



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under  
article 18 of the Convention**

**Eighth and ninth periodic reports of States parties due in 2014**

**Haiti\***

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Acronyms and abbreviations . . . . .	5
Introduction . . . . .	7
Chapter I. Principle of equality and the Gender Equality Act . . . . .	8
1.1 Towards equality . . . . .	8
1.2 Recent key measures for the implementation of a gender equality policy . . . . .	9
1.3 Inter-ministerial Committee on the Rights of the Person (CIDP) . . . . .	10
1.4 Gender equality policy . . . . .	10
Chapter II. Legislative reform . . . . .	10
2.1 Slow procedures . . . . .	10
2.2 Assessment . . . . .	11
Chapter III. National mechanism for the promotion of women . . . . .	12
3.1 Mission, organisational structure and lines of action of the mechanism . . . . .	12
3.2 Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) . . . . .	15
3.3 Thematic Round Table on Gender . . . . .	16
3.4 Partnerships with civil society . . . . .	17
3.5 Visibility of the Convention . . . . .	17
Chapter IV. Temporary special measures . . . . .	19
4.1 Quota as a temporary special measure . . . . .	19
4.2 Minimum 30 per cent quota for women . . . . .	19
4.3 Rejection of proposals to provide for quotas in the electoral law . . . . .	20
4.4 The symbolic parliament, a civil society initiative . . . . .	21
Chapter V. Stereotyping and cultural practices . . . . .	21
5.1 Noticeable but slow and fragile development . . . . .	21
5.2 Revision of textbooks . . . . .	23
Chapter VI. Violence against women . . . . .	23
6.1 Rape and incest . . . . .	23
6.2 Violence in post-earthquake camps for displaced persons . . . . .	24
6.3 National Dialogue on Violence against Women . . . . .	25
Chapter VII. Participation in public and political life . . . . .	29
7.1 Women's participation in politics and main related achievements . . . . .	29
7.2 Women in appointive and elective political posts . . . . .	30

	7.3 Representation of women in the justice sector .....	31
	7.4 Proportion of women in the National Police .....	31
Chapter VIII.	Women's participation in international activities .....	32
Chapter IX.	Nationality .....	32
Chapter X.	Education .....	32
	10.1 General observation .....	32
	10.2 State initiatives .....	35
	10.3 Contribution of the private sector and NGOs .....	35
Chapter XI.	Employment .....	36
	11.1 Assessment of the status of women in the economy: they are marginalized .....	36
	11.2 Measures taken by the State .....	37
Chapter XII.	Health .....	38
	12.1 General information and statistics on access to health care .....	38
	12.2 Access to health care .....	38
	12.3 Reduction of maternal and infant mortality .....	39
	12.4 Measures taken by the State .....	39
	12.5 Family planning, contraception and abortion .....	40
	12.6 Abortion regulation initiatives and statutory family-planning measures .....	41
	12.7 Specialized training for the staff concerned and provision of health care services .....	41
	12.8 Health education for young persons .....	41
Chapter XIII.	Social protection .....	42
	13.1 Assessment of and main achievements in social protection .....	42
	13.2 Analysis by the National Monitoring Centre on Poverty and Exclusion (ONPES) .....	43
Chapter XIV.	Rural women and women heads of household .....	44
	14.1 Results of the general census of agriculture (RGA) .....	44
	14.2 Socio-economic situation of rural women .....	45
	14.3 Measures under the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) .....	46
Chapter XV.	Equality before the law .....	47
Chapter XVI.	Family relations .....	47
	Fulfilment of commitments .....	47
	A. Ratification of international instruments .....	47
	B. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women .....	48
	C. Current situation regarding the ratification of the Optional Protocol .....	49

D. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action . . . . .	49
E. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) . . . . .	49
F. Dissemination of conclusions . . . . .	50
G. Technical assistance . . . . .	50
H. Interim report, 2010 . . . . .	51
Conclusion . . . . .	52
Bibliography . . . . .	53

## Acronyms and abbreviations

AFLIDEPA	Limonade Women's Association for Development
BLCVFF	Office to Combat Violence against Women and Girls
BPM	Brigade for the Protection of Minors
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDP	Inter-ministerial Committee on the Rights of the Person
CNIGS	National Geo-spatial Information Centre
CNSA	Food-security Coordination
COTEM	Quota Implementation Committee / Multisector Technical Committee
CSPJ	High Council of the Judiciary
DSF	Family Health Directorate
EMMUS	Survey on Morbidity, Mortality and Use of Services
FP	Family planning
GARR	Returnee and Refugee Support Group
HUEH	Haiti State University Hospital
IBESR	Social Welfare and Research Institute
IHSI	Haitian Institute of Statistics and Information Technology
INFP	National Institute of Vocational Training
KOFAVIV	Komisyon Fanm Viktim pou Viktim
KRFBL	Lower Artibonite Women's Advisory Committee
MARNDR	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development
MAST	Ministry for Social Affairs and Labour
MCFDF	Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights
MCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MJSP	Ministry of Justice and Public Security
MOUFHED	Haitian women's movement for education and development
MPCE	Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation
MPP	Papaye peasants' movement
MSP	Ministry of Public Health and the Population

NGO	Non-governmental organization
OFATMA	Office for Occupational Injury, Sickness and Maternity
ONA	National Old-Age Insurance Office
ONPES	National Monitoring Centre on Poverty and Exclusion
OPC	Office of the Ombudsman
PAARP	Action Plan for Poverty Reduction Acceleration
PARGEP	Public management support project
PATH	Technical support project
PROFAPGO	Women's organisation structure for the promotion of the Gonaïves commune
PSDH	Strategic Development Plan for Haiti
PSUGO	Free and compulsory universal education programme
REFRAKA	Network of women in Haitian community radio organizations
SOFA	Haitian Women's Solidarity
SONU	Emergency obstetric and neonatal care
SONUB	Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal
SONUC	Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care
UN Women	United Nations organization for gender equality and the empowerment of women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VCP	Voluntary Cooperation Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## Introduction

1. The Republic of Haiti signed the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1980 and ratified it by parliamentary decree on 7 April 1981.
2. The country's earliest report on the implementation of the Convention was prepared in the period 2006-2008 on a participatory and multisector basis. Haiti presented that report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its forty-third session, held in Geneva, on 27 January 2009.
3. The above report combined the initial report due in 1982 and six periodic reports that had been due in 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2006, covered a period of 25 years and made up for the country's delay in meeting its obligation, under article 18 of the Convention, to submit an initial report one year after ratification and thereafter periodic reports every four years.
4. The present document is also a combined report. It consists of the country's eighth and ninth periodic reports, requested in paragraph 49 of the Committee's concluding observations (CEDAW/C/HTI/CO/7), and covers the period 2006-2014. With this report, Haiti is up to date with respect to its reporting obligations and shall submit future reports to the Committee according to schedule.
5. In the period 2006-2014, Haiti was struck by a devastating earthquake that caused considerable human and material losses, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives and destroying much of Port-au-Prince (the country's capital) and neighbouring cities. On 12 January 2010, the National Palace and most public-administration, church and education- and health-sector buildings were completely destroyed or severely damaged. The premises of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) had the same fate. Certain staff members, including the General Director of the Ministry, died, while documents and equipment were lost. The women's movement mourned such feminists, well-known at home and abroad, as Anne Marie Coriolan, Magaly Marcellin, Mireille Anglade and Myriam Merlet, Head of the Minister's Office, an expert in gender issues and member of the Haitian delegation to Geneva in January 2009.
6. In examining any delays in implementing the Convention and the recommendations of the Committee, account should be taken of the exceptional circumstances resulting from the above disaster, which threw the country into disarray, disrupted programmes and projects and echoed throughout the world.
7. In addition to an overall diagnostic appraisal of the status of women in Haiti, the report specifically includes an analysis of the difficulties that slow down the implementation of certain articles of the Convention and describes solutions considered and measures taken to solve those problems.
8. In the order of the articles of the Convention, the report provides information on action taken by the State in response to the observations and recommendations formulated by the Committee after consideration of the previous report.
9. The report refers to the treaties, conventions and other agreements to which Haiti is a party, and in particular to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, focusing on six critical areas of concern, namely, education and training for women, women and the economy, women and health, violence against women, women and

decision-making and women's human rights; and to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including MDG 3, which calls for promoting gender equality and empowering women, and is also a prerequisite for attaining the other MDGs

## **Chapter I**

### **Principle of equality and the Gender Equality Act**

#### **1.1. Towards equality**

10. In its 2008 report on the implementation of the Convention,<sup>1</sup> Haiti acknowledged the urgent need for a comprehensive strategy designed to reduce inequality between men and women in all areas of activity. The State concluded that an equality policy and action plan were necessary and, pursuant to the recommendation contained in paragraph 11 of the Committee's concluding observations, a gender equality bill aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination in line with articles 1 and 2 of the Convention should be adopted as soon as possible.

11. In view of article 2 of the Convention and general recommendation No. 28 of the Committee, the provisions of the country's entire legal framework are currently insufficient. By clarifying the scope and meaning of article 2 of the Convention, the said general recommendation sheds light on the specific nature of discrimination against women, taking into account the concepts of sex and gender. With regard to international treaties, the distinction drawn between explicit provisions guaranteeing gender equality and implicit reliance on the concept of non-discrimination elucidates the scope of the various instruments necessary for combating all forms of discrimination. Clearly, a new national enactment containing a definition of direct and indirect discrimination against women and explicit references to and penalties for discriminatory acts is bound to strengthen Haitian law.

12. Haitian legislation still contains discriminatory provisions. Moreover, mere affirmation of the principle of equality does not suffice to eradicate inequalities in practice or to change the social perception of male superiority. It is therefore necessary to introduce appropriate public policies, adopt a relevant action plan, speed up legal reform and establish standards accompanied with penalties for non-compliance.

13. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) began to consider those issues in 2008. A first gender equality policy document, outlining relevant action, was favourably received by the Prime Minister. After presentation of the country's 2009 report to the Committee, that work continued and the report's conclusions were disseminated in the various State and civil society sectors.

14. Currently, after delays due to numerous government changes and especially the effects of the 2010 earthquake that disorganized State programmes and projects, diverting all energy to emergency assistance, the process of developing a gender equality policy is finally bearing fruit. The State adopted a gender equality (EFH)

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<sup>1</sup> In February 2007, a Committee delegation headed by Ms. Françoise Gaspard had met with the Haitian authorities and recommended a gender equality policy.



policy for the next 20 years and a related national plan, 2014-2020; and began to set up mechanisms ensuring their implementation and evaluation on a national scale.

## **1.2. Recent key measures for the implementation of a gender equality policy**

15. Progress towards equality is confirmed by following measures, taken in the period 2012-2014:

- Explicit affirmation of the equality principle in the Government's general policy statement and in official discourse;
- Designation of women to more than 30 per cent of ministerial posts;
- By constitutional amendment, adoption by the National Assembly of a minimum 30 per cent quota for women at all levels of national life, particularly in public services;
- Creation of a gender equity office in the National Assembly;
- Adoption of the Paternity, Maternity and Filiation Act by the National Assembly;
- Adoption of a gender equality policy by the Government;
- Inclusion in the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) of an action plan to ensure gender equality through the participation of the various ministries;
- After evaluation of the first national plan to combat violence against women, 2006-2011, adoption of a second such plan for the period 2012-2016;
- Creation of the Office to Combat Violence against Women and Girls (BLCVFF) under the responsibility of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) and the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP);
- Creation of the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Rights of the Person (CIDP), of which the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights MCFDF is a member.

16. Dialogue mechanisms have been strategically strengthened as follows:

- State-Civil Society partnerships, such as the National Consultation Body against Violence, which in 2005 produced a national plan renewed in 2011, have been strengthened through the creation of the above Office, whose management was formalized on 31 January 2014 through a protocol signed by aforementioned three ministries;
- Partnerships with United Nations and other international community bodies have been strengthened through the establishment of the Thematic Round Table on Gender.

### **1.3. Inter-ministerial Committee on the Rights of the Person (CIDP)**

17. In view of the need to coordinate its human rights action, the Government established, by a decree of 13 May 2013, the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Rights of the Person (CIDP), chaired by the Prime Minister's Deputy Minister for Human Rights and Extreme Poverty and comprising representatives of the ministries most directly concerned. One of the two representatives of the Ministry for Human Rights and Extreme Poverty (MCFDF) to the Committee is the Director of Legal Affairs. The Committee is responsible for coordinating and following up on public policies on human rights and for proposing a national strategy and a roadmap for the implementation of such policies. The Committee also coordinates the preparation of the national report submitted by Haiti under the universal periodic review mechanism and helps to disseminate the Convention and mainstream gender equality in all State agencies.

