



**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**

**Combined fourth and fifth periodic report of States parties
due in 2011**

Cameroon*

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document has not been formally edited.

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Acronyms

ACAFEJ	Cameroonian Association of Women Lawyers
ACAFEM	Cameroonian Association of Women Doctors
ACAFIA	Cameroonian Association of Women Agricultural Engineers
ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
ACDI	Canadian International Development Agency
ACEFA	Programme to Improve Competitiveness of Family Farms
ACEP	Private Enterprises Credit Agency
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
ADB	African Development Bank
ADPAM	Project to Support Development of Artisanal Maritime Fishing
AEP	Drinking Water Supply
ALVF	Association to Combat Violence against Women
ANIF	National Financial Investigation Agency
APE	Parents' Association
APENOC	Project to Support Development of Non-conventional Livestock Breeding
ARV	Anti-Retro-Viral
ATC	Authorized Treatment Centre
C2D	Debt Reduction-Development Contract
CAPR	Regional Supply Centres
CARMMA	Campaign for the Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa
CBF	Chantal Biya Foundation
CBIRC	Chantal Biya International Research Centre
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CERAC	Circle of Friends of Cameroon
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIPCRE	International Circle for the Promotion of Creation
CMA	District Medical Centre
CNDHDAC	United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa
CNDHL	National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms
CNFZV	National Centre for Zootechnical and Veterinary Training
COGE	Water Management Committee
CRA	Farmers' Regional College
CRTV	Cameroon Radio and Television

DSCE	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
ECAM	Cameroonian Household Surveys
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFSC	Cooperative School for the Training of Specialists
EFSDC	School for the Training of Specialists in Community Development
EFSEAR	School for the Training of Specialists in Agricultural and Rural Equipment
ENAM	National School of Administration and Judicial Training
ENAP	National School for Prison Administration
ENIEG	Training College of General Education Teachers
ENIET	Training College of Technical Education Teachers
ENS	Teacher-Training College
ENSPY	Yaoundé National Police Academy
ENSPY	National Advanced School of Engineering at the University of Yaoundé
EONC	Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care
ETA	Agricultural Vocational School
EVS	Children, HIV and AIDS
FESADE	Women, Health and Development
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
IAI	African Information Technology Institute
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
INS	National Institute of Statistics
IRIC	International Relations Institute of Cameroon
JIG	Joint Initiative Group
LLIN	Long-lasting Insecticidal Nets
MDRI	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
MFI	Micro-Finance Institution
MINADER	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MINAS	Ministry of Social Affairs
MINEDUB	Ministry of Basic Education
MINEPIA	Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries
MINESEC	Ministry of Secondary Education
MINESUP	Ministry of Higher Education

MINJEUN	Ministry of Youth Affairs
MINJUSTICE	Ministry of Justice
MINPMEESA	Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses, Social Economy and Handicrafts
MINSANTE	Ministry of Public Health
MIPROMALO	Local Materials Promotion Authority
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
OP	Farmers' Organization
OPJ	Criminal Investigation Officer
PACD/PME	Support Programme for the Creation and Development of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
PAJER-U	Rural and Urban Youth Support Project
PARETFOP	Technical Education and Vocational Training Reform Project
PARFAR	Programme to Increase Rural Family Income in the Northern Regions
PEPFAR	United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PEZ	Priority Education Zone
PIFMAS	Youth Socio-Economic Integration Project through the Creation of Micro-Enterprises for the Manufacture of Sports Material
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission
PNA	National Literacy Programme
PNDRT	Root and Tuber National Development Programme
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
REFAMP/CAM	Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians, Cameroon Branch
REPAGE	Parliamentarian Network for Gender Advancement
SAR/SM	Rural Artisan Centres/Domestic Science Centres
SASNIM	Action Week for Infant and Maternal Health and Nutrition
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organization
ZEP	Priority Education Zones

I. Introduction

1. The present report, which combines the fourth and fifth periodic reports on implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, submitted pursuant to article 18 thereof, covers the period from February 2009 to September 2011. It contains information on legislative, judicial, administrative and other initiatives adopted by Cameroon to give effect to relevant provisions pertinent to the Convention.

2. It updates the information contained in the preceding reports, taking into account general guidelines from the June 2008 inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies on the use of indicators to advance and monitor the implementation of human rights.

3. Finally, it addresses the concerns, suggestions and recommendations contained in the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women following consideration of the second and third periodic reports of Cameroon presented in a single document (CEDAW/C/CMR/3) at its 876th and 877th meetings, on 28 January 2009, during its forty-third session.

4. The Committee asked the State party first to provide in written form, within two years, information on measures undertaken to carry out the recommendations set out in paragraphs 15 and 27 of its concluding observations, and then to respond to the concerns expressed in the following periodic report.

5. Thus, after updating prior information and discussing the progress made in the promotion and protection of women's rights (Part One), the State of Cameroon will respond to the main concerns, suggestions and recommendations of the Committee (Part Two) before addressing the obstacles and difficulties encountered in implementing certain provisions of the Convention, as well as challenges and opportunities (Part Three). Legal texts, tables of statistics, judgments and rulings rendered on various issues regarding advancement and protection of women are annexed hereto.

II. Part One

Information on developments with regard to the general framework for implementation of the Convention

6. The new initiatives undertaken by the State of Cameroon to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention are legislative, institutional and administrative in nature.

Legislative measures

7. Since presenting its last periodic report, in 2009, Cameroon has signed and ratified international conventions and adopted laws that advance and protect human rights affecting women, helping to strengthen the implementation of the Convention.

International legal undertakings

8. These undertakings deal with signed and ratified instruments at the global, regional and subregional levels.

Instruments signed

Universal

9. The following instruments were signed on 15 December 2009 in New York:
- The Convention on Cluster Munitions, adopted in Dublin on 30 May 2008;
 - The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, adopted on 8 December 1990;
 - The Optional Protocol of 18 December 2002 to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, of 10 December 1984, ratified by Decree No. 2010/347 of 19 November 2010 of the President of the Republic.

Regional

10. The following are of note:
- The African Youth Charter, adopted in Banjul, Gambia, on 2 July 2006 and signed on 15 December 2009 in Addis Ababa;
 - The Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the African Union, meeting at the Third Ordinary Session of the Conference, held in Addis Ababa from 6 to 8 July 2004, on Gender Equality in Africa.

Subregional

11. A noteworthy development is the signing, on 11 November 2009 in Libreville, Gabon, of two instruments adopted on 6 July 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria, by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) / Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Ministerial Conference, including:
- The Multilateral Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa;
 - The Resolution on Combating Trafficking in Persons.

Instruments ratified

Universal

12. The amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, adopted on 17 September 1997 in Montreal and on 3 December 1999 in Beijing, was ratified by Decree No. 2009/141 of 18 May 2009.

Regional

13. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), a legal instrument adopted by the African Union under the authority of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on 11 July 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique, and which entered into force on 25 November 2005, was ratified by Presidential Decree No. 2009/143 of 28 May 2009. The ratification of this legal instrument constitutes the most significant action in building the legal framework for the promotion and protection of women's rights.

National legislative and regulatory measures

14. Among the legislative and regulatory enactments that pertain to the promotion and protection of human rights are:

- Act No. 2009/004 of 14 April 2009, concerning the organization of legal assistance (see annexes);
- Act No. 2009/009 of 10 July 2009, on the sale of off-plan buildings, and its implementing decree No. 2009/1726/PM of 4 September 2009;
- Act No. 2009/010 of 10 July 2009, on real estate rental/first-time access to home ownership, and its implementing decree No. 2009/1727/PM of 4 September 2009;
- Act No. 2010/002 of 13 April 2010 on advancement and protection of persons with disabilities (see annexes);
- Act No. 2010/020 of 21 December 2010, on the organization of leasing in Cameroon;
- Act No. 2010/023 of 21 December 2010, which defines the status of public interest groups;
- Decree No. 2010/0243/PM of 26 February 2010, which defines the terms under which State power is transferred to towns for the allocation of aid and relief to the indigent and the needy.

Institutional framework

15. New or redesigned institutions have enhanced the institutional framework for the promotion and protection of human rights in Cameroon since 2009. The following are examples:

- For the rights of the child, the Bépanda Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre in Douala, established by Decree No. 2009/301/PM of 13 February 2009;
- For the rights of persons with disabilities, the Cardinal Paul Emile Léger National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, established by Decree No. 2009/096 of 16 March 2009;
- For the right to a healthy environment, the National Observatory on Climate Change, created by Decree No. 2009/410 of 10 December 2009 and the Permanent Committee for monitoring issues relating to the International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, created by Order No. 131/PM of 30 April 2009;
- For the right to energy, the establishment of the Rural Energy Fund, created by Decree No. 2009/409 of 10 December 2009.

Administrative measures

16. In a similar vein, the Development Vision 2035 and the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper were adopted in 2009.

17. The Vision is expressed as follows: “Cameroon: an emerging country, democratic and united in its diversity”. Aspects of this vision include strengthening women’s roles in society and their economic autonomy.

18. The Growth and Employment Strategy Paper is the Government action framework for realizing the Vision’s goals during the first 10 years (2010–2020). It is focused on accelerating growth, creating formal employment and reducing poverty.

19. In addition, a Document on National Gender Policy, whose main elements apply to the situational analysis of gender issues in Cameroon and the aspects of that Policy that focus on the foundation, vision, values and principles of the objective, goals and areas of strategic focus, was drafted and technically validated.

III. Part Two

Responses to concerns, suggestions and recommendations of the Committee in its concluding observations on the second and third reports of Cameroon

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 8 of the concluding observations of the Committee (CEDAW/C/CMR/CO/3)

20. Following consideration of the third periodic report, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family organized briefings assembling the representatives of all the ministerial divisions and of women's and human rights organizations.

