordance with article 2;

(b) Prioritize and target social services for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, including those children referred as *Akhdam* children, children with disabilities, street children and children living in rural areas;

...

774. The Committee takes note of the measures undertaken by the State party to guarantee children's access to information. However, it remains concerned about the limited access to information for children living in remote and rural areas.

775. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its effort to ensure the right to information for children, especially those who live in remote and rural areas through, *inter alia*, mobile libraries.

...

785. The Committee notes the efforts undertaken by the State party in the area of basic health and welfare, such as the immunization programme and control of diarrhoeal diseases, and the consequent improvements such as, *inter alia*, the decrease in the infant and under-five mortality rates. The Committee also welcomes the adoption of a Strategy for the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI). However, the Committee is deeply concerned about the health situation and the fact that only 50 per cent of the population has access to health services. Particular matters of concern are:

...

(e) The poor provision of health care, particularly in rural areas, due to lack of necessary support structures such as education, communication, transport and other facilities; and

...

786. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(d) Improve access to health care, especially within rural areas, through coordinated and comprehensive health-care strategies with time-bound targets; and

...

793. The Committee welcomes the information regarding the efforts made by the State party to enhance the quality of education and improve the quality of teaching and working

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conditions of teachers. However, it remains deeply concerned that:

...

(e) Urban/remote/rural disparities remain very high;

...

794. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Continue its efforts to ensure that all children have equal access to educational opportunities with a view to eliminating the prevailing disparities between girls and boys as well as in urban and rural areas;

...