### **1.4. Gender equality policy**

18. The equality policy document was finalized, adopted and published in 2014. In addition to an assessment focused on women's rights, access to justice, education, health, employment and women's participation in public and political life, the document contains a presentation of the legal, political, socio-economic and cultural foundations of gender equality and the State's vision in that area. All State and civil-society sectors are called upon to own that policy and contribute to its implementation. The ensuing main thrusts and specific objectives are described. Solemn proclamation of the policy by State authorities in an official legal document confirmed the policy's legitimacy and sustainability. The document addresses relevant governance-related issues, namely orientation, management and accountability in the area of equality and explicitly affirms the principle of non-discrimination as a guiding rule and a prerequisite for the right to equal opportunities and equal pay.

## **Chapter II Legislative reform**

### **2.1. Slow procedures**

19. Although a priority of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) in line with the recommendation contained in paragraph 13 of the Committee's concluding observations, legal reform is admittedly extremely slow. Various decision-making bodies related to the National Assembly, the executive and the judiciary participate in the process.

20. In order to be adopted, any bill must be passed separately by the House of Deputies and the Senate. In those stages, deputies and senators may introduce amendments but must subsequently concur on a single text. Once voted by the National Assembly, the text is transmitted to the executive for promulgation and publication in the Official Journal, and thus enters into force. However, the executive may formulate objections within a specified time limit. In that complex

and long process, a bill may run into complications. It is therefore difficult to establish a clear time frame as suggested in the above recommendation.

## 2.2. Assessment

21. Bills promoted by the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) have been intensely debated in the relevant agencies and by the public. Such legislation addresses issues resulting from a patriarchal social order governed by the Civil and Criminal Codes. They were drawn up in the early nineteenth century on the basis of the Napoleonic Code. That legal framework has shaped mentalities and attitudes at all social levels. Thus:

- The bill on responsible paternity and filiation, which became the Paternity, Maternity and Filiation Act, adopted by the House of Deputies in 2010 and by the Senate in 2012, was promulgated on 28 May 2014 and published in issue No. 105 of the Official Journal on 4 June 2014. Information and awareness-raising strategies are being developed in order to facilitate the implementation of the Act;
- The Domestic Workers' Labour Conditions Act, adopted by the House of Deputies on 5 March 2008 and by the Senate on 6 May 2009, has not yet been promulgated;
- The bill on consensual unions (*plaçage*) has not yet been included in the legislative agenda;
- The Human Trafficking Act, adopted by the House of Deputies in August 2013 and by the Senate in 2014, is awaiting promulgation;
- The draft framework act on violence against women, announced in the 2008 report, has been finalized and is awaiting inclusion in the next legislative agenda;
- A bill on gender equality is being finalized;
- A commission of jurists set up by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) is working on a reform of the Codes;
- On 2 December 2013, a gender equity office was inaugurated in the National Assembly in the presence of the Presidents of the Senate and the House of Deputies, the Minister for the Status of Women and Women's Rights, parliamentarians and representatives of the international community. The new office will provide parliamentarians with technical support by analyzing bills from a gender perspective and with proposals so as to take that perspective into account in the legislation adopted and ensure compliance with the international instruments ratified by Haiti.

## **Chapter III**

### **National mechanism for the promotion of women**

#### **3.1. Mission, organisational structure and lines of action of the mechanism**

##### **3.1.1. Mission of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF)**

22. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) was on 8 November 1994, on the basis of women's demands and as part of the preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. As a cross-cutting authority, it is mainly responsible for formulating, implementing, managing and enforcing government policy; promoting the emergence of an egalitarian society fair to both genders; and guiding the development and implementation of equitable public policies at the national level.

##### **3.1.2. Organisational structure**

23. Until 2012, the Ministry's functions were divided between two Directorates, the Directorate for Gender Mainstreaming (DPAG), responsible for programmes and activities embodying the Ministry's cross-cutting role, and the Directorate for the Promotion and Defence of Women's Rights (DPDDF). A third directorate, the Directorate of Legal Affairs (DAJ), was established in 2013. Currently, the responsibilities of DPDDF and DAJ are being adjusted. The new Directorate, responsible for the legal aspects of the Ministry's action, is in particular entrusted with providing legal guidance in cases of women and girls victims of violence. It represents MCFDF in the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Rights of the Person (CIDP) and is responsible for following up on the international instruments related to the rights of women.

24. The Ministry is represented in the regions by 10 departmental coordinating offices entrusted with implementing its policies at the local level. For lack of human and financial resources, the decentralized structures have not yet obtained the departmental directorate status provided for in the Act on the organization and operation of the Ministry, in force since 2005. They consist of a departmental office managed by a small team headed by a coordinator and answer to the Directorate of Coordination of Departmental Offices (DCBD).

##### **3.1.3. Strategic lines of action**

25. The following five policy targets were adopted under the Ministry's revised strategic plan, 2006-2011:

- Design, development and implementation of a gender equality policy;
- Building of the Ministry's organisational and institutional capacities;
- Improvement of the status of women;
- Raising of the awareness and education level of the population;
- Elimination of violence against women.

Five years later, in 2013, the same targets guide the policy of the Ministry.

### 3.1.4. Place of the Ministry in the structure of the Government

26. Against the troubled post-earthquake backdrop, some of the new political forces that came to the forefront in the 2010 presidential elections went so far as to question the Ministry's usefulness. As more than twice in the past, the women's and feminist organizations as a whole were mobilized in order to thwart any attempt to dismantle or weaken the national mechanism crucial to the promotion of women's rights and the country's development. In media debates during the campaign, candidates attempted to discredit the Ministry and propose instead a ministry for family affairs. However, the women's movement countered such views in those debates.<sup>2</sup>

27. Personalities from women's and feminist organizations undertook to explain the concepts of the status of women, gender equality and fundamental rights of women and to describe the gender-based inequalities and discrimination that justify the Ministry's specific mission. The Ministry was thereby strengthened. Thus, in 2012, women accounted for almost 40 per cent of the ministers and the Government has since maintained the average rate of women's participation in the cabinet at over 30 per cent. The principle of gender equality was officially confirmed in presidential declarations, in the Prime Minister's general policy statement and through the Ministry's launching of the gender equality policy finalization process on 14 December 2012. Relevant guidelines are provided by the highest ranking authorities but, to be sustainable, gender equality must be enshrined in the law and mainstreamed in public policies and institutional implementation mechanisms. Moreover, an appropriate budget is required.

### 3.1.5. Budget

28. Although larger than in previous years, the Ministry's budget does not exceed 1 per cent of the State budget. That inadequacy slows down the decentralized development of the Ministry's programmes and activities. Reaching the numerous population groups concerned, which are dispersed in rural areas, requires the frequent presence of mobile awareness-raising, information and training teams on the ground. A project to set up, in the country's 10 departments, women's centres, namely facilities for meetings, discussion and training aimed at empowering women and girls through capacity building, is running into financing difficulties. In Port-au-Prince (Ouest), some care, counselling and training activities are organized in the first such centre. Three other centres, in Cape Haitian (Nord), Cayes (Sud) and Jérémie (Grand-Anse), are not yet fully operational. An appropriate budget is needed to cover the ongoing expenses of such projects.

29. The operation of shelters for abused women is disrupted by similar difficulties. The first such shelter, founded in 2008 by the Ministry and closed after the earthquake, is being replaced by a new building whose construction has just begun. Partnerships with the Ministry for Social Affairs and Labour (MAST) are possible under the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH).<sup>3</sup> A presidential decree dated 13 February 2014 (Official Journal, issue No. 54, 21 March 2014) specifies

<sup>2</sup> MCFDF, 2013, *Identification of gender inequalities (Diagnostic des inégalités de genre)*, p. 25-27.

<sup>3</sup> See PSDH regarding the establishment of care centres for women victims of violence in accordance with programme 3.8 on the organization of social solidarity.

rules for the creation and operation of shelters for abused women and their children, assigning relevant responsibilities to the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) and the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP).

30. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) suffers from a shortage of qualified staff, particularly specialists in such areas as, for instance, research and communications. Activities provided for under PSDH sub-programme 3 on producing and disseminating information on gender equality include the organization of a research institute or observation public centre for gender issues (that would in particular follow up on gender-related public policies, studies and reports) and the review and monitoring of women's participation in political and public life.

### **3.1.6. Institutional and organizational capacity-building**

31. A table recapitulating the activities and measures adopted by the Ministry in the period 2008-2013 reveals ongoing interest in the formulation, development and implementation of a gender equality policy. This policy target, a priority in all action plans, is systematically incorporated in revised annual plans and five-year strategic plans and taken into account in programmes and in all activities. In the period under review, despite a countrywide natural disaster and the resulting need for resource mobilization and programme adjustments to meet emergencies, and despite deceleration due to the succession of three Ministers for the Status of Women and Women's Rights who took diverging approaches, the maintenance of the said policy target as a priority ensured continuity of efforts towards the Ministry's key objective, namely the adoption and implementation of a national gender equality policy.

#### *3.1.6.1. Studies and surveys*

32. Between 2007 and 2012, the Ministry sponsored studies and surveys supported by international organizations and conducted by national and international experts (on, inter alia, domestic violence, best practices, political participation, identification of gender inequalities, and action plans for equality); prepared and presented reports related to international instruments on women's rights and gender equality (under the Convention and in connection with Beijing+10, Beijing+15 and Beijing+20); drew up and revised a five-year plan for its own activities, ascribing top priority to gender equality policy; and ensured the inclusion in the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) of a gender-equality action plan imposing obligations on all government sectors. Based on international experience, the Ministry built and tried out methods and tools for gender-related analysis, implementation and evaluation, such as comparative analysis by gender (ACS) and gender-sensitive budgeting. The Ministry organized a workshop to finalize the gender equality policy and, during that process, promoted nationwide discussion through departmental feedback meetings.

#### *3.1.6.2. Finalization of the gender equality policy document*

33. The launching of the gender equality policy finalization process has been a milestone in mainstreaming the gender perspective. After the launching ceremony, held on 14 December 2012, the sectors, technical and financial partners and civil

society organizations met in a two-day workshop, organized on 18-19 December, in order to participate in finalization work. The Ministry had thus an opportunity to expose the basis, priorities and main thrusts of the policy. Those elements are contained in three equality policy document sections devoted to, respectively, identification of gender inequalities, gender equality policy, and the national action plan for equality.

34. The constitutional amendment establishing the principle of a minimum 30 per cent quota for women at all levels of national life, particularly in public services, entered into force with the publication of the amended Constitution in the Official Journal on 19 June 2012.

### **3.2. Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH)**

35. The Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH), adopted by the Government and published by the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE) in May 2012, provides a long term vision of the country's development. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) had built the gender dimension into the PSDH through the action plan to ensure gender equality, which encompasses sub-programmes and projects, invites the other State bodies to take the gender perspective into account in their respective action plans, and constitutes a significant step towards a national gender equality plan. The sub-programmes concern the following main areas of action:

- Gender equality policy implementation;
- Continuation of legal framework adjustments;
- Production and dissemination of information on gender equality;
- Strengthening of women's participation;
- Creation of a gender and development fund;
- Elimination of violence against women and girls.

36. Specific responsibilities are stipulated for, respectively, the Office of the President, the Office of the Prime Minister, and every ministry and State agency. Concrete projects are proposed to the various ministries, which now have a roadmap for adjusting their respective programmes. The inclusion of the gender-equality action plan in the PSDH can be considered as the most significant measure taken by the State in the period 2008-2013 towards the establishment of a comprehensive strategy on gender equality.

#### **3.2.1. Implementation analysis tools**

37. The technical tools for the implementation of gender equality measures under the PSDH are comparative analysis by gender (ACS) and gender-sensitive budgeting, developed and tested by the Directorate for Gender Mainstreaming (DPAG) of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF).

##### *3.2.1.1. Comparative analysis by gender*

38. Comparative analysis by gender (ACS) helps to foresee, in designing of a policy or a project, its distinct effects on the men and women concerned. ACS must

be used, at the national level, by ministries and government agencies as well as by departmental and local authorities. ACS is carried out during the various project stages, namely development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and, in certain cases, leads to the adoption of differing measures for men and women.