21. During these working meetings chaired by the head of this ministerial division, the members of the Cameroonian delegation, having presented the report to the Committee, presented the substance of the concluding observations, emphasizing areas of concern and recommendations. A table identifying all the actions to be undertaken and the actors by sector was drawn up and distributed to each participant. Thereafter, explanatory and immersion meetings were held by the 10 regional delegations for women's empowerment and the family, to reach the social stakeholders within local communities.

22. The information in the present report reflects the responses provided by the sectors regarding the expectations expressed.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 9 of the concluding observations of the Committee

23. In response to the concluding observations, the following actions have been carried out at the National Assembly level:

24. In 2009, implementation of the Parliamentarians' Network for Gender Advancement, which advocates the gender perspective in parliamentary deliberations. During the last two years, this network has undertaken operational capacity-building including:

- A session fostering ownership for the Convention and for gender perspectives, with the support of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM);
- A session for increasing the effectiveness of measures to combat violence against women, with the support of the Interparliamentary Union and civil society organizations (the Association to Combat Violence against Women, the Cameroonian Association of Women Lawyers and Lawyers without Borders) in June 2011. In addition, since January 2011, Parliamentarians' Network for Gender Advancement has organized awareness-raising meetings for parliamentarians on integrating gender perspectives into the preliminary draft of the code of the person and the family, which is in the process of being adopted.

25. In 2010, the Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians, Cameroon Branch (REFAMP/CAM) became operational, adopting its charter and internal regulations, implementing the executive bureau and adopting a triennial (2010–2012) plan of action.

REFAMP/CAM implements the resolutions of the International Population and Development Conference, which is itself a structure that implements the Convention.

26. These networks' capacities have been built through workshops and seminars on:
- Gender budgeting in sectoral policies, programmes and projects;
 - Mainstreaming gender when adopting laws;
 - Increasing women's involvement in the electoral process;
 - The role of women in governance, particularly in building the legal framework to criminalize the offences of sexual harassment, female genital mutilation and early marriage.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 11 of the concluding observations of the Committee

27. As regards legislative reform of the legal sector, announced during consideration of the last report, drafts incorporating the Convention are being drawn up of the code of the person and the family, the civil code, the civil and commercial procedure code and the penal code. The bills that pertain to them propose eliminating all provisions deemed discriminatory in the existing legislation and setting out new provisions that ensure women's enjoyment of the rights contained in the Convention, with a view to advancing gender equality.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 13 of the concluding observations of the Committee

On the training of lawyers and judges

28. The subject of human rights has been taught in Cameroon since the 2008–2009 academic year at all educational levels, from preschool to university. The teaching modules at all the State universities that train lawyers incorporate the international conventions on human rights, including the Convention.

29. Human rights are also taught at civil servant and public official vocational training schools, including those that implement the laws, in this case the National School of Administration and Judicial Training (École Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature), the Yaoundé National Police Academy (École Nationale Supérieure de Police de Yaoundé), the National Gendarmerie School (École Nationale de Gendarmerie) and the National School for Prison Administration (École Nationale pour l'Administration Pénitentiaire).

30. Initial training of judges is provided by ENAM. The curriculum includes a module on human rights that emphasizes publicizing and adopting international legal instruments on human rights.

31. The continuing education of judges is provided through seminars and workshops, some of which are planned and budgeted for annually by the Ministry of Justice, while others are organized on an ad hoc basis, depending on departmental needs, and financed by development partners, to build capacities.

32. With specific regard to implementing the Convention, MINJUSTICE organized three seminars, held first from 9 to 11 December 2009, with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and then, respectively, from 21 to 23 December 2009 and from 18 to 20 January 2010, with the ministry's own funds.

33. At the end of these sessions, 90 judges, a majority of them women, selected in the 10 Appellate Courts at the rate of 30 per session, took up this international legal instrument, considered to be the charter of women's rights. They became aware of its justiciability and consequently of its invocability before national jurisdictions, whether for strengthening domestic legislation or for filling its gaps. The seminar participants undertook, moreover, to share what they had learned with colleagues who had not attended these initial training sessions, which should be offered to all judicial personnel.

34. Thanks to these sessions, the concluding observations of the Committee were passed on to seminar participants, with a view to encouraging the participants to propose measures to implement them.

35. To that end, with a view to taking greater ownership of the Convention, the seminar participants made pertinent suggestions, including:

- To increase the number of training sessions for judges, lawyers and criminal investigation police in implementing the Convention, in the context of initial and in-service training in seminars, workshops, panel discussions and round tables, organized at the appellate court level, for a better understanding of recurring problems in all regions of the country;
- To speed up the process of incorporating the Convention by drafting, adopting and enacting national legislation guaranteeing women's rights and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women;
- To harmonize the organization and the operation of traditional courts, and to train those in charge of them to implement the Convention;
- To train civil registry officers to implement the Convention;
- To train parliamentarians in the Convention in order to include gender perspectives when laws are adopted.

36. Another training session for judges on implementing international conventions in domestic law, attended by some 50 judges, was organized from 31 May to 4 June 2010.

37. These training sessions raise the judges' awareness of the unequivocal and self-executing provisions in international legal instruments, with a view to implementing them in their professional practice independently of incorporating these instruments into special laws, under article 45 of the Constitution. After this first series of training sessions, a body of case law on the national jurisdictions' implementation of the Convention began to emerge.

Women's access to justice on an equal footing with men

38. Cameroon's response regarding this issue in document CEDAW/C/CMR/Q/3/Add.1 is still applicable. As stated in the preceding report, the right to obtain justice is guaranteed by the Constitution to all Cameroonians regardless of gender. The legal framework for improving access to justice, implemented in 2009 through the adoption of Act No. 2009/004 of 14 April 2009, on organizing the above-mentioned legal assistance, makes it easier for women to go to court because they fall into most of the categories of persons eligible for legal assistance. Moreover, many of them are poor, subject to withholding tax or going through a divorce with children to take care of and no income of their own. Thus, in 2010, legal assistance was granted to most of the needy women who had applied to the commissions established in courts for this purpose, as shown in table 1.

39. It is noteworthy that in 2010, of the claims registered and considered by the commissions, 141 women compared with 113 men received legal assistance in various areas and at all levels of jurisdiction.

On information for women and community leaders

40. The following actions have been undertaken:

- A weekly 15 minute programme has been broadcast nationwide by Cameroon Radio and Television (CRTV) in the two official languages (French and English) by the Communications Unit of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF). This programme, broadcast in local languages by the MINPROFF decentralized departments, is two hours long on the CRTV regional stations and community radio stations. These programmes emphasize raising awareness in communities of the harmful effects of early marriage, violence against women, female genital mutilation, breast ironing and sexual harassment.
- The translation of the Convention, which was initially translated into four national languages (Fulfulde, Bulu, Pidgin and Ghom'ala) and made available to community leaders and social communicators, with a view to disseminating it to undereducated social classes. Moreover, the annual printing and distribution of 10,000 leaflets, begun in 2008, is continuing. The same is true of the observance of 16 days of annual activism with regard to violence against women, essentially dedicated to publicizing the Convention. On this occasion, round tables, educational talks, panel conferences and radio and television programmes are organized. For more widespread media coverage, articles are also published in public and private print media, and copies of the Convention are made available to members of the Government.
- In 2010, provisions of the Convention were rewritten in a simplified style in French and English, to facilitate its comprehension. Two thousand published copies have been distributed to community liaisons, with an eye to wider distribution.
- During the days dedicated to commemorating women and the family, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family, together with its partners, organizes round tables, conferences and educational talks on the Convention throughout the national territory. For example, during the observance of International Women's Day 2011, a symposium was organized with the support of the United Nations System at the University of Yaoundé I and the University of Buea.
- In 2010 a booklet entitled "Passport for Equality" was published, with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and was distributed throughout women's association networks in the 10 regions of the country. It contains the provisions of the Convention, with commentaries.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 15 of the concluding observations of the Committee

41. The bill that provides for revision to the Penal Code is being finalized. After it is approved by all stakeholders, the process of presenting it to the National Assembly will begin.

42. A text prepared as a preliminary draft of the code of the person and the family was, initially, integrated into the preliminary draft of the law enacting the Civil Code. The merging of the two texts appeared to be necessary on the one hand because the law of persons and the family is part of civil law, and on the other hand in order to avoid splitting up the texts. Legal tradition dictates that the first book of the Civil Code concerns persons and the family, while the second book must concern property and various changes to ownership. But issues regarding both branches of civil law are found in the draft of the code of the person and the family.

43. However, because the timetable for adopting the civil code may appear longer or shorter in light of the time spent preparing the first book, the option of finalizing the first book as the code of the person and the family was chosen for its advantage of reducing approval and adoption time. The process of approving the Code has changed due to the implementation, in April 2011, of a Multidisciplinary Reviewing Committee within the Department of the Prime Minister. This Committee has submitted its draft, which was examined through inter-ministerial coordination in June 2011, and submission of the bill to the National Assembly is expected at the next parliamentary session.

44. With respect to registering civil status documents, Act No. 2011/011 of 6 May 2011 modified and supplemented certain provisions of Ordinance No. 81/02 of 29 June 1981, on organizing civil status and some provisions on the status of natural persons.

45. Consequently, the adoption of the two documents (the penal code, and the code of the person and the family) essential to the advancement and protection of gender equality and the fundamental rights of women is expected at the end of 2011.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 17 of the concluding observations of the Committee

46. The provisions of the code of the person and the family, in the process of being adopted, establish the minimum age for marriage at 18 years, regardless of the gender of the future spouses, in these terms: “The man and the woman may not enter into marriage before the age of 18”. For the rest, see the response to recommendation 5 below.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 19 of the concluding observations of the Committee

47. To better ensure the independence of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (CNDHL), the National Assembly has adopted, and the President of the Republic has enacted, Act No. 2010/004 of 13 April 2010, modifying and supplementing the provisions of Act No. 2004/016 of 22 July 2004, on the creation, organization and functioning of the CNDHL. Through this law, which has essentially eliminated the voting rights held by Government representatives, Cameroon has adhered to the Paris Principles. Its National Institution for Human Rights has therefore been re-accredited with Status A by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions.

48. With respect to appointing a Deputy Ombudsperson for Gender Equality (Médiateur adjoint pour l'égalité entre les sexes), whose specific mandate is to promote women's rights within the CNDHL, it should be noted that as part of its multidisciplinary composition, a Ministry representative charged with the advancement of women is a member, and mediation is one of the Commission's responsibilities. Moreover, the CNDHL is made up of 30 members including nine women, or 30 per cent, in compliance with the provisions of the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (Document de Stratégie pour la Croissance et l'Emploi – DSCE) on women's representation.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 21 of the concluding observations of the Committee

49. As regards implementing the DSCE, gender budgeting has been advocated in an effort to reduce gender-based disparities and take into account the concerns of all social components. With support from this framework paper, concrete steps have been undertaken by the national authorities, chief among them:

- Bulletin No. 001/CAB/PR of 13 December 2010, on preparing the State budget for the fiscal year 2011, in which the Head of State has requested that the gender

perspective be incorporated into, and that gender inequality be reduced in, the national development process;

- The advocacy of MINPROFF vis-à-vis the Secretaries-General of the sectoral ministries, for gender mainstreaming when preparing policies, plans and development programmes.

50. According to the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, for the period 2012/13, 24.5 per cent of the national budget was allocated to measures that advance women, with the bulk of the support geared to developing agro-pastoral, artisanal and informal-sector activities.

51. The financial resources allocated to MINPROFF increased from 4.3 billion CFA francs in 2007 to 5.90 billion CFA francs in 2009, then fell to 4.78 billion CFA francs in 2010 and to 3.61 billion CFA francs in 2011. This reduction reflects that of the overall State budget for the period under consideration, marked by international financial and economic crises. Nevertheless, this budget has provided for, among other items, the construction of 10 Centres for Women's Empowerment in 2009 and 10 others in 2010. Consequently, the supply of services has increased by about 24 per cent. As regards human resources at MINPROFF, contractual arrangements with 196 employees since 2008 have strengthened the operation of the national machinery substantially.

52. The effective implementation of decentralization since January 2010 has allowed the targets of the national machinery to be closer to the decision-making centres and to better assess their specific needs as set out in the work plan prepared for that purpose.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 23 of the concluding observations of the Committee

53. Cameroon is committed to the Millennium Development Goals, the third of which is to "promote gender equality and empower women". Mainstreaming measures have been undertaken by the Government with the collaboration of development partners and those from civil society. Among the special measures adopted by the Government is the Project to Reform Technical Education and Vocational Training, whose goal is to provide scholarships to young women from the top-ranking higher education establishments (*grandes écoles*) to encourage them to pursue careers in science. Likewise, the Ministry of Higher Education grants scholarships to girls to allow them to pursue their studies abroad. For its part, the Ministry of Youth Affairs organized information fairs on 11 February 2010 and 12 August 2010 on careers for young people, with a special focus on the job outlook for young women.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 25 of the concluding observations of the Committee

54. As a result of a number of studies on the current status of gender mainstreaming, since 2008 the Government, with the support of development partners, has been involved in the process of drafting a Document on National Gender Policy. That document, which was technically approved in 2010 through a partnership-based, coordinated mainstreaming approach, advocates gender mainstreaming when drafting, implementing, monitoring and assessing development policies, programmes and projects. While its adoption by the Government is awaited, 15 heads of prestigious professional training schools, 40 radio station managers, 40 community liaisons and 40 heads of decentralized departments at sectoral ministries have been trained in incorporating gender mainstreaming into training curricula.

55. Moreover, the Government has conducted and approved studies aimed at raising awareness of the overall problem of violence against women, including:

- A situational study on female genital mutilation in Cameroon;
- A legal study on the rights of women and girls in Cameroon;
- An assessment of gender-based violence in Cameroon;
- An assessment of the gender perspective in politics, programmes and projects in Cameroon;
- Women's participation in public life;
- The National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms has organized an awareness-raising/training workshop, during which the following groups have received training:
 - 50 representatives of political parties and associations;
 - 50 media professionals (journalists and documentarians);
 - 50 representatives (focal points and members of gender committees) of public, semi-public and private administrations, and international partners.

56. On 14 and 16 June 2011, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms also organized a capacity-building workshop for 50 political parties and civil society organizations on citizens' participation in the electoral process.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 27 of the concluding observations of the Committee

57. The substance of the bill on preventing and punishing both violence against women and gender-based discrimination has been absorbed by the draft of the penal code, which is in the process of being revised, again in an effort to avoid disparities between texts in both criminal and civil matters.

58. The rape of a woman or a girl, which was mentioned in the preceding report, is considered in Cameroon to be a serious physical and psychological violation of the victim. Consequently, the government supports all the initiatives of its development partners and of civil society to combat this act. For example, the German Agency for International Cooperation has made a commitment to finance a two-year national awareness-raising campaign, whose main objectives are:

- To encourage victims to report sexual violence;
- To improve their medical and psycho-social care;
- To ensure that the perpetrators of these odious acts are punished.

59. The first phase of this campaign was completed in May 2011. It was launched on 28 May 2009 in the presence of Government members who oversee, respectively, justice, health, youth, the advancement of women and families and basic education; members of the diplomatic corps; and representatives of international organizations and civil society.

60. At the level of court proceedings, the issue of rape and incest was included on the agenda of the annual meeting of the heads of the courts of appeal, which took place in October 2009.

61. In proposing a multi-sectoral response to sex crimes, which mainly involves the cooperation of social workers and legal and health officials, leaders in the legal arena have recognized the central role the law must play in the fight against these social practices.

Obstacles that limit action have been identified. They include disparities between civil and criminal legislation and between domestic and international law, and restrictions on the mobilization of public action.

62. At the end of that meeting, a circular letter was adopted directing judges to implement the legal provisions efficiently and to better evaluate the facts in these cases.

63. It should be noted that a national strategy to combat gender-based violence was developed in 2009. This strategy is currently in the process of being publicized. Between 2009 and 2010, various actors in civil society received general training in implementing the Convention. They consisted of 178 judges, 62 bailiffs, 26 attorneys, paralegals, journalists and criminal investigation officers.

64. In any event, domestic violence, spousal rape and all forms of sexual abuse of women will be better expressed in the penal code currently under revision. Under the current state of the law, they can be punished through various classifications of injuries. Therefore, with regard to punishment for spousal rape, “any man who uses physical or moral violence to have sexual relations with a woman shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of five to 10 years” (art. 296 of the Penal Code). A husband who uses violence to force his wife to have sexual relations with him may be prosecuted for causing intentional injury, depending on the severity of the violence; all of this is a question of fact left to the discretion of the judge hearing the case of the victimized wife.

65. At the institutional level, the Centres for Women’s Empowerment, which are local specialized technical units located throughout the national territory, also act as shelters for women in need. To that end, a Pilot Centre has been open since 2010 in one of the Centres for Women’s Empowerment in Yaoundé.

66. For emergency situations, 13 telephone lines, called “green lines” and mentioned in the previous report, remain in operation for emergency calls. The goal is for these lines to reduce cases of domestic violence by at least 10 per cent annually, as stipulated annually by the Head of Government in the MINPROFF road map.

67. The result of installing green lines and of the partners’ combined initiatives is incident reporting and open testimony throughout the above-mentioned meetings and in the media.

68. To allow professionals to better assess the cases of violence recorded, 10,000 copies of a “listening guide” were printed and publicized in 2009. More than 2,000 female victims of violence have been provided support through listening, counselling and guidance.

69. As regards empowerment, 86,000 young women have been trained at 57 Centres for Women’s Empowerment. In addition, they have been provided micro-credits that allow them to undertake income-generating activities, which in turn enable the financing of 2,488 projects in order to retrain female sex workers in more decent work.

70. In a similar vein, a legal-assistance document for women and families was drafted and validated in 2010. The document is currently being published and publicized.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 29 of the concluding observations of the Committee

71. Female genital mutilation and other harmful practices have been established as criminal offences in the draft of the penal code currently being revised. The perpetrators of these acts do not enjoy immunity in Cameroon. When established by a doctor, cases of female genital mutilation are considered to be serious injuries. In light of this, their perpetrators fall within the scope of penal sanctions, set out by article 277 of the Penal Code in effect, which punishes “with a term of 10 to 20 years’ imprisonment anyone who

permanently deprives another person of the use of all or part of a limb, an organ or a sense”.

72. Moreover, all forms of physical abuse of women may be punished, when established and reported, by implementing the provisions of articles 275 to 281 of the Penal Code, which punish violations of physical integrity, regardless of the status of the perpetrator or of the victim.

73. Awareness-raising of women, families, communities and opinion leaders about the harmful effects of female genital mutilation, of early and forced marriage and of other forms of domestic or public abuse is conducted through the observance of days commemorating women and the family, including the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence (seize jours d’activisme contre les violences faites aux femmes).

74. As regards implementing the activities of the component “Gender, Culture and Human Rights” with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 20 community and local radio show hosts, representing 15 radio stations from two regions (Eastern and Northern), have been trained in preventing and managing gender-based violence and in the advancement of reproductive health including in emergencies.