#### 3.2.1.2. *Gender-sensitive budgeting*

39. Gender-sensitive budgeting, launched in 2008 by the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) in partnership with UN Women and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), aims at boosting gender equality. It is a technical tool for distributing public funds better and for improving the provision and targeting of public services, taking into account the practical needs and strategic interests of women and men. That tool is crucial to gender equality. Thus:

- A joint committee on gender-sensitive budgeting was set up in 2009 and mandated to develop programmes disseminating that tool;
- The committee consists of representatives of the Ministry of the Economy and Finance (MEF), the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE), the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and a representative of UN Women. Some of the officials and specialists trained in gender-sensitive budgeting between 2009 and 2014 have been selected to be trained as trainers;
- The committee has decided to organize, with the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI), a pilot project for women's economic empowerment in the sectors of agriculture, processing and trade.

### 3.3. **Thematic Round Table on Gender**

40. In 2004, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) coordinated a Sectors' Round Table on Gender, where the main national and international partner organizations met in order to harmonize activities promoting women's rights in the light of national priorities. An important meeting of that round table took place in March 2009, shortly after presentation of the report under the Convention, to consider the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations so that the members could adjust the programmes undertaken in their respective areas of activity towards the achievement of common goals. In 2013, that round table, renamed Thematic Round Table on Gender, met again, led by the Ministry and encompassing more partners, given the Ministry's broader cross-cutting mandate.

41. Currently, the Thematic Round Table on Gender consists of representatives of State actors, the private sector, local authorities, international development agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations (inter alia, women's and socio-professional associations). Its main mandate consists in promoting the gender perspective in addressing sectoral problems prioritized under PSDH programmes, by aligning international community contributions with national priorities, harmonizing and



coordinating relevant action, developing effective methods and tools for gender equality and proposing technical-support and training strategies.

### **3.4. Partnerships with civil society**

42. Sub-programme IV ("Strengthening Women's Participation") of the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) underscores the importance of partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations. Women constitute 52 per cent of the population and are a pillar of the country's economy. Civil-society (particularly women's and feminist) organizations are crucial to advocacy of women's rights and the provision of information on the actual experience of women and girls in Haiti.

43. Moreover, those organizations play a key role in the provision of basic services (for instance, support for victims of gender-based violence). Accordingly, the State must seek to reinforce or develop partnerships conducive to greater visibility and consideration of women's needs and to the provision of adequate services to women, girls, men and boys. Strengthening State-civil society mechanisms for promoting dialogue and coordinated action at the national and local levels is a top priority.

### **3.5. Visibility of the Convention**

44. In recent years, training sessions on women's rights and the law protecting such rights, including international treaties ratified by Haiti, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (Belem do Para Convention), have been organized for justice and law-enforcement staff (judges, police chiefs and police officers). Generally, such training is provided by national organizations and institutions in cooperation with United Nations agencies or with the participation of national and international experts. Specialized national bodies, such as the NGO Unité de Recherche et d'Action Médico-Légale (URAMEL), have provided such training services in various regions of the country.

#### **3.5.1. National Dialogue on Violence against Women**

45. This tripartite mechanism, which includes State, civil-society and international bodies and tangibly promotes the Convention's visibility, has developed specific training modules and related material for police officers and provided systematic support as part of the national plan to combat violence against women.

46. Special training sessions have been organized in connection with the adoption of legal or administrative measures for women's protection and access to justice, such as the Decree of 6 July 2005 on sexual assault, the agreements signed between the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) and the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP) regarding medical certificates, and the national plan to combat violence against women. Training in the protection of women's rights and particularly in implementing the relevant Conventions is being institutionalized.

### **3.5.2. School for Judges (EMA)**

47. This school, operating under the supervision of the Justice and Public Security (MJSP), has included the study of international instruments in the judges' initial and in-service training. On the initiative of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), the Convention was presented once more to district judges in the Ouest Department on 25 October 2013, at an awareness-raising workshop on violence against women, organized by the Directorate of Legal Affairs (DAJ) in cooperation with the School and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP), with a view to promoting the judges' ownership of international conventions and treaties signed and ratified by Haiti. The State's, especially the judiciary's, obligation to implement the Convention was discussed at length by the participants, including women lawyers, women officials, female staff of the Directorate, and district judges who, frequently accustomed to conciliation and friendly settlement practices, tend to play down women's complaints.

### **3.5.3. Office of the Ombudsman (OPC)**

48. This independent State institution was set up, in accordance with the Paris Principles, under the relevant Act of 3 May 2012. As part of decentralization of its services in 2012, it organized throughout the country, for key judicial and law-enforcement staff and the local authorities, awareness-raising meetings on treaties ratified by Haiti, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Belem do Para Convention, thereby contributing to the Convention's visibility. The Office pays special attention to detained women, considers them as persons facing emergency needs; and recommends that "public awareness campaigns on the Convention should be intensified and the Office's budget should be increased in order to create and operate, within the institution, the unit for the protection and promotion of women (UPDF), this time as a directorate, in line with the Act of 3 May 2012. That may ensure a certain independence of action for the benefit of women".

49. The Office, whose mission is to guarantee the citizens' rights vis-à-vis public administration, also recommends that, with regard to gender equality and non-discrimination, "the State should take steps to supervise its administration by establishing mechanisms, indicators and criteria for detecting cases in which an employee or civil servant is victim of discrimination".

### **3.5.4. Civil society**

50. The Convention is relatively well-known to civil society, particularly women's and human-rights organizations. During 2009, after the presentation of the country's report to the Committee, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and its partners carried out throughout the country an extensive campaign aimed at popularizing the report and the Committee's concluding observations. With support from United Nations specialized agencies, the Ministry prepared relevant booklets and leaflets in Creole. National organizations and NGOs also helped to increase the visibility of the Convention.

51. Beginning with a symbolic international tribunal that they organized in November 1997 in order to report and judge violence against women and girls, women's and feminist organizations have consistently and methodically provided information on the national legislation and the international treaties that guarantee

women's rights, through publications, newspapers, reviews and radio and television broadcasts. Such information, related messages and advocacy outcomes and feedback have been systematically conveyed in Creole, the national language, declared official under the Constitution of 1987, so as to reach the entire society without any exclusion. The above organizations, joined by new ones, are continuing in that direction. The symbolic parliament that they organized on 16 October 2013 achieved the same educational impact as the international tribunal of 1997.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Temporary special measures**

#### **4.1. Quota as a temporary special measure**

52. Special temporary measures constitute affirmative action that is sometimes necessary in order to correct historical practices linked to gender discrimination. The main such measure adopted is the minimum 30 per cent quota for women, which has been established by the National Assembly.

#### **4.2. Minimum 30 per cent quota for women**

53. On 9 May 2011, both houses of the National Assembly, meeting in a single session to adopt constitutional amendments, added to the Constitution of 1987, as amended, article 17.1, worded as follows: "The principle of a minimum 30 per cent quota for women shall apply to all levels of national life, and in particular to public services."

54. The Constitutional Act of 9 May 2011 amending the Constitution of 1987 was published in the Official Journal on 19 June 2012 and entered into force on the same date. Adoption of the said principle constitutes a victory for the small minority of women deputies (5 out of 99), who persuaded the majority through concerted efforts, with the help of women's and feminist organizations and with support from United Nations agencies and such specialized international organizations as IDEA.

##### **4.2.1. Implementation of the quota**

55. In addition to awareness raising, training and ownership of the process by those mainly concerned, namely women, implementation mechanisms are necessary in order to introduce the above constitutional and legal principle. There is a need to develop and enforce affirmative action measures in order to ensure women's integration into political, administrative and technical structures.

56. Under the "Acceleration of civil service reform" sub-programme of the PSDH, the Office of the Prime Minister, with support from the Human Resources Management Office (OMRH), is responsible for formulating a gender-based policy on equal opportunities in the civil service and mainstreaming that policy in public administration. As part of gender equality policy, the State undertakes to promote such affirmative action measures as the aforementioned quota, including in respect of elective decision-making offices, policies for women's and men's integration into non-traditional trades, and any other related policies that may be necessary.

#### **4.2.2. Electoral law quotas**

57. Meeting in the National Assembly on 14 May 2013, the Commission for quota enforcement support, which consists of representatives of women's and feminist organizations, of the Commission for social affairs and women's rights of the House of Deputies, and of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), formulated recommendations for the inclusion of a minimum 30 per cent quota for women in the new electoral law currently under preparation. That document recalls that the gender equality principle must be integrated into that law in line with the treaties ratified by Haiti; and specifically provides for the application of such quota to the local authorities, the National Assembly, candidates' lists established by political parties and all decision-making and operational structures of the electoral machinery.

58. Additional measures to facilitate women's participation are recommended. The above Commission expects the Electoral Council to produce gender-disaggregated statistics. Penalties are stipulated for the political parties' non-compliance with electoral law. As part of an awareness-raising campaign, the said document was published in newspapers and publicized through the audio-visual media.

#### **4.2.3. Sectoral follow-up committee**

59. The Multisector Technical Committee (COTEM), created to support quota implementation, consists of representatives of the State bodies and women's organizations concerned. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) plays a significant role by participating in coordination. On 6 and 7 September 2013, COTEM held a national workshop to prepare advocacy and a mobilization campaign in favour of women's participation into all electoral authorities and to encourage women's involvement in the elections as candidates. The Ministry's departmental coordinators and representatives of women's organizations in the country's various regions participated in the workshop.

### **4.3. Rejection of proposals to provide for quotas in the electoral law**

60. The first attempt to stipulate a minimum 30 per cent quota for women in the electoral law was voted down in the House of Deputies, including by some women deputies, in adopting the amended Electoral Provisions Act of December 2013. That shows how difficult the transition from legal to actual equality is. In view of that rejection, COTEM is preparing a formal protest at the National Assembly and a broad coalition of women's organizations, requesting the Senate, which has not yet voted, to reinstate articles 58 and 62 and all of the provisions guaranteeing the implementation of the said quota in the above Act. A statement dated 4 April 2014 demanding respect for women's political rights has been signed by the following major organizations of women: Haitian women's group for women's political participation (Fanm yo la), Haitian women's movement for education and development (MOUFHED), Network of women in Haitian community radio organizations (REFRAKA), Haitian Women's Solidarity (SOFA), Kay Fanm, AFASDA, Fanm Deside and EnfoFanm.

#### **4.4. The symbolic parliament, a civil society initiative**

61. Civil society bodies, particularly women's organizations spearheaded by feminist associations, actively participate in the combat for equality. The draft Domestic Workers' Labour Conditions Act and the draft Paternity, Maternity and Filiation Act, adopted by the National Assembly, were part of the legislative agenda presented in 1998 by those bodies to the forty-sixth legislature. In 2013, the bodies in question were mobilized for the implementation of the aforementioned quota. On 16 October 2013, a broad range of organizations and militants organized the symbolic parliament, comprising more than 100 women from all of the country's constituencies, to discuss gender equality and socio-economic rights. The participants acted as parliamentarians and members of the executive who were challenged. The event, held at the National Assembly, was meant to show the women's capacity to conduct parliamentary debates and to vote on bills, in this case on gender equality policy and on the implications for women of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which Haiti acceded on 31 January 2012.

62. The symbolic parliament contributed to the mobilization of women. A follow-up committee continues discussions with the National Assembly on legislative proposals for gender equality. Such steps are made public, including through the press. The relevant meetings have been taking place exclusively in Creole. The national language is used in the debates and the related documents not only for effective communication, but also as a sign of respect for the population's linguistic rights.

## **Chapter V Stereotyping and cultural practices**

### **5.1. Noticeable but slow and fragile development**

63. In view of the limits characterizing sectoral activities, the State must recognize that, without a comprehensive strategy, as recommended by the Committee, it will be difficult to eliminate gender stereotypes and discrimination against women. Nevertheless, the social perception of women's place and role has slightly improved in the country, while certain discriminatory stereotypes seem to be weakening. Such slow developments are the perceptible cumulative result of measures and steps taken in various social sectors without coordination.

64. Gender inequality problems have become more visible. Certain slogans, such as "52 per cent women, that's important" and, more recently, "minimum 30 per cent women at all levels of national life", are broadly disseminated and help to familiarize the population with the idea that gender discrimination and abuse and the exclusion of women are not normal practices.

65. Dates linked to women's combat for equality and the elimination of violence are commemorated ever more actively every year. The International Women's Day on 8 March, the national day of the Haitian women's movement on 3 April, and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November are celebrated by an increasing number of women's organizations throughout the country and are marked by such events as, inter alia, discussion days, militants'

marches, and tributes to pioneer women. In the last three years, the period 8 March to 3 April has generally been regarded as women's month. Yet militant feminists are concerned that the festive aspect of the above commemorations may overshadow their true significance in terms of women's combat for equality.

66. The media have become slightly more attentive to women's presence and views, both in connection with the above commemorations and, generally, in public and political life. In their reports on national events, journalists note more frequently the presence or absence of women. Women's opinions are solicited in public debates slightly more often. Certain newspapers, magazines and radio or television programmes address gender problems under regular headings ("Espas Fanm" or "Women's space", "Kisa lalwa di?" or "What does the law say?", "Alterpresse" and "Radyo Kiskeya").

67. Every year since 2007, during the main carnival festivals, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) carries out awareness-raising campaigns to draw attention to the dangers inherent in abusing a woman's body and to prevent violence, under the slogan "Kò m se diyite m" or "My body, my dignity". The various operators and actors participating in the organization of the annual carnival (promoters, musicians and artists) are regularly sensitized and security arrangements are made so as to prevent sexual aggression. The above Ministry is not alone. Other ministries and State bodies are increasingly involved in this campaign. From year to year, slight changes are perceptible in, for instance, meringue topics and lyrics, but do not suffice. In addition to stereotypes conveyed through music, certain literary texts and the media in general, crucial to communication, continue to transmit inegalitarian attitudes towards women. Use of the female body as merchandise in advertisements highlights the powerful role of visual images in the perpetuation of sexist mentalities.

68. Gender equality has become a somewhat more prominent topic in political discourse. Women's participation in public and political life is on the agenda. Despite its visibility and demonstration value, women's occupancy, in the last three years, of a greater number of significant posts in the Government, including the strategic Ministry of the Economy and Finance (MEF), is still a fragile achievement. Access to elective office is more complex and difficult, and, over and above political resolve, requires an affirmative action plan to facilitate and encourage women's candidacies, education of the population, and considerable awareness-raising and determination at the national level.

69. A July 2013 survey funded by the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and detailing gender inequalities serves as the basis for effective gender-equality public policies formulated and proposed by the Ministry. The survey highlights the character and extent of inequalities, particularly in the areas of education, health, employment, political participation and legislation. A thorough analysis of stereotypes helps to understand why it is so difficult for women to decide to participate actively in elections and play a role in politics.

70. The change in attitudes is likely to remain superficial if it is not accompanied by structural measures at the legal, economic and social levels. At the legal level, for instance, as long as it remains characterized by irresponsible paternity and non-recognition of the most common spousal union, known as *plaçage*, Haitian society will fail to offer women and men equal opportunities, and power relations will continue to advantage men. Sexist stereotypes no doubt play a key role in keeping

women attached to their traditional roles and preventing them from becoming fully involved in public and political life.

## **5.2. Revision of textbooks**

71. Under the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH), the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) contributes to the elimination of stereotypes in school by ensuring that the cooperation protocol that it concluded in July 2007 with the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MENFP) (known as the Indigo Pact) is implemented and followed-up on, including in the form of a training programme for authors, graphic designers, school directors and publishers regarding stereotypes in textbooks and gender equality.

# **Chapter VI**

## **Violence against women**

### **6.1. Rape and incest**

72. In reference to the concerns expressed by the Committee in paragraph 24 of its concluding observations, it should be noted the cases of incest perpetrated by the father or another close relative, and classified under the heading of cultural practices in the 2008 report and in the Identification of Inequalities, 2013, are marginal and no research justifies any generalization based on those cases.

73. Under Haitian law, the crime of rape is punished with 10 years of forced labour and, if aggravated by incest, hard labour for life. Rejected by the population, incest is generally not regarded as a cultural practice. The relevant Decree of 6 July 2005 increases punishment for such crimes by stipulating that, "if they are persons having authority over the victim, hard labour for life shall be imposed on the offenders".

74. Nevertheless, lawyers are reticent about having recourse to those legal provisions. Moreover, families frequently hide cases of incest out of shame and, furthermore, because the Civil Code prohibits registrars from recording declarations of birth of an infant conceived through incest.

75. The Criminal Code is often criticized for not defining rape or incest explicitly. To fill that gap, those offences are defined clearly and rigorously in the draft framework act on violence, as communicated to participants in the relevant consultation workshops.

76. To have a deterrent effect, punishments stipulated in the law must be systematically observed by the judicial authorities and complemented with educational programmes. Measures taken with regard to such issues and sex education in general are insufficient at the level of schools, young persons and the training offered to the relevant actors. Training must be systematic and included in the curriculum. Information and awareness-raising campaigns addressing the population should be planned on a regular basis, and civil society, particularly women's organizations, should be encouraged to contribute to that effort.

## 6.2. Violence in post-earthquake camps for displaced persons

77. The problem of violence against women is not new in Haiti. The disaster of 12 January 2010 brutally worsened the situation and rendered it more visible through the massive displacement of disaster victims seeking refuge under makeshift shelters in public places, schoolyards or other accessible spaces. Up to 1,500,000 persons sought shelter in refugee camps under extremely precarious conditions of hygiene, nutrition, family organization and morale. Such post-earthquake displacements, inadequate housing, and loss of means of subsistence and economic possibilities compounded women's vulnerability and aggravated physical and sexual violence against them.

78. According to Amnesty International, the following risk factors are the cause of that situation:

- Lack of security, law and order in the camps and inadequate police support for rape victims;
- Lack of lighting in the night;
- Insecure and inadequate shelters, such as tents, tarpaulin covers and even blankets or sheets;
- Inadequate toilets/latrines and sanitation facilities inside and around the camps;
- Degradation of law and order, with armed gangs launching attacks in the camps with full impunity;
- Overpopulation in the camps;
- Difficulties in accessing any means of earning a living or an income;
- Unequal distribution of humanitarian and emergency assistance among and within the camps;
- Lack of protection measures for sexual violence victims, who are thus exposed to further victimization;
- Lack of information on the specific procedures that sexual violence victims must follow to report the crime to the police and the judicial authorities.

79. Extreme vulnerability of certain women in the camps has reportedly increased prostitution, sometimes exercised for a derisory HTG 25-50 or against food. Sexual exploitation cases are reported in the discussion groups held with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Besides their exposure to violence, women in the camps do not always have adequate access to care services. The Returnee and Refugee Support Group (GARR) notes the occurrence of pregnancies not followed by medical staff, inaccessible because of distance or ignorance of its existence.

80. The various forms of violence against women and girls caused by post-earthquake insecurity has given national authorities and international humanitarian-assistance agencies and organizations grounds for concern. Various national and international entities launched specific post-earthquake emergency programmes. Although gravely affected by the earthquake, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) mobilized all of its resources to face that critical



situation. As early as 2008, when Haiti was hit by four major cyclones, the Ministry prescribed special measures in view of the specific needs of women and girls in temporary post-disaster shelters. In 2010, the Ministry took part in the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR) Working Group under the auspices of the global Protection Cluster (PCWG) set up by the United Nations system, and thus participated in the psychosocial action units for displaced persons' camps in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area and developed a special rehabilitation programme in the Carradeux area.

### **6.3. National Dialogue on Violence against Women**

81. For structural responses, the State has since 2005 had at its disposal a national plan to combat violence against women, mainly in the areas of prevention, care and support for women and girls victims of specific violence, and data collection. The most recent measure taken by the authorities under that plan has been the creation, on 25 November 2013, of the Office to Combat Violence against Women and Girls (BLCVFF), a public service body offering care and support to the above women and girls. One of the aims of the Office is to guarantee access to information and accelerated procedures. The Social Welfare and Research Institute (IBESR) and the Brigade for the Protection of Minors (BPM) are the reference agencies for girls.

82. The above national plan was prepared by the National Dialogue on Violence against Women, an action and follow-up structure comprising representatives of the State and civil society, particularly women's organizations, with the support of relevant United Nations and international cooperation agencies. That structure is mandated to formulate and propose public policies on action with respect to women and girls victims of gender violence and to seek the validation of such policies by the State authorities concerned. By creating a space combining appropriate capacities and best practices, this State-civil society partnership has in the last 10 years proved effective in preparing and ensuring the progressive implementation of the above plan for the period 2006-2011. A mid-term evaluation of results in 2008 encouraged further building of structures in the sectors of justice, health, and creation and dissemination of training tools regarding care and support for victims, prevention and general awareness-raising.

The following structural measures have been taken:

- Creation of the Women's Affairs Coordination Unit in the police;
- Establishment of a pilot unit of care for abused women and girls in seven of the country's police stations;
- Creation of networks to implement the aforesaid national plan in the Sud-Est and Nord-Est departments:
- Establishment of training programmes for police and care staff;
- Compilation and dissemination of gender-specific data on violence.

83. After the inevitable regression due to the 12 January 2010 earthquake, which strongly affected the Ministry, the National Dialogue on Violence against Women and the network's member organizations, killing numerous workers, including two members of the Coordination Unit, and destroying buildings, equipment and documents, the National Dialogue on Violence against Women resumed operation in

2011. The network was assessed and the tools used were revised to include a national record for registering cases of violence, a related user's guide, a care personnel training manual, a related trainer's guide, a training programme for police officers, and a list of organizations and institutions offering services to abused women and girls. A new national plan to combat violence against women in the period 2012-2016 is in force.

84. Using the data management system that it helped to set up, particularly the national record for registering cases of violence, the National Dialogue on Violence against Women<sup>4</sup> has compiled, analyzed and published partial data for the period 2009-20115.<sup>5</sup> Data compilation on the basis of indicators defined in that record began with the creation of that structure, which campaigned among actors providing care for women victims of violence in favour of a single record. According to a UNDP report,<sup>6</sup> between July 2011 and June 2012 the said structure reported 1,127 cases of violence against women and men in four departments of the country. Of those cases, identified through the above record, 52.4 per cent were reported by women's organizations, 35.9 per cent by health professionals, 25 per cent by women's organizations and 10.6 per cent by judicial authorities (courts and public prosecutors' offices). These figures suggest a change compared to earlier data, according to which the women addressed themselves mainly to the health sector and only secondarily (in 25 per cent of cases) to women's organizations. The percentage of cases recorded by judicial authorities increased by 3.6 per cent.

### **6.3.1. Responsibilities and action of State actors**

85. Most of the activities undertaken build on the specific contribution of the various entities constituting the National Dialogue on Violence against Women, whose multisector and multidisciplinary approach led to various State-civil society or inter-ministerial partnerships and helped to harmonize support from international agencies and NGOs. In that framework, on 25 November 2013 the national authorities established the Office to Combat Violence against Women and Girls (BLCVFF). A series of agreements signed separately by the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) with the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP) and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) in past years culminated in an institutional arrangement for the management of the Office on the basis of a tripartite agreement.

86. The Office will be managed according to a protocol signed on 31 January 2014 by the Ministers for the Status of Women and Women's Rights, of Public Health and the Population, and of Justice and Public Security. The Minister for the Status of Women and Women's Rights will chair the Office's administrative board, which, in addition to those three ministers, will include the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, the senior-most member of organizations defending women's rights and, as observer, the Ombudsman.

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<sup>4</sup> In connection with the national plan to combat violence against women, 2012-2016, under the PSDH.

<sup>5</sup> Women's organizations, inter alia SOFA, Kay Fanm, MOUFHED and FanmDeside, regularly publish their own statistics on their activities.

<sup>6</sup> Agnès Hurwitz, *Assistance légale pour les femmes victimes de violence de genre en Haïti* ("Legal assistance for women victims of gender violence in Haiti), UNDP, April 2013.

87. There are still problems related to the accessibility of justice and to the inaction of victims:

- Access to justice is reduced by economic factors and the incompetence of judges;
- Reticence to file complaints is due to shame, fear of public exposure, social prejudices, relationship with the offender (in cases of domestic or spousal violence), reservations of parents or guardians (where the victim is a minor), and the financial situation of the victim.

88. In accordance with the action plan to ensure gender equality under the PSDH, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) is largely responsible for combating violence against women. The Ministry itself and the agencies under its authority (the Office of the Secretary of State for Public Security, the National Police and the National Police General Inspectorate) contribute to that effort through:

- Consideration of women's needs and respect for gender equality in the Ministry's policies, programmes and projects;
- Dissemination, and monitoring of the enforcement, of the:
  - Legislative Decree of 6 July 2005 on sexual violence;
  - Agreement of 17 January 2007 between the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP) and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) on issuing free of charge medical certificates in cases of sexual and/or spousal violence;
  - Agreement of 28 February 2008 between the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) on adequate care for violence victims in police stations;
- Training programmes and information and communication tools related to women's fundamental rights and the relevant treaties, in Creole;
- Popularization of communication and information tools regarding human and women's rights and the procedures available to women victims of violence and discrimination for access to justice;
- Specific training and awareness-raising programmes in connection with violence against women;
- Preparation of a bill to decriminalize abortion;
- Reform of the Civil Code, the Criminal Code and any related legislation by a public commission to be set up and chaired by the Minister of Justice and Public Security (MJSP). The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) is to participate in that commission. The reform will aim at removing from the current legal framework any acts or articles that discriminate against women (see the legal framework reform programme and the sub-programme on ensuring the right to citizenship).