75. The partnership with the above-mentioned radio stations has resulted in the production of 200 programmes in local languages and French (many spots, short programmes and magazine programmes) to date, with the involvement of administrative, traditional, local and civil society authorities. Producing these programmes has led to a synergy of activity among the various actors, including law enforcement groups, health-care personnel and other participants.

76. Moreover, the State party, with support at the time from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), has run awareness-raising campaigns in four communities where female genital mutilation was practiced. These campaigns have led to the symbolic laying aside of knives by former male and female excision practitioners.

77. In 2009, the Government gave agro-pastoral production equipment, including two tractors, to four former excision practitioner associations currently engaged in other income-generating activities. In October 2010, a five-year plan of action to combat female genital mutilation was updated and validated.

78. This plan of action places particular emphasis on the following areas of focus:

- Studies and research;
- Capacity-building;
- Prevention;
- Protection and care;
- Partnership;
- Coordination/monitoring and assessment.

79. Since 2008 the Government has implemented, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a project to combat gender-based violence. This project is aimed primarily at community leaders, religious officials and women’s associations, with a view to training a national coalition in opposing violence against women in general and female genital mutilation in particular. With respect to awareness-raising activities, 2,000 posters and 2,000 pamphlets on gender-based violence were produced and distributed in 2010.

80. On 6 February every year, in cooperation with the international community, Cameroon observes a day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation with a heavy

emphasis, these last three years (2009–2011), on awareness-raising and advocacy vis-à-vis administrative, political, traditional and religious authorities. Moreover, 14 local anti-FGM committees are operating in communities that harbour the practice. Material and financial support is provided to practitioners and the above-mentioned committees. This support increases awareness of combating FGM in local populations.

81. Starting this year, the draft platform to combat violence, involving law-enforcement, civil society and sectoral ministry groups, has been implemented. Prior to this activity, the programme publicizing the Strategy To Combat Gender-Based Violence was launched in June 2011, in the Eastern region. The meeting, which brought together various leaders from the social sector, law-enforcement groups, civil society, the media, and technical and financial partners, has resulted in the creation of a mechanism for implementing this strategy. Finally, a programme to combat violence against women has been under way since July 2011. It receives French support and cooperation and involves civil society partners including the Association de Lutte contre les Violences faites aux Femmes (Association to Combat Violence against Women, ALVF), the Association Camerounaise des Femmes Juristes (Cameroonian Association of Women Lawyers, ACAFEJ) and the Cercle International pour la Promotion de la Création (International Circle for the Promotion of Creation, CIPCRE).

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 31 of the concluding observations of the Committee

Measures taken to address trafficking in and prostitution of women

82. Human smuggling and trafficking in persons, including trafficking in women, are treated as criminal offences in the draft of the penal code. Trafficking in girl children is punished by Act No. 2005/015 of 29 December 2005, on combating child smuggling and trafficking in children.

83. Since 2009 there have been eight judicial inquiry proceedings under way regarding the smuggling of children, both girls and boys.

84. Prostitution in both its forms has already been criminalized under the existing Penal Code:

- The exploitation of female prostitutes is punished by article 294, under the offence of procuring. The provisions of that article provide for the closing of prostitution establishments by a judge. Moreover, minor girl children receive special protection against moral danger and prostitution under article 345, which punishes the act of making a child of under age 18 reside or work in a house or establishment where prostitution is engaged in;
- Prostitution as a sex trade used by women is criminalized by article 343, which punishes in the same way “anyone who regularly engages in sex acts with others in exchange for payment” and anyone who, for purposes of prostitution, solicits persons by any means.

85. As a preventive measure and to maintain order, the administrative authorities often close down brothels. With support from the Criminal Investigation Vice Squad, they round up procurers in the street.

86. Along the same lines of prevention, the Government is raising awareness among young women regarding deviant, immoral behaviour such as infanticide, abortion, alcoholism, consumption of narcotic drugs, indecent dress and prostitution. It is continuing initiatives to rehabilitate prostitutes and female sex workers socio-economically by, among

others, training them in income-generating activities and organizing them in Joint Initiative Groups.

87. In April 2011, an Inter-Ministerial Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons, of which the Secretaries-General of the sectoral ministries are members, was created. Under the overall supervision of the Secretary-General of the Office of the Prime Minister, this committee conducts activities in the areas of action research, awareness-raising and monitoring/assessment.

88. The 2008–2012 cooperation programme with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is a reference framework for implementing the following activities:

- Organizing two regional awareness-raising campaigns on preventing violence against, exploitation of, abuse of and discrimination against children in Cameroon’s Great North region;
- Organizing 10 training sessions in the 10 regions of the country using awareness-raising tools to combat trafficking in children and their sexual exploitation. These sessions have resulted in the training of 250 social workers who are equipped in this area.

Provision of care

89. As regards caring for victims of trafficking and prostitution, the following actions have been undertaken:

- Rehabilitating three public youth counselling centres;
- Implementing a foster care system in December 2009 through approving and publicizing a guide to providing foster care for vulnerable children in Cameroon;
- Publishing two social workers’ guides in 2010 for the psycho-social support of children in difficult and circumstances or in emergency situations;
- Launching the national campaign to combat child trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children in Cameroon, in February 2011;
- Organizing five regional campaigns to combat child smuggling and the sexual exploitation of children in Cameroon in the Far North, North, Adamaoua, East and South regions. These campaigns have mobilized 2,500 pupils, 200 schoolteachers, 150 nursing students, 500 motorcycle taxi drivers, 200 administrative authorities, 50 teachers, 100 local activity leaders and 500 youths;
- Increasing the number of youth support centres, with a view to protecting and advancing women and girls through literacy, education and training.

Reintegration

90. As regards reintegration, the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Basic Social Services project has, through Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) funding, provided support and materials (miscellaneous equipment, socio-economic assistance, educational and medical supplies and special aid for street children) to vulnerable populations. To that end, 119 street children have been reintegrated into the formal education system.

91. Based on a successful experience with German cooperation between 2003 and 2008, the institutional machinery has devised a socio-economic reintegration project for teen mothers and female sex workers, called the *Projet Tantines* (“Aunties Project”). The project’s activities began in 2009 with the training of 58 teen mothers in sexual and reproductive health and in combating abuse and sexual violence. The ultimate aim is the

socio-economic reintegration of at least 400 teen mothers and female sex workers within five years.

92. At the same time, the technical units of MINPROFF have begun the socio-economic rehabilitation of female sex workers, including training them in rewarding work and organizing them in Joint Initiative Groups in order to, among others, allow them to access available financing for these groups.

93. In the same vein and also of note is ongoing awareness-raising, by these same units, among women, girls and families, of the dangers of cyber-marriage, considered to be a new form of trafficking in women.

94. Moreover, faith-based organizations counsel young female sex workers, offering them training in finding income-generating activities in food processing and preservation.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 33 of the concluding observations of the Committee

95. As regards elected positions, the statistical information on women's participation in political life provided in the preceding report remains current as the next round of elections is awaited. However, the number of female members of Government has risen from 11.8 per cent before 2009 to 13.5 per cent.

96. With regard to women's participation in political life and their presence in decision-making posts, advances have been observed in several sectors.

97. In the judicial sector, the number of female judges rose from 214, out of a total of 925 on 15 October 2008, to 242, out of 994 judges, on 8 July 2010. At the head of the decision-making bodies, including the jurisdictions and central services of the Ministry of Justice, there have been two female public prosecutors out of 70 public prosecution offices at the courts of first instance and the high courts since that date, compared with no women present during the last evaluation period. The greatest amount of progress made pertains to the first-time nomination of a woman to the post of public prosecutor at a court of appeal, out of 10 public prosecutor positions.

98. The diplomatic sector, overwhelmingly male-dominated in the past, has experienced an increase in women. The evolution of the female makeup of the last four graduating classes of The International Relations Institute of Cameroon, which provides training in diplomacy, illustrates this trend perfectly. In the class of 2011, of the 71 students currently being trained at that university institution, 35, or 47.88 per cent, are female. In 2004, that figure was 33.33 per cent (see table 4). The same holds true for the central services of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, where the status of women has been enhanced considerably these past years (see table 5).

99. In 2006, women were named head of two directorates for the first time, compared with none before that year. In 2008, an additional woman was promoted to head of a third directorate. In total, in this ministerial division with 10 directorates, three of them are currently led by women.

100. With this workforce, the 30 per cent threshold of women in decision-making posts has been crossed. This is in addition to the fact that there is a woman in the Office of the Minister, in the post of Inspector.

101. The most significant advance made is that of the nomination, for the first time, of a woman to the prestigious strategic post of Technical Adviser to the Presidency of the Republic, in Diplomatic Affairs, in December 2010.

102. At the territorial administration level, four women were registered as sub-prefects between 2008 and 2010.

103. At the international level, Cameroon submitted the application of a female candidate for the post of member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in July 2009. A female judge was elected Commissioner at this regional body.

104. Aware of women's overall underrepresentation in decision-making posts and in public life despite noteworthy progress, and taking into account the causes of this situation as they emerge from various studies conducted between 2007 and 2008, MINPROFF drafted, in 2010, a women's political training manual in anticipation of the next round of elections. This document raises women's awareness of their civil and political rights and the conditions for eligibility. Tables Nos. 6 through 10 provide an overview of women's participation in public affairs in Cameroon.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 35 of the concluding observations of the Committee

105. To give effect to this recommendation, the following initiatives have been undertaken, by focus of attention identified:

Adoption of general measures in support of education of girls in rural areas

106. The steps taken at this level involve non-formal and formal education.

Non-formal education

107. The supply of non-formal education has changed, as indicated in the response to recommendation 19; in addition, 71 trainers in various vocational specializations developed at the Centres for Women's Empowerment were recruited.

108. Education is provided at the counselling and vocational training centres that come under several ministerial divisions, including:

- Multi-Functional Youth Empowerment Centres, created and organized by Decree No. 2010/1099 of 7 May 2010. These centres offer a new direction in local extra-curricular support for youth. They are located in both urban centres and rural areas. Cameroon has 200 such centres in operation. The centres have housed and trained 5,852 participants, of whom 61 per cent are girls;
- Farmer Field Schools (Écoles Pratiques d'Agriculture): in 2009, three Farmers' Regional Colleges (Collèges Régionaux d'Agriculteurs) trained 252 persons including 146 men and 106 women;
- Nine Agricultural Vocational Schools (Écoles Techniques d'Agricultures) have trained 312 persons including 210 men and 102 women;
- Two Cooperative Schools for the Training of Specialists (Écoles pour la Formation des Spécialistes en Coopération) have trained 28 persons including 10 men and 18 women;
- Three Schools for the Training of Specialists in Community Development (Écoles de Formation des Spécialistes en Développement Communautaire) have trained 74 persons including 35 men and 39 women;
- One School for the Training of Specialists in Agricultural and Rural Equipment (École pour la Formation des Spécialistes en Equipement Agricole et Rural) has trained 19 men. These schools have trained a total of 685 persons including 428 men and 257 women; 62 per cent are men and 48 per cent are women;
- Livestock breeding stations and aquaculture stations: these stations disseminate breeding techniques and provide supplies (spawners, chicks and so on) to producers

at minimal cost. As regards the Programme to Support the Renewal and Development of Vocational Training in the Breeding and Fishing Sectors, in 2010, six such stations received support to increase producer farmer expertise and professionalize and prepare young people for socio-professional integration in farming careers. Of 145 students trained, 31, or 21.37 per cent, are women;

- The National Centres for Zootechnical and Veterinary Training (Centres Nationaux de Formation Zootechniques et Vétérinaires): charged with the training, development, retraining and specialization of technical personnel in breeding in animal health in Maroua and Jakiri, and in aquaculture and fisheries in Fouban. Of a workforce of 7,488 trained students, 3,491, or 46.62 per cent, are women;
- The Centres for Women's Empowerment, established in both urban and rural areas: these are dedicated to the intellectual, moral, civic and vocational training of this group. Between 2007 and 2010, their number rose from 45 to 84, an increase of 46.4 per cent. These centres trained approximately 86,000 women (including more than 70 per cent in rural areas) per year during the above-mentioned period compared with 13,000 women in 2005, an 84.88 per cent increase for the period under consideration;
- The Rural Artisan Centres/Domestic Science Centres (Sections Artisanales Rurales/Sections Ménagères, SAR/SM) are training centres for the technical trades and home economics. There are 189 such centres, which accommodate young people of both genders, throughout the entire country. Between 2009 and 2010, they received 24,269 students: 8,984 girls and 15,285 boys;
- The main objective of the six public and 300 private Vocational Training Centres (Centres de Formation Professionnelle) is to build the expertise of students of both genders, in order to reintegrate them occupationally. Between 2008 and 2010, the SAR/SM and public Vocational Training Centres trained 24,269 students, including 8,984 girls and women, or 37 per cent. Scholarships were provided to some students. In 2009, 413 scholarships were given, including 196 (47.45 per cent) to girls. In 2010, 640 scholarships were given, including 302 (47.18 per cent) to girls. These training centres added 1,219 qualified trainers in 2009.

109. Moreover, in 2006 the Ministry of Youth established the Rural and Urban Youth Support Project. When it was developed, the target population, consisting of young people 15 to 35 years of age who had not had schooling or had dropped out of school, graduates and non-graduates, was estimated at 1,515,216, or 9.8 per cent of the total population of Cameroon. Of that population, 47.2 per cent lived in an urban area and 52.8 per cent in a rural one. It was composed of 53.3 per cent women and 46.7 per cent men. The following outcomes were obtained:

- 7,000 young people from the 10 regions were identified, trained and financially supported by the project;
- 2,282 micro-projects were financed;
- 116 junior enterprise projects were financed and implemented;
- 412 projects were financed in the 10 regions;
- 282 young people were placed in jobs.

110. As regards affirmative action, for this programme a special provision establishes a minimum quota of women's projects to finance by region. To that end, regions that do not comply with this provision are rejected outright.

111. Moreover, since 2006 the Ministry of Youth has implemented the Youth Socio-Economic Integration Project through the Creation of Micro-Enterprises for the Manufacture of Sports Material, which is run in the 10 regions of the country. The target population and conditionality are identical to those of the Rural and Urban Youth Support Project. In its current pilot phase, this project is being conducted in the Adamaoua, Far North, North and North-West regions.

112. The following project outcomes have been achieved:

- 421 young people have been mobilized through the project;
- 35 sports material producers' cooperatives have been financed and established;
- 80,000,000 CFA francs have been made available to finance 35 cooperatives;
- "Made in Cameroon" balls and nets for soccer, handball and volleyball have been marketed;
- A monthly production capacity of 494 soccer balls, 13 handballs, six volleyballs, 32 pairs of soccer nets and two pairs of handball nets.

113. In addition, these two projects (the Youth Socio-Economic Integration Project through the Creation of Micro-Enterprises for the Manufacture of Sports Material, PIFMAS; and the Rural and Urban Youth Support Project, PAJER-U) support entrepreneurship and employment in the following ways:

- Supporting production units' creative ideas;
- Monitoring;
- Organizing internship programmes;
- Placing individuals in jobs.

114. As regards the eradication of illiteracy among women and girls, of the 35,854 persons trained by the National Literacy Programme, 23,857, or 62 per cent, are women and girls.

115. The Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries has three (in Maroua, Fouban and Jakiri) National Centres for Veterinary and Fishery Zootechnical Training, which are charged with the training, development, retraining and specialization of technical personnel in the breeding and animal health trades (in Maroua and Jakiri), and in fishing and aquaculture (in Fouban). In addition, the centres support the development of the breeding and health protection trades.

116. As regards socio-professional training, in 2010 the Ministry of Social Affairs trained 500 young girls at "Bobine D'or" ("Golden Bobbin") community centres and Centres for Disabled Girls' and Women's Empowerment in Yaoundé, and 240 girls in moral danger at the Douala shelter/workshop.

Formal education

117. Formal education includes primary, secondary and higher education.

Primary education

118. The government-led initiatives comprise:

- Providing free primary education, which, in general, overwhelmingly benefits rural populations because of their size and income level;

- Implementing programmes that encourage girls to attend and remain in school, by identifying Priority Education Zones, with special support for school-age girls;
- Constructing 12,161 separate toilets at the schools between 2009 and 2010;
- Offering parents food assistance, managing the girls' schooling and providing school supplies, to motivate girls to attend school and stay;
- Adopting a textbook policy that eliminates sexist stereotypes in texts and teaching materials;
- Implementing this policy has resulted in not only updated books and textbooks but improved teaching quality. Consequently, the rate of grade repetition among girls at this level of schooling decreased from 30 per cent to 15 per cent between 2002 and 2010 (see table 10).

Secondary education

119. Global initiatives, based on Act No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998, on the direction of education in Cameroon, have also been undertaken to promote girls' education. Article 7 of this law provides that: "the State guarantees equal access to education to all, regardless of gender; political, philosophical or religious belief; and social, cultural, linguistic or geographic background".

120. Moreover, the specific measures undertaken are the following:

- Formally encouraging young women in technical education by providing merit scholarships to the most deserving students. This was undertaken with the support of the Technical Education and Vocational Training Reform Project. An average of 100 young women have won scholarships annually since the 2007/08 school year;
- The ministerial decision, including Decision No. 187/09/MINESEC/IGE/IPTI/DETN of 2 September 2009, on creating a cosmetology/hair-styling specialization within Secondary Vocational Education.

121. It is noteworthy that between the 2006/07 and the 2009/10 school year, the percentage of girls in technical education increased by 4.32 per cent, with increases, respectively, of from 75,252 girls and 109,182 boys to 109,698 girls and 171,298 boys.

122. The current Government policy on improving educational offerings is based on creating schools in rural areas because urban areas are more affected by reforms of existing schools, with a view to accommodating more pupils by opening new grade levels.

Post-secondary education

123. In July 2011, the supply of institutions of higher education consisted of eight State universities and 99 private institutions. In addition to the University of Bamenda, the newest of the State universities, which was created in 2011, the seven university institutions operating in 2009 were: the University of Buea (six schools), the University of Douala (nine schools), the University of Dschang (six schools), the University of Maroua (one school), the University of Ngaoundéré (seven schools), the University of Yaoundé I (five schools) and the University of Yaoundé II (five schools).

124. A noteworthy development is the creation of a School of Gender at the University of Buea. Moreover, starting in the academic year 2011/12, a Professional Master's programme in Gender and Development opened at the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Humanities, part of the University of Yaoundé I.

125. Institutions of higher education are not plentiful in rural areas. However, with the reorganization of the university map, their number will increase significantly.

126. The following incentives are intended to advance women's and girls' education:

- The Ministry of Higher Education is partnering with the Ministry of Secondary Education to implement the Female Excellence (Excellence au Féminin) programme. The programme's main goal is to increase the participation of women and girls in technical and scientific vocational training;
- Alongside this programme, awareness-raising is being increased to improve students' skills. As a result, the criterion for excellence is applied equally to students of both genders, for domestic merit scholarships and the foreign work-study programme, for internships during vacation breaks and for business-creating initiatives (at the Science and Technology Park of the National Advanced School of Engineering at the University of Yaoundé I). In these programmes the ratio of girls to boys still fluctuates and remains low, as follows:
- Joint scholarships with partner countries: in 2008, there were 30 girls for 93 scholarships offered, or 32.25 per cent; in 2009, there were 34 girls for 85 scholarships offered, or 40 per cent; in 2010, there were 31 girls for 87 scholarships offered, or 35.63 per cent;
- Work-study programme: of 406 students, 147 girls, or 36.20 per cent, participated;
- Vacation-break internships in 2008 and 2009: of 2,070 students, 710 girls, or 34.29 per cent, participated;
- Students being trained in creating businesses at the National Advanced School of Engineering's Science and Technology Park, at the University of Yaoundé I: of 100 students, 10 girls, or 10 per cent.