89. In 2011, the country's services for the protection of children organized at Port-au-Prince and in the Nord, Artibonite, Sud and Sud-Est departments round tables on child trafficking and children in domestic servitude. The Social Welfare and Research Institute (IBESR), in cooperation with the Emigration and Immigration Service and the National Police, established a procedure for monitoring the travel of minors abroad. Under that procedure, the Immigration and Emigration Directorate (DIE) must support IBESR by checking the validity of all entry, exit and transit documents for all minors of either gender and for the persons accompanying them and ensuring that minors not accompanied by their biological parents hold a departure authorization delivered by IBESR.

90. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) held a workshop for discussion and exchange of information among the various actors providing care for women having specifically suffered violence at the Haitian-Dominican border in order to update the Ministry's provisional list of care organizations and other tools related to the border area. After the workshop, the Returnee and Refugee Support Group (GARR) presented such a list. Although aware of the extent of the problem of migrant women, the Ministry can undertake very limited action in that regard. The small proportion of the national budget allocated to the Ministry does not allow it to take effective measures, especially in remote areas of the country.

91. An act defining trafficking as a crime was adopted by the House of Deputies in August 2013, ratified by the Senate in May 2014, promulgated on 28 May 2014 and published in the Official Journal, issue No. 103, on 2 June 2014. Haiti has ratified related international instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing that Convention.<sup>7</sup>

92. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) has held a series of consultations with all of the country's mayors with a view to the signature of a decree aimed at strengthening the legal framework on prostitution, the sale of pornographic material and the admission of minors of either gender to bars and nightclubs. Unfortunately, the decree has not yet been published.

### **6.3.2. Civil society action**

93. Haiti has four official border posts, covering 380 km of frontier with the Dominican Republic, and six unofficial border posts. Many economic transactions occur in the border areas concerned. According to a 2009-2010 census of Instituto del Comercio Exterior y la Innovación Empresarial of the Dominican Republic (CEI-RD), 63.5 per cent of vendors at those border posts are women. They are subject to daily violations of their socio-economic rights as a result of disorderly border-post management and the two States' inegalitarian border measures. The trading areas of those vendors are frequently reduced by rising waters. In fact, occasional Lake Azuei floods impose on Haitian traders wishing to reach certain Haitian localities a detour over Dominican territory.

94. Despite checkpoints manned by Dominican soldiers, women traders are exposed to theft and other forms of violence. The soldiers are to blame for inaction

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<sup>7</sup> National Assembly ratification decree of 12 January 2004, Official Journal, issue No. 51, 11 July 2005.

on complaints, illegal arrests, violence and bribery. Haitian pregnant women seeking better care in the Dominican Republic are at their mercy.

95. In 2010, the Returnee and Refugee Support Group (GARR) took steps to promote the sexual and reproductive rights of migrant adolescent girls and women at various border locations (Belladère, Lascahobas, Fonds-Verrettes, Anse-à-Pitres, Ganthier (Fonds-Parisien), Thomassique and Cerca la Source).

## **Chapter VII**

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

#### **7.1. Women's participation in politics and main related achievements**

96. The principle of a minimum 30 per cent quota for women at all levels of national life, particularly in public services, has been recognized through a constitutional amendment which entered into force on 19 June 2012. For many years after the presidential elections of 2010, various municipal, other local-authority, senatorial and House of Deputies elections were repeatedly postponed. In 2014, the electoral period for those various levels provides an opportunity to test the above quota in practice. As suggested by the activities below, reported in the press, women and their organizations actively prepare to participate in that process. Certain steps, such as those of the Multisector Technical Committee (COTEM), are taken jointly by State sectors and civil society while others are undertaken by women's and feminist organizations.

- Creation of the Multisector Technical Committee (COTEM), designed to support quota implementation;
- Proposals for the inclusion of the quota in electoral law;
- Symbolic parliament;
- Draft act proposals;
- Lobbying of the political parties;
- Capacity-building and training seminars for women;
- Participation in public debates.

97. A critical mass of women should be elected to the National Assembly in order to ensure better balance and address gender equity issues. However, the first attempt to implement quota in electoral mechanisms met with resistance. The House of Deputies rejected the articles of the Electoral Provisions Act which provide for the inclusion of women in lists of candidates for election to the posts of mayor and deputy mayor (*cartels municipaux*). The opinions and votes of the five women deputies who had fought for the quota are divided. Responding to the above regressive decision, a COTEM delegation supported by numerous women's organizations visited the National Assembly and, in a written statement, protested formally against that violation of the Constitution, inviting the Senate, which has not yet decided, to react.

## **7.2. Women in appointive and elective political posts**

98. Women's presence in senior appointive governmental posts has mainly a visibility effect and can be ephemeral. Only the election of a critical mass of women to the National Assembly and women's access to the various public administration decision-making levels, at which women are minimally represented or absent, can ensure sustainable progress towards gender equality. As table 1 shows, the number of women participating in the Government fluctuated during the period 2009-2014, as a result of cabinet reshuffles. A woman leaving a ministerial post is not necessarily replaced by another woman.

In the last three years, the proportion of women ministers, initially 44 per cent, has subsequently averaged approximately 30 per cent .

As table 2 shows, the percentage of women in the National Assembly is low. Currently, 5 of the 99 seats of the House of Deputies are held by women, while no women sit in the Senate.

### 7.3. Representation of women in the justice sector

99. The proportion of women is also low in the justice sector.<sup>8</sup> Of the 660 judges, only 52 (less than 5 per cent) are women. The number of women attending the School for Judges (EMA) has increased from 7 in the 1997 class, first to graduate from the school, to only 15 (out of 60 students) in 2013.<sup>9</sup>

Table 3

**Distribution of district judges by gender and district**<sup>10</sup>

<i>District</i>	<i>Persons</i>			<i>Percentage</i>		
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
Port-au-Prince	74	8	82	90.24	9.76	100
Cap	56	6	62	90.32	9.68	100
Cayes	30	1	31	96.77	3.23	100
Croix-des-Bouquets	27	4	31	87.10	12.90	100
Saint-Marc	33	1	34	97.06	2.94	100
Gonaives	32	3	35	91.43	8.57	100
Port-de-Paix	33	1	34	97.06	2.94	100
Grande-Riviere	20	1	21	95.24	4.76	100
Aquin	24	2	26	92.31	7.69	100
Jérémie	37	0	37	100.00	0.00	100
Fort-Liberté	51	3	54	94.44	5.56	100
Mirebalais	26	0	26	100.00	0.00	100
Coteaux	23	0	23	100.00	0.00	100
Hinche	21	0	21	100.00	0.00	100
Jacmel	41	1	42	97.62	2.38	100
Anse-a-Veau	15	0	15	100.00	0.00	100
Miragoane	19	1	20	95.00	5.00	100
Petit-Goâve	21	0	21	100.00	0.00	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>94.80</b>	<b>5.20</b>	<b>100</b>

### 7.4. Proportion of women in the National Police

100. Up to the twenty-third graduating class of the National Police, there were only 772 women among the 9,389 police officers. In the twenty-fourth class, 112 regular officers and 10 beneficiaries of special training in Colombia are women.

<sup>8</sup> High Council of the Judiciary (CSPJ).

<sup>9</sup> DAJ, MCFDF: Workshop report.

<sup>10</sup> MJSP, Department of Legal Affairs, 2013.

Table 4  
**Breakdown of National Police officers by gender<sup>11</sup>**

## **Chapter VIII**

### **Women's participation in international activities**

101. As there is no national policy aimed at encouraging women's participation in international activities, there has been no significant development in that area during the period considered. However, the recent adoption of the minimum 30 per cent quota for women may stimulate progress in that sector.

## **Chapter IX**

### **Nationality**

102. No progress has been made in this area since the previous report under the Convention.

## **Chapter X**

### **Education**

#### **10.1. General observation**

103. School enrolment is a priority for the current authorities, which in 2011 launched a free and compulsory universal education programme (PSUGO). Adult literacy, a goal pursued by the Government, is pursued under extreme poverty reduction programmes, particularly those targeting women.

##### **10.1.1 Women's literacy**

104. Since the earthquake affected the database of the State Secretariat for Literacy, no data prior to 2011 are available. Information on literacy is mainly drawn from the Survey on Morbidity, Mortality and Use of Services (EMMUS) V, according to

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<sup>11</sup> National Police, 201.



which the national literacy rate is 74 per cent among women and 79 per cent among men, compared to 48 and 61 per cent, respectively, in 2004. The current respective rates are 64 and 70 per cent in rural and 84 and 89 per cent men in urban areas. The sixth national literacy campaign, launched on 21 March 2014, is expected to benefit 370,000 persons over two years.

### 10.1.2. Primary and secondary education

105. The data available (from EMMUS V and the 2010-2011 schools census of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MENFP)) suggest improvement in terms of access of girls/women and boys/men to primary and secondary education compared to the data of EMMUS IV and in terms of retention of girls/women in school compared to the previous report to the Committee. According to the above Ministry's statistics, in the 2010-2011 school year there was little difference between genders as regards access to primary and secondary education. As the following tables show, the average rates of girls' access to or retention in primary and secondary education fluctuate close to the parity level. A gender gap in favour of boys begins to develop in the last year of high school (known as *classe de philosophie*).

Table 5  
Per cent breakdown of primary education (first and second cycle) pupils by grade, gender and type of area<sup>12</sup>

Grade	First		Second		Third		Fourth		Fifth		Sixth	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Urban	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.48	0.52	0.47	0.53	0.48	0.52
Rural	0.54	0.46	0.54	0.46	0.53	0.47	0.52	0.48	0.51	0.49	0.52	0.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>

Table 6  
Per cent breakdown of secondary education (third cycle) students by grade, gender and type of area

Grade	First		Second		Third		Fourth		Fifth		Sixth (Rheto)		Seventh (Philo)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Urban	0.52	0.48	0.51	0.49	0.52	0.48	0.47	0.53	0.50	0.50	0.51	0.49	0.48	0.52
Rural	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.51	0.47	0.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.52</b>

### 10.1.3. Higher education

106. There is a generally a lack of overall comparative data on higher education for 2008 and 2013. The fragmentary data available do not permit a breakdown of the number of higher education students by gender. In addition to Haiti State University,

<sup>12</sup> MENFP, 2010-2011 schools census, 2014.

which is public and free, the sector includes a number of private universities that function according to non-standardized rules.

107. In a recent article, Evelyne Trouillot<sup>13</sup> states that gender-disaggregated statistics are available in certain private universities. At Université Quisqueya (UniQ), for instance, the proportion of girls is 56.42 per cent overall, lower than the boys' in science and technological disciplines (18.75 per cent in engineering and 28.57 in agronomy) and higher in education and health (respectively, 60 and 52.61 per cent).

108. Given the private sector's high direct and indirect costs, students of either gender, in view of their precarious financial situation, largely attend Haiti State University, whose most recent data concern only registered students, not those admitted. Of the registered candidates, men and women account respectively for 68 and 32 per cent. However, the gender distribution of students is relatively even in the schools of medicine, pharmacology and dentistry. Information on students admitted to the University is available only for the sciences and the 2007-2008 academic year, in which the proportion of women was 11 per cent in science, 15.5 per cent in topography, 19 per cent in chemistry and 26 per cent in medicine. No gender-disaggregated figures are available regarding the University's teaching and administrative staff. In November 2013, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MENFP) in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) launched a national survey on higher education institutions, which, as the country's other schools, are largely private. The survey is expected to provide precise gender-disaggregated data on higher education in general and on the individual disciplines.

#### 10.1.4. Vocational training

109. According to data of the National Institute of Vocational Training (INFP), women account for 42 per cent of persons registered for regular vocational training in 2013. In fact, they generally opt for so-called "women's trades" (such as secretarial work, accounting, bank work, data processing or administrative assistant duties) in line with traditional roles, not with labour market needs or opportunities.

Table 7

#### Persons registered for the June-December 2013 session exam, by gender and sector<sup>14</sup>

Gender	Training sector		Total	
	Industry	Trade	Number	Percentage
Girls	976	1,667	2,643	42
Boys	3,095	499	3,594	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,071</b>	<b>2,166</b>	<b>6,237</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>13</sup> Evelyne Trouillot Menard, "L' éducation en Haïti : inégalités économiques et sociales et question de genre. La femme dans l' enseignement supérieur" ("Education in Haiti: economic and social inequalities and gender. Women in higher education"), *Condition des femmes haïtiennes, Haïti perspectives*, vol. 2, No. 3, Port-au-Prince, 2013, pp. 35-40.

<sup>14</sup> Source: INFP.

## 10.2. State initiatives

110. In various faculties of Haiti State University, training modules providing an introduction to gender issues were set up within master's degree programmes. Such courses, aimed at building gender-analysis capacities and promoting knowledge on social relations between women and men, were launched in the faculty of human sciences in 2007 and the faculty of ethnology in 2008. In the National School of Administration and Public Policies (ENAPP), a seminar on comparative gender analysis and gender-sensitive budgeting in public policies was included in the curriculum in February 2014. Under the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH), the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MENFP) shall carry out the following projects as part of sub-programme "Promoting gender equality in education":

- Elimination of stereotypes in school, particularly through more effective implementation and monitoring of the cooperation agreement between the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MENFP);
- Training programme for authors, designers and concept and dissemination directors of publishing houses and school staff in eliminating stereotypes in textbooks and promoting gender equality;
- Survey on girls dropping out of school;
- Advocacy of retention of girls in the school system;
- Promotion of higher education for girls and women;
- Cartoon films documenting stereotypes in school;
- Promotion of equal opportunities for girls, boys, women and men in school.

111. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MENFP) plans to develop a programme to promote training in non-traditional trades for both genders. In the latest National Conference on Education, held in April 2014, the gender dimension was addressed in a discussion and exchange workshop, albeit in a superficial manner. The main recommendation stressed the cross-cutting character of the gender dimension, placing it at the centre of all educational goals.

## 10.3. Contribution of the private sector and NGOs

112. Université Quisqueya (UniQ), in cooperation with Haitian feminists and with UN Women, established in 2011 a chair offering, in the summer, introductory courses on gender issues. That training programme, at the end of whose first session participants received a university certificate, is open to a varied public interested in studying or learning more about gender analysis, relevant methodological tools and the consideration of the gender dimension in their activities. A class comprises approximately 30 students.

113. The growing number of students and the demand for similar modules in other faculties of the university, such as the medical school and the department of agronomy, show that above initiative has been well received, given. Although it is

too early to evaluate its effect, Marie Frantz Joachim<sup>15</sup> considers that it will no doubt contribute to a change in practices and to the development of a different view of society. As a recent development in the area of research, publications authored by women who are gender-issue professionals or specialists interest a broader readership. Research, studies and scientific findings are published in scholarly reviews or reported in symposia and conferences.

114. NGOs have undertaken initiatives designed to provide brief training to vulnerable women and girls in traditionally male trades. However, most of such training activities have not been approved by INFP, do not always meet labour market needs and thus tend to aggravate the trainees' vulnerability.

## **Chapter XI**

### **Employment**

#### **11.1. Assessment of the status of women in the economy: they are marginalized**

115. A review of data available in 2013 with regard to Haitian women's economic activities confirms that women's role in the economy is crucial but generally undervalued and that their wages or the income generated by their activities are particularly low. At the national level, women are employed mainly in the sectors of agriculture, trade, the crafts, manufacturing and house work. They are largely active in the informal economy. As the analysis contained in the Identification of Inequalities prepared by the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) indicates, an overview of women's role in the economy can be obtained through a combination of sources.

116. The general census of agriculture (RGA), important because 60 per cent of the Haitian population is rural, has for the first time taken account of the gender dimension, permitting a more accurate assessment of the character and significance of women's role in agricultural production and in processing and marketing the produce. The RGA covers the entire national territory and all territorial divisions, the smallest of which are known as communal sections. The results, published in 2012, reveal that, of the Haitian farming units, characterized by small-scale family farming, 25.3 per cent are managed by women;<sup>16</sup> and that men manage a larger useful farm area than women.

117. According to the partial findings of a business survey funded by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) reveals that women account for slightly more than 61.4 per cent of enterprise owners and that 90.18 per cent of the country's enterprises have a turnover below HTG 96,000 and thus do not fall within any of the four census categories.

118. According to data of the Haitian Institute of Statistics and Information Technology (IHSI), average income is HTG 4,582 for men and HTG 3,320 for

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<sup>15</sup> Marie Frantz Joachim, "Le mouvement féministe et des femmes dans la transition 1986-2012 en Haïti" ("The feminist and women's movement in transition in Haiti, 1986-2012"), *Rencontre*, No. 26-27, Port-au-Prince, 2012, pp. 145-152.

<sup>16</sup> MARNDR, Country-wide overview of the results of the general census of agriculture (RGA), 2012, p.18.

women. Such gender-based wage inequalities characterize all sectors of industry and all socio-professional categories. That wage gap is due to, inter alia, differences in the number of hours worked between men and women, discriminatory procedures in respect of salaried jobs, accumulation of women in given business or institutional sectors and, basically, the society's gender relations, which give rise to gender-based division of labour and social roles.

119. The manufacturing sector, which employs mainly women, especially in the textile industry, experiences a certain growth in two free trade zones, located in the Ouest and Nord departments. Although feeble, this incipient development is revitalizing the trade unions, which are currently mobilized in connection with the minimum wage and working conditions. In 2014, the International Women's Day, held on 8 March and considered as a day for discussion and combative manifestations, was marked by gatherings and statements highlighting the rights of female workers.

## **11.2. Measures taken by the State**

120. Through the economic policy guided by the Ministry of the Economy and Finance (MEF), the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) provides for the following measures:

- Promotion of women's participation in development;
- Further development and institutionalization of gender-sensitive budgeting under the budget- and fiscal-policy orientation sub-programme;
- Support for gender-equality research and, through IHSI, for gender-disaggregated data collection and compilation;
- Provision to the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) of an annual budget package for the Gender and Development with a view to the implementation of gender-equality and women's empowerment promotion projects throughout the country.

121. Although recognizing women's importance for the country's economic development, the above measures do not offer them any prospect of playing a strategic role. The Ministry for Social Affairs and Labour (MAST) took a positive step by creating the tripartite Higher Council on Wages, consisting of representatives of the employers, the trade unions and the Ministry. It is at the level of that Council that female workers must show vigilance and defend their rights.

122. The Labour Directorate of the above Ministry announced recently the reorganization and strengthening of the labour inspectorate. A significant number of new inspectors are currently being trained and will be deployed throughout the territory. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) should check the percentage of women recruited for the general inspectorate of labour and ensure that the training provided to inspectors specifically covers working conditions for women.

## **Chapter XII**

### **Health**

#### **12.1. General information and statistics on access to health care**

123. Despite significant efforts undertaken by the State, the health sector is characterized by inequalities in terms of access to health services, especially in the rural areas. According to various sources (such as EMMUS V and the Household Budget and Consumption Survey), the level of access of the population to health care and related social services is alarming. Dispensaries, which account for more than half of all health care facilities, offer a derisory range of health services. As a stopgap measure, patients seek recourse to traditional medicine. The private sector, especially facilities operating for profit, is sizeable and deserves better coordination with the public sector. The 12 January 2010 earthquake compounded earlier difficulties encountered by the sector and weakened it further.

124. The health sector receives considerable external financial support. In the period 2012-2013, the sector obtained more than HTG 12.07 billion, over HTG 3.42 billion more than in the period 2011-2012. Since much of that funding is provided by NGOs, lack of coordination fragments the system. For instance, expenditure related to HIV/AIDS amounts to twice the public budget for health (Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP), Interim Strategic Health-care Plan, 2010).

125. The recommendations contained in paragraphs 36 and 37 of the Committee's concluding observations, in line with general recommendation No. 24 of the Committee, concern four major areas of the health sector, namely access to care, reduction of maternal death and infant mortality, family planning (including contraception and the abortion) and sex education for young persons. Most of the data available (EMMUS V, WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA 2010, and major 2012-2013 initiatives of the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP)) show that the State, with the international community's support, made significant efforts to improve basic demographic and health indicators in accordance with the above recommendations (inter alia, enhanced training for specialists, building of infrastructure and establishment of a legal framework). Although encouraging, the outcome in question do not suffice to achieve the relevant MDGs. In fact, progress is so slow that it will take decades to attain those goals.

#### **12.2. Access to health care**

126. For more than 82 per cent of women, access to health care or a medical opinion is still impeded by four major problems. Of the women interviewed, 76 per cent referred to lack of money for treatment, 43 per cent to distance to health services, 21 per cent to fear of visiting a health facility alone and 9 per cent to lack of permission to seek care. The proportion of women having stated at least one of those problems affecting access to health care is higher among those having five or more children (93 per cent), those separated (87 per cent), those living in rural areas

(89 per cent), those with no education (92 per cent) and those whose household is classified in the lowest quintile (94 per cent).<sup>17</sup>

### 12.3. Reduction of maternal and infant mortality

127. According to WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA estimates for the period 2005-2010, the country's maternal mortality rate seems to have dropped from 523 cases per 100,000 live births (EMMUS IV) to 350. However, comparisons between the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA and EMMUS surveys call for prudence. Their enquiry methods differ. The sampling procedure of the various EMMUS surveys covers deliveries in and out of hospital facilities while the surveys of the United Nations agencies cover only the former. Despite an increase in the number of women receiving hospital care,<sup>18</sup> out-of-hospital childbirths have always been a main cause of maternal mortality. The 2013 statistical report of the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP), published in May 2014 and covering maternal mortality and institutional and community-based births reported to the health information system (SIS), provides a maternal mortality rate of 157 deaths per 100,000 live births. According to that Ministry's 2013 findings regarding the MDGs, only reported deaths are taken into account in its Haitian health information system (HSIS), which covers 75 per cent of the country's health facilities.

128. In recent years, the infant and child mortality rates as a whole have decreased but that is not the case with neonatal mortality. In the period 2007-2012 (EMMUS V), of 1,000 infants born alive, 59 died in their first year and 31 died before attaining five years of age. Approximately one child out of eleven dies before age 5. Between EMMUS-IV (2005-2006) and EMMUS V, the under-five mortality rate decreased from 114 to 88 per 1,000 live births in rural areas and increased from 78 to 99 per 1,000 live births in urban areas.

129. Although they suggest improvement at the national level, maternal and under-five mortality statistics (respectively, 278 per 100,000 live births and 88 per 1,000 cases) place Haiti high on the relevant scale in the Americas and worldwide.

### 12.4. Measures taken by the State

130. Maternal and infant health is a crucial area covered by the master plan of the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP). That plan aims to halve maternal mortality by 2022 and comprises the following three main thrusts:

- Pregnancy and post-partum care;
- Emergency services and obstetric care;
- Promotion of maternal health.

131. In the 2012-2013 fiscal year, 10 per cent of priority programme funds and 4 per cent of the national expenditure on health were allocated to maternity care.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> EMMUS V, p. 165.

<sup>18</sup> According to EMMUS V, between 2006 and 2012 the rate of institutional deliveries increased from 25 to 36 per cent and the rate of deliveries carried out by trained staff increased from 26 to 37.5 per cent.

<sup>19</sup> MSPP, Report on the 2010-2011 national accounts for health, 2013, p. 45.

Reducing the maternal mortality rate, which has always been high, requires better allocation or more effective management of the resources earmarked for that area. Various family planning activities, an immunization campaign to promote women's health (reproductive health in particular), and awareness-raising action in respect of violence and early pregnancy were planned and coordinated with the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF).

132. In the above period, the Family Health Directorate (DSF) continued to launch and promote activities aimed at reducing maternal mortality by increasing the number of trained personnel and of health facilities offering obstetric care.

133. In 2012, MSPP, with support from its partners, drew up a national plan to eliminate tetanus in mothers and newborns by 2015, immunization being a strategic component of the plan. Accordingly, the Ministry, along with strengthening routine immunization, which is mainly proposed to pregnant women, carried out additional immunization activities in 65 high-risk communes in April and May 2013. Those activities targeted all women of childbearing age (estimated at 1,292,142) and, during the first two visits, attained 1,241,728 women (98.1 per cent) for the first dose and 973,043 women (75.3 per cent) for the second dose. Moreover, 279,148 first doses were administered during the second visit.

## **12.5. Family planning, contraception and abortion**

134. In the area of family planning, EMMUS V findings show that women are better informed about contraception. Practically all women aged 15-49 regardless of marital status are aware of at least one modern or traditional contraceptive method. On average, women know 8.8 such methods. Among women living in a union, that figure has slightly increased compared to earlier surveys. The prevalence of modern contraception in that group changed little between 2000 and 2005-2006 but increased considerably in 2012.