Training and recruitment of qualified teachers

Primary and secondary education

127. As regards primary and secondary education, the following overall initiatives have been undertaken:

- Recruiting 37,200 contract teachers, in accordance with governance standards, between 2007 and 2011;
- Training the trainers: 15,426 graduates of the general and technical teacher training colleges have been trained in gender perspectives;
- Creating new schools.

Post-secondary education

128. In 2008, 2,762 teachers were trained at the country's teacher-training colleges. This figure was 3,150 in 2009 and 4,532 in 2010, due to the graduation of the first class from the Maroua Teacher-Training College, the newest school. As regards the number of permanent teachers at the State universities (professors, assistant professors, lecturers, assistants and assistant lecturers and researchers), it increased from 2,011 in 2005 to 2,980 in 2009. This is the result of a vast effort to recruit 1,000 teachers, called for by the Head of State. However, despite these efforts, which resulted in a nearly 50 per cent increase in the number of permanent teachers between 2005 and 2009, the quality of support for students did not improve. The student-teacher ratio changed from 46:1 in 2005 to 52:1 in 2009, a downward trend (in the number of teachers).

129. There is work to be done to achieve gender equity among the population of teachers, of which 19 per cent were women in 2009. However, this average conceals significant

disparities among the various types of schools. Legal sciences and health provide the best gender parity indices. Women represent 30 per cent of the legal sciences teachers and 29 per cent of the field in health institutions. However, there has been an upward trend as regards female representation since 2006, when the ratio of women was at just 16.2 per cent (table 12 shows the increase in the number of female teachers in higher education since 2006).

130. The percentage of women decreases as one ascends the academic ladder. For example, 21 per cent of the assistants are women. This indicator declines progressively to 20 per cent for lecturers, 10 per cent for assistant professors and 8 per cent for professors.

131. At several types of schools, women are absent at the professor level. This is the case for agriculture, agro-food, secondary-level teacher training, and technical institutes (see table 13, which indicates the percentage of female teachers by type of school and level).

Allocation of resources for purchase of teaching materials

132. The following measures have been undertaken in primary education:

- Providing a minimum of supplies;
- Improving methods for managing the transfer of some skills to Decentralized Territorial Entities, which thus makes them accountable for running the public schools under their jurisdiction effectively.

133. In secondary education, the resources allocated for purchasing teaching materials are paid out of the fees due when every pupil is registered, as follows:

- General education:
Undergraduate programme: 1,400 CFA francs, of 7,500 CFA francs;
Graduate programme: 2,500 CFA francs, of 10,000 CFA francs.
- Technical education:
Undergraduate programme: 1,700 CFA francs, of 10,000 CFA francs;
Graduate programme: 2,200 CFA francs, of 15,000 CFA francs.

Raising parents' awareness of the importance of education for girls

134. In this section, the following measures are to be undertaken:

- Obtaining 2,500 birth certificates for school-age children through cooperation with Plan Cameroon and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);
- Providing 2,600 scholarships to primary-school girls;
- Developing a strategy to advance girls' enrolment in school, following the example of "Child-Friendly, Girl-Friendly Schools" (Écoles Amies des Enfants, Amies des Filles) initiatives, which construct separate toilet facilities in school buildings in the Northern region; and of the Mother-Daughter Association (Association des Mères-Elèves), which monitors primary school-age girls' enrolment in the same region;
- Developing the educational community, a partnership between pupils, teachers and parents whose instruments are Parents' Associations (Associations des Parents d'Elèves, APE) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), with a view to better monitoring the school enrolment of children of both genders;
- Changing the budgetary allotment for student scholarships.

135. The policy of awarding students scholarships does not consider gender sufficiently. However, as regards the merit scholarship awarded by the Head of State, universities are asked to give priority female students. For 2010, consequently, 40 per cent of the recipients, or 23,400 female students of 58,000 total, received a merit scholarship. Every student received a total of 50,000 CFA francs, resulting in a total of 1,160,000,000 CFA francs for the female students.

Identifying the number of students in post-secondary education by sex, age and field of study

Trend of statistics disaggregated by sex

136. In public higher education, the number of women in the student population increased from 56,509 in 2008 to 68,669 in 2009, a growth rate of 21.51 per cent. In the period 2005–2009, the number of women multiplied by 1.9. The proportion of women increased from 38.4 per cent in 2005 to 43.2 per cent in 2008, then to 43.57 per cent in 2009, an increase of 5.17 percentage points in four years. However, between 2008 and 2009, there was a progressive decline in female representation. This decrease is explained by the opening of the Maroua Teacher-Training College, where the percentage of women is relatively low compared with that of the other secondary teacher-training colleges. (The level of representation for girls at the training colleges was 29 per cent at the Maroua Teacher Training College, 37 per cent at the Douala National Training College of Technical Education Teachers and 41 per cent at the Yaoundé Teacher-Training College).

137. In training schools oriented toward the arts, letters and humanities, the over-representation of women, observable in 2005, continues to increase. The number of women increased from 53.9 per cent in 2005 to 56 per cent in 2009.

138. In law and economics, there has also been an upward trend in female representation. In law, the number of women increased from 42.5 per cent in 2005 to 48.4 per cent in 2009, while in economics that figure increased from 35.3 per cent in 2005 to 48.42 per cent in 2009.

139. In science and engineering, women continue to be relatively underrepresented. The 2009 statistics show that in faculties of natural science, they make up 35.1 per cent of the students. The situation in engineering (aside from agriculture and agro-food) is even less satisfactory. At engineering schools with “bac + 5” (a five-year degree after the baccalaureate) programmes, such as the National Advanced School of Engineering (École nationale supérieure polytechnique) and the Faculty of Industrial Engineering in Douala, just 13 per cent of the students are female. The rate is 19 per cent at University Institutes of Technology (Instituts Universitaires de Technologie), 20 per cent in veterinary science, 23 per cent in agriculture and 26.4 per cent in agro-food, at the School of Agro-Food Science (École des Sciences Agroalimentaires). (See tables Nos. 14, 15 and 16, and 17 and 18.)

Leadership trends

140. Like other measures undertaken on the instructions of the Cameroonian Government, since 2009 impetus has been given to women’s empowerment. Tables Nos. 19 and 20 indicate, respectively, the percentage of female heads of secondary schools and the gender indicators in the central services of the Ministry of Higher Education.

141. As regards secondary school personnel, women represent 30.19 per cent, or 48 women out of 159 posts, of the leaders at the central services level. With respect to leadership positions, there were 111 female heads of school out of 1,930 head-of-school positions open during the 2008/09 school year, amounting to 5.75 per cent of the heads of

school being female. This gap is explained by, among others, the isolation of some communities not sought by women.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 37 of the concluding observations of the Committee

Equality of opportunity between women and men

142. Other than Act No. 92/007 of 17 August 1992 on the Labour Code, in its article 1, paragraph 2, and article 2, paragraph 1, the collective agreements and the General Statute on the Civil Service do not discriminate in any way regarding access to employment. The above-mentioned Code devotes its chapter 3 to initiatives specific to women. Moreover, in partnership with some civil society organizations, awareness-rising initiatives have been undertaken with traditional leaders, opinion leaders and communities.

143. In a similar vein, curricula for some traditionally male-dominated occupations have been developed and approved. To increase women's access to these so-called reserved occupations, particularly those in the industrial sector, scholarships are regularly provided to them, with a view to building their capacities.

144. In addition, guidance, career, job-information and counselling-related activities are regularly organized by all the ministries in the education sector, the National Employment Fund and civil society. Specifically through the National Employment Fund, created by the Presidential Decree of 27 April 1990 and whose main goal is to integrate young people into the labour market, the following outcomes have been obtained:

- In 2009, classification as wage-earning employment: 15,319 men, or 63.69 per cent, and 8,732 women, or 36.31 per cent; funded projects: 4,070 for men, or 69.30 per cent, and 1,803 for women, or 30.70 per cent; workforce integration through self-employment: 6,322 men, or 69.30 per cent, vs. 2,801 women, or 30.70 per cent; total number of placements: 21,641 men, or 65.23 per cent, vs. 1,533 women, or 34.77 per cent.
- In 2010, classification as wage-earning employment: 12,835 men, or 63.90 per cent, and 7,265 women, or 36.14 per cent; funded projects: 791 for men, or 58.94 per cent, and 551 for women, or 41.06 per cent; workforce integration through self-employment: 1,346 men, or 60.01 per cent, vs. 897 women, or 39.99 per cent; total number of placements: 14,181 for men, or 59.02 per cent, vs. 8,162 for women, or 40.98 per cent.
- 145The gap between the percentages of men and women can be explained by the disparities between the genders in education and vocational training. The unemployment rate in Cameroon is higher among women. Consequently, the disparities in educational level contribute to making access more competitive and difficult because women are less educated and qualified. Advancing full employment for all would be a strategy for fighting poverty and job insecurity.

Social protection and support for women working in the informal sector

146. In Cameroon, women make up three-quarters of the stakeholders in the informal sector. Consequently, social security coverage for these women has been a matter of concern as regards the reform of the social security system, begun in 2008. This reform is intended to extend social security to all, including informal sector workers. The preliminary draft of the law pertaining to it has already been written.

147. Moreover, Order No. 159/CAB/PM of 11 October 2010, on the creation, organization and operation of the National Labour Monitoring Centre (Observatoire

National du Travail), which recommends improving working conditions, social security for workers and their social climate and health, has also had an impact on social protection in the informal sector.

148. In this context, the Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses, Social Economy and Handicrafts has implemented the Support Programme for the Creation and Development of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises to process and conserve local products for mass consumption; its goals are as follows:

- To advance the establishment and development of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses, to process and conserve local products for mass consumption;
- To foster an environment that is favourable to creating businesses and to entrepreneurial culture;
- To drive and boost the production and competitiveness of the by-products of income-generating activities;
- To implement mechanisms that support and sustain female sponsors of small and medium-sized businesses and micro enterprises;
- To stimulate inter-industry trade;
- To build the technical and managerial capacities of female sponsors of income-generating activities.

149. The initial results: 150 viable projects have been identified and funded, among them 34 women-led projects, or 31.7 per cent, in rural and peri-urban areas. In addition, 150 processing plants have been installed, and 70 male technicians, female technicians and sales agents, including women, have been trained.

Repeal or revision of discriminatory measures

150. The adoption of the draft of the code of the person and the family and the ongoing revision of the Penal Code will repeal and revise discriminatory provisions.

151. As regards workplace sexual harassment, an inter-ministerial commission to redesign the labour code is currently in place. One of its major concerns is protecting the moral and physical integrity of women.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 39 of the concluding observations of the Committee

152. Efforts to develop the country's health infrastructure can be accomplished through the budget allocated to the ministerial division involved. In 2008 it stood at 3.85 billion, increasing by 4.92 million in 2009 before decreasing to 4.81 billion in 2010.

153. In 2011, that figure increased to 10,506,571,070 CFA francs. Despite these sharp fluctuations, the physical capital of the supply of health services has been upgraded. In 2007, the physical capital of the supply of health services consisted of 2,846 health-care facilities of all categories. At the end of 2009, there were 3,328 health-care facilities. In 2007 and 2009, the recruitment of 3,000 health-care personnel and the provision of health-care training at all levels also improved the supply of services.

154. As regards maternal and child health, there was no specific budget for this until 2011, during whose budgetary period the State awarded this area 1 billion CFA francs (about 500 million United States dollars). Other resources (700 million) have come from the Debt Reduction-Development Contract (C2D) and from Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) funds (300 million). In total, 2 billion CFA francs, for boosting the

prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, were allocated to maternal and child health in 2011.

155. The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, an initiative of the American Head of State, has awarded the Cameroonian Government a grant of 4 million United States dollars to integrate PMTCT into maternal and child health services throughout all the health-care pyramid's structures. The American Government has provided an additional grant of 10 million dollars to boost PMTCT. The Clinton Foundation has agreed to support all the maternal and child health-related activities in the South-West and North-West regions of Cameroon.

156. As regards the HIV/PAYS proposal, PMTCT initiatives will also be financed with 9,366,031 euros, and support for orphans and vulnerable children with 4,515,274 euros. These funds are intended for HIV/AIDS prevention, paediatric care for children infected with HIV/AIDS, and training personnel in family planning and managing obstetric complications.

157. Through the HIPC Fund, the Government has allocated additional resources to priority areas such as reducing infant mortality, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and malnutrition in children.

158. With respect to the response to HIV/AIDS, the following are noteworthy:

- The current HIV programme comprises 140 structures: 23 Authorized Treatment Centres (ATCs) and 117 Care Units (CUs), which provide comprehensive care for People Living with HIV (PLHIV);
- The cost of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs decreased from 600,000 CFA francs in 2001 to 0 CFA francs in 2007; antiretroviral therapy has been free and available at the Regional Supply Centres since 1 May 2007. As of 31 December 2007, 45,605 PLHIV/AIDS were undergoing ARV therapy, compared with 28,403 in 2006. At the end of 2009, the active list of patients undergoing ARV therapy numbered 76,228;
- The HIV screening test is subsidized. Since February 2007, the cost has decreased to 3,000 CFA francs (about 5 United States dollars). Today the screening is free for pregnant women and children aged 0 to 5.

159. As regards food and malnutrition, the following initiatives have been undertaken:

- Monitoring the current quality of everyday consumer products, in particular bread;
- Providing vitamin supplements to 2,737,560 children aged 6 months to 59 months;
- Implementing the Government decision to co-produce and distribute these supplements in Cameroon;
- Monitoring malnutrition by increasing capacity in the area of breastfeeding to 370 health-care personnel (see tables Nos. 20, 21 and 22).

160. Improving the supply of services dedicated to preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV has resulted in an increase in the number of health-care facilities offering PMTCT services. The number of facilities providing PMTCT services increased to 2,069 in 2010 compared with 1,159 in 2006, or area coverage of 99.4 per cent (see table 23).

161. In 2009, 228,812 pregnant women were tested through PMTCT. Of that number, 6.9 per cent tested positive. Of the 76,228 PLHIV in the active list undergoing ARV therapy in 2009, more than 57 per cent were women. Moreover, 9,092 HIV-positive pregnant women tested received ARV prophylaxis, representing national coverage of

12.9 per cent of the projected HIV-positive pregnant women. (Table 24 shows the distribution of PLHIV undergoing ARV therapy, by gender and region, in 2009.)

162. The decentralization of HIV/AIDS care has also been improved. There are 140 health-care facilities that provide care for the sick, distributed throughout 100 of the 178 health districts. National PMTCT coverage increased from 22 per cent in 2004 to 34 per cent in 2010.

163. In 2009, the awareness-raising, education and training of women, families, communities and opinion leaders in preventing HIV/AIDS and some risk factors, such as early and forced marriage, FGM and other forms of domestic violence, have intensified. As a result of the initiatives of some health non-governmental organizations, projects to support childbearing women living with HIV have been implemented.

164. The organization of HIV screening campaigns by MINPROFF, in collaboration with the mobile units of the National AIDS Commission and apart from the initiatives undertaken by other actors in civil society, has informed a total of 2,462 men and women of their serostatus on International Women's Day, International Day of Families, African Women's Day and World Rural Women's Day. Through educational talks organized on these days, MINPROFF has distributed 50,000 female condoms and demonstrated how to use them. Other noteworthy developments are:

- The distribution of thousands of giveaways (pins, T-shirts, caps and so on) to women throughout the country on the days of various observances such as World AIDS Day and International Women's Day;
- Since 2005, the organization of a solidarity march that mobilizes more than 1,000 women during World AIDS Day;
- The publication and distribution of the Training Manual for Women's Organization Coaches in Gender, Community-Development Initiatives and HIV/AIDS;
- The training of more than 2,000 community liaisons in supporting the rural population.

165. Civil society supports the Government in these efforts. Chantal Biya, the Cameroonian First Lady, has undertaken initiatives along these lines through African Synergy against AIDS and Suffering. This pan-African NGO is actively involved in HIV/AIDS efforts and in supporting HIV-positive persons and affected family members, in particular mothers and children.

166. This organization has accomplished much thus far, including:

- Training 400 providers of PMTCT services;
- Creating 55 PMTCT sites;
- Distributing more than 25,000 rapid HIV diagnostic tests;
- Supporting the education and nutrition of children orphaned by AIDS and other vulnerable children in need;
- Organizing annual campaigns for pupils and students entitled "A vacation without AIDS" and "A Campus without AIDS". One of its major accomplishments is without doubt the creation of the Chantal Biya International Research Centre, which is dedicated to:
- Studies and clinical trials pertaining to ARV therapy;
- Studies on genetic resistance to ARV therapy;
- Studies pertaining to the immune system;

- Studies on implementing various types of therapies;
- Studies on treating and providing prophylaxis for opportunistic infections and co-infections;
- Studies on nutrition and food vis-à-vis PLHIV.

167. Other initiatives undertaken by Cameroon's First Lady to advance vulnerable populations, specifically women, can be observed through the Chantal Biya Foundation and the Circle of Friends of Cameroon, of which she is the Founding Chairperson.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 41 of the concluding observations of the Committee

168. Despite the efforts exerted by the Government with collaboration from technical and financial partners in development, maternal mortality remains high, at 600 deaths per 100,000 live births. The chief direct causes of maternal mortality in Cameroon are bleeding followed by complications from abortions (13 per cent), haemorrhages (33 per cent) and eclampsia (4.5 per cent). Several interventions in the area of maternal health are ongoing, seeking to reverse the current trend. To that end, various training sessions on family planning and Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EONC) have been organized nationwide since 2006, with a view to building the capacities of health-care providers. The rate for childbirth assisted by a qualified professional, which was 58.9 per cent in 2006, increased to 63 per cent in 2010, according to the 2010 World Mortality Report by the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Bank.

169. In 2010, the Government officially launched the Campaign for the Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA). This campaign's strategic national plan was officially adopted in April 2011. With a view to reducing maternal mortality, many campaigns to raise public awareness have been led throughout the country. Since 1 June 2011, innovative projects have been ongoing in the Northern region (Adamaoua, the Far North and the North). A budget line of 750 million was established for this purpose. These projects have allowed birth kits (costing 6,000 CFA francs), caesarean section kits (costing 40,000 CFA francs) and emergency kits to be provided to the various area health-care facilities. This initiative will eventually be extended to all the health districts in the country. In addition, health vouchers have been piloted in some health districts.

170. Increasing the availability of qualified professionals is another important focus of CARMMA. Eight midwife-training schools will soon be operational. Training sessions have been organized throughout the country with a view to building the capacities of EONC and obstetric surgery providers.