135. According to the same source, the rate of use of modern contraception methods among women aged 15-49 increased from 24.8 per cent in 2006 to 31 per cent in 2012. The national average number of children per woman (total fertility index) decreased from 6.2 in 1983 to 3.5 in 2012. However, the desired average number of children is 2.0 (for 57 per cent of respondents), which suggests a high level of unsatisfied family planning needs, especially among young persons. Actually, among women aged 15-49 who live in a union, 35 per cent of family planning needs related to limiting births remain unsatisfied.

136. Abortion is still used as a family planning method by 4 per cent of women. Of those abortions, 40 per cent take place in a health care facility and 42 per cent are performed by a health worker, including 39 per cent performed by a physician.

137. Through the Family Health Directorate (DSF), the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP) held a workshop on the reorganization of the family planning department in university hospitals and arranged training for residents of three university facilities, including the Haiti State University Hospital (HUEH), in reorganizing their service. One of the strategies envisaged in order to improve family planning coverage is to set up family planning units in the major public markets.



## **12.6. Abortion regulation initiatives and statutory family-planning measures**

138. On the initiative of the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP), efforts are made to submit a draft act decriminalizing abortion. Religious bodies, women's associations and national and international organizations met on 14-15 May 2013 to discuss the establishment of a legal framework on (mainly therapeutic) abortion. The Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and the National Dialogue on Violence against Women contributed to the discussion. Most of the bodies participating, but not the Catholic Church, signed the resolution of that workshop. On the basis of the recommendations thus formulated, an expert drew up a new proposal to the legislators, taking into consideration the actual situation in the country and the need for legislation on criminal aspects of abortion. That bill is to be submitted to the National Assembly as soon as possible. Such initiatives constitute a substantial first step insofar as heretofore abortion was regarded as a crime under the Criminal Code.

139. A decree dated 13 May 2013 rendered family planning services obligatory in all relevant institutions functioning in the national territory. In March 2014, a national campaign was launched in order to establish the family planning programme as a priority for the country through an integrated law-based and multisector approach and thus to expand family planning coverage.

## **12.7. Specialized training for the staff concerned and provision of health care services**

140. Various special measures have been taken in order to facilitate the provision of quality health care services and to ensure the accessibility of reproductive health care in rural areas. In October 2013, Haiti State University established a national training institute for midwives, which comprises post-graduate training in midwifery for graduate nurses and training in midwifery for *baccalauréat* holders. The programme aims at implementing a human resources development and management plan in maternal and neonatal health and family planning so as to provide the country's health care facilities most in need with qualified personnel to deal with pregnancies from conception through the postnatal period and beyond.

141. In order to increase the number of health facilities offering obstetric care, the Ministry of Public Health and the Population (MSPP) is building a number of Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (SONUB) and Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (SONUC) facilities in eight departments. MSPP has also updated the map of health care services in various departments, integrating into it the new emergency obstetric and neonatal care (SONU) modules. As a result, the location of obstetric and neonatal care centres in the 10 departments is now known and accessible on the Ministry's web site.

## **12.8. Health education for young persons**

142. Early pregnancy remains a challenge for the health system. Of the girls aged 15-19, 11 per cent are mothers and 3 per cent were pregnant for the first time at the time of the latest EMMUS survey. As teenagers and young persons, a section of the

population has not always received the full attention required. The Ministry includes a youth health department.

## **Chapter XIII**

### **Social protection**

#### **13.1. Assessment of and main achievements in social protection**

143. Despite efforts undertaken by the Insurance Office for Occupational Injury, Sickness and Maternity (OFATMA), the social protection and insurance issue gives grounds for concern. The Office has decentralized its operations to various geographic departments, built hospitals and opened up its services to the community, mainly for emergencies, accidents, orthopaedic rehabilitation and maternity care, with adequate equipment. Initially, under the supervision of the Ministry for Social Affairs and Labour (MAST), the Office had serviced exclusively insured private-sector workers. The Office plans to offer, through relatively flexible procedures, a health insurance card guaranteed by the Government to all informal sector workers, mainly women engaged in crafts, trade and paid domestic work. The general director of the Office announced recently that progress had been made towards that goal. Most Haitians are covered by no social security scheme. According to a report published in November 2013 by the National Monitoring Centre on Poverty and Exclusion (ONPES), fewer than 3 Haitians out of 100 enjoy minimum social protection, through private insurers, the Civil Pension Fund and especially OFATMA and the National Old-Age Insurance Office (ONA). The country's 2008 report to the Committee described the same situation.

144. The above Centre, which reports to the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE), conducted the first impact study on the Ede Pep ("Helping people") social assistance programme, one year after it was launched. Established in October 2012, that programme was designed as a set of public social-assistance activities for the extremely poor with a view to reducing their vulnerability and social exclusion.

145. Carried out in October 2013, the above study was limited to the activities implemented long enough for their impact to be observable.

Table 8

#### **The Ede Pep ("Helping people") social assistance programme**

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Benefit</i>	<i>Type of support</i>
Ti manman cheri	Cash	Human capital promotion
Kore etidyan	Cash	Human capital promotion
Kore peyizan	In kind	Economic inclusion
Panye solidarite	In kind	Social assistance
PSUGO	Cash	Human capital promotion

### **13.1.1. The free and compulsory universal education programme (PSUGO)**

146. This programme was launched before the others, when President Martelly took office in 2011. It concerns the early primary education grades and is based on cooperation with parents. Thus, the prerequisite for benefits under "Ti manman cheri", an activity directly addressing mothers that has been attached to PSUGO, is that children should continue to attend school.

147. According to the latest figures, published in April 2014, 122,000 women, exclusively mothers, participated in "Ti manman cheri" throughout the country. Women benefit also from the other activities, including support initiatives for students, peasants and, as a later addition, disabled and older persons, but their proportion is unknown. Gender-disaggregated data have not always been rigorously compiled.

### **13.1.2. The Ede Pep ("Helping people") social assistance programme**

148. This programme helps to target vulnerable population groups more effectively by providing certain crucial services, with priority given to promoting the national identity and literacy. However, the programme as a whole is criticized by human rights organizations, which are concerned at the fragmentary and limited character of its activities and prefer social investment of a structural character so as to fulfil the social, economic and cultural rights of the population as a whole.

## **13.2 Analysis by the National Monitoring Centre on Poverty and Exclusion (ONPES)**

149. The Centre's study concludes by confirming a certain satisfaction among the beneficiaries, who nevertheless demand improvements in terms of regularity, composition and methods of distribution of allowances. There is a need for frequent and regular surveys in order to assess the actual impact of the relevant activities, of which some address emergencies and some are structural. According to the Centre, the Ede Pep programme can effectively help to reduce poverty and hunger and serve as a cushion protecting the poorest against hard blows, for instance natural disasters.

150. ONPES recommends the following steps, designed to institutionalize the programmes concerned:

- Effective targeting or generalization of programme coverage;
- Enhancement of the involvement and capacities of sectoral public agencies towards greater Ede Pep programme effectiveness;
- Transformation and design of the Ede Pep programme as a comprehensive social-protection policy;
- Establishment of local reception and information facilities for the beneficiaries;
- Updating of the lists of beneficiaries.

151. With the Action Plan for Poverty Reduction Acceleration (PAARP) published in April 2014, the Government seems to endorse some of the above recommendations. That Plan, which explicitly includes the MDGs, will strengthen the Ede Pep programme, regarded as part of a comprehensive social protection

policy, through the focused action of State monitoring and evaluation agencies (inter alia, IHSI, National Food-security Coordination (CNSA), National Geo-spatial Information Centre (CNIGS) and ONPES).

## **Chapter XIV**

### **Rural women and women heads of household**

#### **14.1. Results of the general census of agriculture (RGA)**

152. Agriculture is a key sector of the Haitian economy. Despite increasing urbanization, more than half of the population is still rural and farming generates 60 per cent of employment. Largely characterized by small-scale family farming, the sector meets 45 per cent of the population's needs and accounts for 25 per cent of GDP. According to the agricultural development policy document of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR), agriculture, a pillar of economic growth and poverty reduction, will in coming years play an increasingly significant role in the area of food security and the country's economic recovery. For Haiti, tackling the challenges related to the sector is on the agenda, particularly in 2014, declared International Year of Family Farming by the United Nations.

153. The general census of agriculture (RGA), 2008-2009, whose results were published in 2012, sheds further light on women's role in the economy by including, for the first time, the gender dimension. According to Nathalie Lamaute-Brisson, that step constitutes "a considerable improvement over the 1950 agricultural census, by making it possible to identify farm managers and the persons in charge of cultivation and animal breeding, and to assess women's contribution to the mobilization of family and wage labour or of traditional labour associations".<sup>20</sup> In the country's mainly smallholder and largely market-oriented agriculture, one fourth of farm managers are, according to RGA, women who manage an average surface of 0.74 ha (compared to 0.99 ha in the case of the men). The census covered the entire national territory and permitted the compilation of data at the level of departments, communes and even communal sections. As a result, farms managed by women can be located and described with precision.

154. Analysis of census findings and data, supplemented with detailed research, surveys and local enquiries, will shed light on the prerequisites and factors related to women's economic empowerment and the resulting development of gender relations. Such information can enrich the formulation of innovative development policies conducive to gender equality. By providing information on rural women and helping to trace lines of action towards gender equality, the census is a strategic decision-making tool for the above Ministry. The said analysis permits to refine the perception of women's labour and to specify affirmative action for women's economic empowerment, a precondition of tangible equality. Basically, such action consists in developing income-generating activities for women; fostering an enterprise culture among them; promoting their career in view of the actual circumstances under which women work in a given sector; and encouraging them to

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<sup>20</sup> Nathalie Lamaute-Brisson, Du recensement agricole aux relations de genre dans l'agriculture haïtienne ("The census of agriculture and gender relations in Haitian agriculture"), *Haiti-Perspectives*, GRAHN review, vol. 2, No. 3, fall 2013, p.

enter growth sectors and prepare themselves for positions of responsibility and elective office.

## 14.2. Socio-economic situation of rural women

155. Rural women are faced with enormous problems related to their living conditions or to their status as women. Generally, their living conditions are particularly arduous. Poverty, more widespread in rural than in urban areas, reduces land productivity, causing rural migration and its corollaries, scarcity of agricultural labour, reduction of cultivated areas and therefore less development of arable land. As a result, agricultural production is reduced, bringing about loss of income and food shortages in that priority sector. In view of their household responsibilities, women are the ones to suffer most from that situation and, in difficult periods, may be obliged to face all family responsibilities alone.

156. Social infrastructure is still largely inadequate in the areas of hygiene and health. Despite the central authorities' efforts to create new health centres closer to the population, the relevant infrastructure and range of services offered are still largely insufficient. However, as part of measures against cholera, State agencies took steps in relation to drinking water, chlorination in particular, while latrine construction programmes have been extended to the rural areas.

157. Women are particularly active in the rural sector. According to traditional division of labour, they mainly engage in small-scale trade and processing (inter alia, of cassava and peanut butter) and assist in such field activities as gathering, harvest, coal sorting, and preparation of food for the *coumbites* (labour units). They engage in highly labour intensive tasks and in temporary activities carried out by State bodies or international NGOs and subject, in recent years, to a quota for female workers. Despite their considerable role in agriculture, most rural women do not effectively participate in the formulation of the economic and agricultural policies implemented in their localities. They are excluded from the local and, a fortiori, national authorities and any contribution that they make to discussions is generally not taken into consideration. That is due to other obstacles that they face, namely lack of education, weight of traditions, limited knowledge or ignorance of their rights and the national legislation and international treaties that provide for their protection. Although they are not subject to any explicit restrictions, rigid attitudes forged under the patriarchal system keep them away from discussions and decisions concerning a citizen's life.

158. Although the above information applies to most of the rural women, ongoing efforts by departmental coordinating offices of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), women's and feminist organizations, some of which are quite active in rural areas, and certain international organizations have successfully ensured that women's demographic importance and social and economic contribution and the urgent need to eliminate any discrimination against women are issues that are gaining ground and help to mobilize and organize rural women. Fanm Vanyan organizations function in nearly all settlements.

159. Although they participate in meetings and voice their opinion on the feasibility of projects to be implemented or the evaluation of the impact of such implementation, women are in certain cases represented by men. In organized groups, women develop self-confidence, leadership and the spirit of initiative. Over

the years, a significant number of positive experiments initiated by State institutions, national or international NGOs and civil society, particularly women's and feminist organizations, have proved the vitality and individual and collective transformation potential of organized women who engage in realistic and concrete economic or social projects that address their needs.

160. The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) showcases the role of the Lower Artibonite Women's Advisory Committee (KRFBL), established in 1996 and organized in 1997, which carried out, under the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), an awareness-raising campaign targeting women in the region in question as part of land reform and a State-civil society partnership in order to promote women's participation. As a result of that action, women secured 36 per cent of the land plots distributed and, as empowered actors, currently undertake activities without direct support from the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF).

161. Lessons can be drawn from the experience of rural women's associations, which are robust, sustainable and active in the framework of such federations or structures as the following:

- Women's organizations of the Papaye peasants' movement (MPP) (Centre);
- Limonade Women's Association for Development (AFLIDEPA) and organizations of cattle-growing women (Nord-Est);
- Rural women's organizations supported by Femmes en democracie (Grand'Anse);
- Haitian Women's Solidarity (SOFA, St Michel de l'Attalaye and Ennery);
- Women's organisation structure for the promotion of the Gonaives commune (PROFAPGO, Artibonite);
- Kay Fanm and Fanm Deside (Sud-Est).

162. The rural areas are not homogeneous. Rural women are largely engaged in the marketing and processing of agricultural produce and are receptive to the culture of enterprise. In recent years, women entrepreneurs have distinguished themselves as model economic actors. As heads of SMEs, they contribute to job creation. On 8 March 2014, International Women's Day, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) paid tribute to women entrepreneurs in various rural areas of the country, honouring those that shift from the informal to the formal economy.

### **14.3. Measures under the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH)**

163. Under the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH), the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) facilitates women's participation, and respect for gender equality, in its policies, plans, programmes and projects through:

- Economic empowerment programmes for women heads of household and rural women;

- Inclusion of women in productive infrastructure-development and rehabilitation projects, such as irrigation systems and use of drainage areas.

164. Such programmes are not new. Actually, the above Ministry has a long history of cooperation with the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) on activities for rural women. In 2009, that cooperation was institutionalized through the establishment by the latter of a focal point to support the action plans of the former, which has undertaken to mainstream the gender dimension in all of its operations. Currently, steps are under consideration with a view to strengthening the gender focal point through the creation of a gender unit to ensure comprehensive structural action.

165. In addition to strictly economic approaches, a comprehensive rural development policy requires the State to consider social rights in the areas of education, health, social security, housing and leisure and to improve the legal framework, particularly the law protecting women and children. That involves information and sensitization strategies addressing the judiciary and the population so as to popularize and implement the Responsible Paternity Act; and the inclusion of the bill on consensual unions (*plaçage*) in the legislative agenda. A comprehensive rural development policy also implies monitoring compliance with the constitutional requirement of a minimum 30 per cent quota for women at all public service levels. Strangely, the technical management staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) includes only five women and approximately 50 men while the Ministry's political leadership (Minister and three Secretaries of State) includes no woman.

166. The lack of women in decision-making bodies has its roots in vocational training, particularly at the level of higher education. Indeed, women average 10 per cent of the number of students in the departments of agronomy and veterinary medicine, while of the country's 60 veterinarians only 5 are women.

## **Chapter XV**

### **Equality before the law**

167. In this area, there is no change to report since the submission of the previous report in 2009.

## **Chapter XVI**

### **Family relations**

168. In this area, as envisaged in the Convention, there is no change to report since the submission of the previous report in 2009.

## **Fulfilment of commitments**

### **A. Ratification of international instruments**

169. Of the nine main treaties related to human rights, three, although signed, have not yet been ratified. Moreover, Haiti has not yet taken the important step of

acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Table 9.

**Adoption of international instruments by Haiti**

<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Signed</i>	<i>Ratified</i>
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	30 October 1972	19 December 1972
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	17 July 1980	7 April 1981
Convention on the Rights of the Child	26 January 1990	8 June 1995
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance		6 February 2007
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities		23 July 2009
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities		23 July 2009
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	15 August 2002	-
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights		31 January 2012 <sup>21</sup>
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	16 August 2013	
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families	5 December 2013	
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women		
Amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women concerning the meeting time of the Committee		

**B. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

170. This instrument, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 6 October 1999, entered into force on 22 December 2000. It has currently been signed and ratified by 80 States, including Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Belize, El Salvador and Guatemala.

171. Adoption of the Protocol, a commitment made by States at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, constitutes a major achievement under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which Haiti has signed. It is

<sup>21</sup> Not yet published in the Official Journal.



therefore important that the Government should honour that commitment by signing the Protocol and transmitting it to the National Assembly for ratification. As its preamble indicates, the Protocol offers States an opportunity to reaffirm "their determination to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to take effective action to prevent violations of these rights and freedoms".

172. At the official presentation of the country's previous report on the implementation of the Convention in Geneva on 27 January 2009, the Haitian delegation expressed the aforementioned determination on behalf of the State. On that occasion, the President of the National Assembly, who was a member of the delegation, made a commitment to taking the measures necessary for accelerating the ratification of the Protocol.

### **C. Current situation regarding the ratification of the Optional Protocol**

173. In its concluding observations, the Committee stresses the importance of the ratification of the optional Protocol by Haiti. In fact, the Committee (in paragraph 7) "notes with appreciation the statement of the State party expressing its intention to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention" and (in paragraph 46) "encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, concerning the meeting time of the Committee".

174. The Optional Protocol has been included in the agenda of the National Assembly, and the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) has been assigned the mission of ensuring the country's accession to the Optional Protocol, to the Committee's rules of procedure, and to the provision of article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, concerning the meeting time of the Committee.

### **D. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

175. Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in China in 1995, Haiti, among many other States, committed itself to respecting and promoting the principle of gender equality as a basis for the nations' harmonious development. The State parties undertook to pursue, through their government policies, the implementation of the Platform for Action and to respect the commitments made to improving the status of women in their respective countries. Haiti has fulfilled its commitment to present every five years a report on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The latest such report was submitted in 2009 and the fourth such report is currently under preparation.

### **E. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

176. Haiti fully acceded to the MDGs and adopted a series of national development plans, including the National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction Paper (DSNCRP) in 2006 and the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) in 2012, using them as a basis for strategies adapted to local circumstances. The free and compulsory universal education programme (PSUGO), launched by the Government in 2011, constitutes a special contribution to the attainment of the MDGs. The Action Plan for Poverty Reduction Acceleration (PAARP), published on 9 April 2014, refers explicitly to that programme. The State shares the global view

that the participation of women on an equal footing with men is a key to economic development and the attainment of the MDGs. It has been demonstrated that, without gender equality women's empowerment in accordance with MDG 3 and on the basis of a human rights approach, it is impossible to attain the other MDGs. By making the Government as a whole responsible for specific activities aimed at gender equality, the inclusion of the action plan to ensure gender equality in PSDH shows the State's commitment to the MDGs.

#### **F. Dissemination of conclusions**

177. The documents on gender equality and the State's related commitments are disseminated through various awareness-raising, training, and plan- and project-evaluation activities undertaken on the initiative of the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and civil society bodies, especially women's and feminist organizations, which are particularly energetic. Consultation and validation meetings organized by the Ministry as part of preparation of reports offer an opportunity to disseminate the relevant documents, the provisions of interest to women and the population as a whole and the institutional response to the State's commitments, especially among the members of the National Assembly and the judiciary.

178. The State acknowledges inadequacies in this area and an obvious lack of an overall communication strategy. The Committee's observations and recommendations encourage the State to redouble its efforts to ensure that all institutions and all organized population groups become well informed stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Convention and the other international agreements ratified by Haiti.

#### **G. Technical assistance**

179. During the two periods considered by this combined report, the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) received multiple technical and financial support for activities linked to its mandate. The Ministry's partners are mostly organizations of the United Nations system and also include regional - cooperation and bilateral agencies.

180. As a key long-term partner of the Ministry, UN Women supports it in monitoring the implementation of gender equality policy; in implementing the pilot project entitled "From legal to actual equality", which has served as a model for comparative analysis by gender (ACS) at the level of local authorities (2008-2011); and, currently, in training civil servants in gender-sensitive budgeting, in establishing the Thematic Round Table on Gender and in preparing this report.

181. In the period reviewed, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) systematically developed partnerships with the Ministry in the areas of gender-related governance, gender equality, and elimination of violence against women, particularly with regard to awareness-raising and care.

182. The Gender Parity Office of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) is building the capacity of Ministry's departmental coordination units to ensure care for women victims of violence and provides technical support for the enforcement of the minimum 30 per cent quota for women, enshrined in the amended Constitution of 1987.

183. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provides the Ministry with technical support in sensitizing the population to reproductive health and with logistic support for five of the Ministry's departmental coordinating units (in the Sud, Artibonite, Centre, Nippes and Sud-Est departments). UNICEF is financing an awareness-raising project of the Ministry for the communities of two departments with a view to eliminating violence against girls and women and improving reproductive health and social relations between genders with the participation of all social and community associations and local authorities.

184. Bilateral international cooperation agencies contribute to the Ministry's policies and programmes. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) provides crucial support for work preliminary to gender equality policy formulation and for post-earthquake emergency programmes, such as the deployment of police officers in the camps for displaced persons.

185. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), currently Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD), has since 2012 provided the Ministry with ongoing technical support through the following three projects:

- Public management support project (PARGEP), helping the Ministry to finalize a gender equality policy document and a related national action plan and to train trainers in comparative gender analysis (ACS);
- Technical support project (PATH), training Ministry staff in developing and managing plans, programmes and projects, supplying equipment and material, and helping to organize the Thematic Round Table on Gender and to draw up the gender-equality policy operational plan;
- Voluntary Cooperation Programme (VCP), offering technical assistance by supporting the coordination units in the Sud-Est and Artibonite departments in creating a network among organizations and linkages with actors of other sectors with a view to mainstreaming gender-based analysis.

186. In connection with the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (Belem do Para Convention), ratified by Haiti in 1996, the Organization of American States (OAS) provides MCFDF with expert support in drawing up a bill on the prevention, punishment and elimination of violence against women. Moreover, the NGO Pan-American Development Foundation (PADF) provided limited assistance in connection with the deployment of police officers in the camps for refugees after the 12 January 2010 earthquake.

187. Haiti appreciates the Committee's recommendations regarding technical assistance (formulated in paragraph 47 of the concluding observations) and welcomes any assistance offers that it receives. After the adoption by the Government and the publication of the gender inequalities identification document, the gender equality policy document and the related action plan, all drawn up by the Ministry with international technical assistance, the State is in a better position to benefit from the Committee's proposals.

#### **H. Interim report, 2010**

188. In a letter of 22 December 2013, the Minister for the Status of Women and Women's Rights explained to the Committee that the exceptional circumstances

occasioned by the earthquake of 12 January 2010 had made it impossible to prepare the interim report requested for 2010; and that all of the information requested by the Committee with regard to draft legislation would be contained in this document, which combines the country's eighth and ninth periodic reports.

### **Conclusion**

189. As shown in this document, which covers the periods 2006-2010 and 2010-2014, the distance that Haiti must still cover in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women is long and strewn with obstacles. This document's first six chapters describe progress achieved in terms of adopting strategic gender-equality policy instruments and taking measures to promote women's rights and combat prostitution, sexist stereotypes and the various forms of violence against women. Chapters seven and eight describe the efforts made by the State and civil society in the last four years towards women's fair and equitable participation in decision-making bodies, noting that the results obtained so far are limited.

190. The State intends to take further action to eliminate discrimination against women and girls and promote women's empowerment and gender equality. New measures will be taken to ensure that the actors in all sectors intensify their efforts against persisting sexist stereotypes and the various forms of violence against women. Reforming the legal framework to tackle the gender inequalities highlighted in this report is a priority. The promulgation of the Paternity, Maternity and Filiation Act on 28 May 2014 and its publication in the Official Journal (issue No. 105) on 4 June 2014 have constituted a significant step in that direction.

191. The Government's adoption in 2014, after a long process, of the gender equality policy and of a related national plan of action was crucial. The State now has a strategic policy-framework instrument to guide the activities of all sectors of society and to have an impact on social behaviour. The main measures provided for concern all actors, in their respective areas of activity, and are expected to help to take gender-related concerns into account in implementing sectoral public policies.

192. With regard to the period 2014-2020, Haiti plans to intensify mainstreaming its policies on gender issues in the areas of justice, education, health, the economy and employment. Related to all aspects of development, the implementation of the Convention is indeed a broad and deep area of action. In order to progress effectively, priorities must be identified. Such implementation, an obligation shared by the various national actors, is undeniably a socially necessary key to the country's comprehensive development.

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