171. Among the complications that exist, obstetric fistula is a major cause of maternal morbidity. In accordance with the goals of the National Strategy to Address Obstetric Fistula, since 2009 the Ministry of Public Health has led free obstetric fistula repair campaigns with support from UNFPA and other NGOs. Consequently, 300 women have been able to receive free obstetric fistula repair. A campaign is also planned for this year. Moreover, a report on the psychosocial care of women suffering from fistulas and who have undergone fistula surgery has been published. In 2010, women who underwent surgery in the Far North and Northern regions received psychosocial care. They received support for undertaking income-generating activities. Monitoring/assessment of the initiatives in favour of these women will be carried out at the end of this year.

172. With a view to improving the health of women and children, since 2008 the Government has organized a twice-yearly Action Week for Infant and Maternal Health and Nutrition. The week includes interventions that have a high impact on maternal and children's health, such as vaccines, vitamin A supplements, distributing or re-treating

mosquito nets, Integrated Management of Childhood Illness, PMTCT, de-worming of children aged 12 months to 5 years, and prenatal and postnatal check-ups. To address this issue, an Educational Guide to the Health of Women and Girls was drafted in 2009. To strengthen malaria control, in August 2011 the Government introduced long-lasting insecticidal nets, currently being distributed to individuals, families, groups and communities.

173. Introducing family life education, birth control education and a module on HIV/AIDS into primary-school curricula provides sex education to boys and girls.

174. As regards implementation of the adolescent-friendly hospital project, the Cameroonian Association of Women Doctors has trained about 100 schoolchildren and non-schooled children in adolescent reproductive health, HIV, STDs and AIDS in the Nkolndongo health district. In addition, the association has produced and distributed thousands of educational materials (posters, pamphlets and brochures). Moreover, both the intake personnel capacity and the amount of reproductive-health services offered in this health district have been increased, with a view to making health-care facilities adolescent-friendly.

175. The NGO Women, Health and Development trained 10,796 young people from 2009 to 2011, including 6,267 girls and 4,529 boys; 68 youth peer educators, including 28 girls and 40 boys; 69 parents, including 47 women and 22 men; 46 adult peer educators, including 35 women and 11 men; 40 guidance counsellors, including six men and 34 women; 188 secondary-school teachers (in life sciences and earth science), including 106 men and 82 women; 73 community associations and NGOs. Fifty-two school libraries have been provided training modules on sexuality (a unit of 21 modules plus a user's manual); 643 units of 21 modules each plus the user's manual have been provided to secondary schools, relevant ministerial divisions, and technical and financial partners (UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO). Between 2007 and 2010, 104 representatives from 52 women's association networks were trained in counselling adolescents and youth in sex education.

176. As regards maternal mortality linked to unsafe and clandestine abortions, health NGOs have begun to publicize the law and the conditions for its application to the general public.

177. Regarding the 2008–2012 Government of Cameroon-UNICEF Cooperation Programme, the Primary Prevention project, coordinated by the Ministry of Secondary Education with the collaboration of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family and the Ministry of Social Affairs with the support of UNICEF, has been implemented. The other partners are youth organizations, NGOs that counsel young people, and other partners in development. This project is one of the three branches of the Children, HIV and AIDS component, whose beneficiaries, estimated at 5,768,304, or 2,929,019 girls and 2,839,285 boys aged 10 to 24 years, make up 32 per cent of the total population of Cameroon.

178. Moreover, the Ministry of Youth Affairs has developed a National Youth Policy that includes an HIV prevention and care component directed at adolescents and young people. This policy is consistent with the direction of the adolescent reproductive health strategy.

179. Thousands of peer educators have been trained in performing vulnerability mapping of their respective communities, in communicating behavioural change and in strengthening the voice of young people. As mentioned above (response to recommendation 17), for more than five years, the campaign "A Vacation without AIDS" has mobilized thousands of young people annually to raise awareness in their peers.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 43 of the concluding observations of the Committee**Measures taken in order to enhance and strengthen women's participation in preparing and implementing local development plans**

180. Rural women are becoming increasingly involved in drawing up and implementing local development plans. These plans are created and led by communities within the framework of implementing decentralization, with the support of the Government, technical and financial partners and civil society.

181. Women participate in the decision-making process. They are among the members of management structures, including executive offices and management committees. For some specific programmes falling under the rubric of food security, they are in the majority, accounting for more than 70 per cent. This is also the case for programmes such as the Root and Tuber National Development Programme and the Programme to Increase Rural Family Income in the Northern Regions.

182. The table in the annex describes the initiatives undertaken to increase women's capacities and enhance their independence in the agricultural sector (see table 25).

183. As regards rural women's participation in decision-making and their access to health-care services, education, sanitation and drinking water, the following developments are noteworthy:

Health and family planning services

184. The majority of the Integrated Health Centres and District Medical Centres are located in rural areas (see recommendation 17 above and table 21).

185. As part of advancing rural women's health, the Government has attempted to move women's health-care facilities to a closer location. A programme to construct 1,000 health-care centres in rural areas was launched in 2005. To date, 3,067 Integrated Health Centres and District Medical Centres have been built. Other relevant initiatives have been undertaken, specifically:

- Installing needed equipment and reagents for the basic diagnosis of HIV;
- Free care for HIV-positive pregnant women, and reducing the cost of treatment and biological testing from 27,000 CFA francs to 3,000 CFA francs;
- Promoting maternal and child health and reproductive health, including family planning;
- Free treatment for children under age 5 with malaria;
- Preventing malaria through distribution of free insecticide-treated mosquito nets to pregnant women and through launching the Long-Lasting Insecticidal Net family distribution campaign, with heavy female participation in this initiative;
- Awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of prenatal check-ups and the repair of obstetric fistulas, the majority of whose victims come from rural areas;
- Psychosocial care for women who have undergone fistula surgery, some 75 per cent of whom come from rural areas.

186. Moreover, since 2010, 25 per cent of women who underwent surgery in the Far North and Northern regions have received financial and material support for socio-economic reintegration.

187. As regards combating practices harmful to the health of rural women, the Government, with the support of technical and financial partners and civil society, has been undertaking tougher actions to eradicate the practice of female genital mutilation. See the response to recommendation 12 above.

Rural education, training and employment

188. Initiatives have been undertaken to facilitate rural women's and young women's access to education and training by increasing the number of general and technical education primary and secondary schools. In addition, to compensate for a shortage of public schools, 408 locally created and locally run community schools have been constructed and are operating under the authority of the Ministry of Basic Education. They are receiving technical and financial support from the Government.

Non-formal education

189. See the response to recommendation 15 above. It should be noted that women's interest in non-formal training is recent. But there has already been a significant increase in their numbers. At the end of the training, women made up the majority of the resource persons in development undertakings and are a source of employment in rural areas. Of 256 farmers' organizations (Organisations Paysannes) supported by the Root and Tuber National Development Programme (Programme National de Développement de Racines et Tubercules), 107, or 43 per cent, are managed by women. Of 83 community liaisons, six, or 7.22 per cent, are female. (See table 26, "Situation des femmes dans les Comités Villageois et de Concertation au niveau du PNDRT", and tables 27 to 31, on the status of women in the executive bureau, of programmes and projects, and of female leaders at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries.)

190. Women occupy 10.61 per cent of the managerial positions in the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries, compared with 89.39 per cent for men. However, progress has been made: before 2006, no woman held the post of Director.

191. Mainstreaming of the training programmes at villages' functional literacy centres, where women are the majority of the learners, is a reality; the information is outlined in recommendation 15 above.

192. Moreover, the Local Materials Promotion Authority trains women through the Women and Employment project, with a view to promoting local materials and developing income-generating activities.

Access to farm / economic development credit and loans

193. This sector has experienced considerable growth in recent years. To date nearly 426 such Cameroonian commercial entities have gradually been established, driven by community initiatives and with the support of development programmes and projects. About 224 micro-finance institutions have formed networks and nearly 202 operate independently.

194. Rural women make up the majority of the members, taking all categories of clients into account in these entities. They have had to play important roles as sponsors, members and users of the funds established. Micro-finance has experienced considerable growth these past years. There are currently 426 such Cameroonian commercial entities, of which 224 have formed networks and 202 operate independently. The clientele of these entities is for the most part women, who are also members and users. In light of this, they have distinguished themselves as proponents of activities at second-tier lending institutions.

Development of organized groups and cooperatives

195. As regards reducing the burden of domestic and agricultural work on rural women, the Government, organizations of civil society, elected representatives and the elite are undertaking specific measures, in particular:

- Publicizing appropriate technologies (improved production, conservation, processing and marketing techniques for agro-pastoral products);
- Organizing mini agro-pastoral fairs at the divisional and regional levels;
- Providing agro-pastoral equipment: wheelbarrows, wagons, mills, phytosanitary treatment equipment, generators, farm inputs, fertilizer, sewing machines, knitting machines and so on.

Access to information and communication technologies

196. With regard to implementing “Operation 100,000 Women for the Year 2012”, 87,500 women throughout the country have already been trained in information and communications technology.

197. ICT training now under way, provided to 2,000 widows by the African Information Technology Institute (Institut Africain d’Informatique, IAI) following the first observance of International Widows’ Day (23 June 2011), part of the IAI-Cameroon-MINPROFF Partnership Agreement, is also a significant initiative. The same holds true for the opening of multi-purpose community tele-centres in rural areas. The goal is to bridge the digital divide that separates urban and rural areas. To date, there are 102 such tele-centres throughout the country.

Electric power and water supply, housing, sanitation, transportation and communications

198. As regards water and sanitation, the Water and Community Health Project in the Adamaoua region has empowered women who chair water-management committees. This project has been carried out with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency.

199. Between 2004 and 2008, with funding from development partners, water supply facilities were installed by the Government in rural areas. Consequently, through HIPC funding, 1,301 water holes and 79 drinking water supply systems have been drilled and installed and, through Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative funding, 126 boreholes and 18 drinking water supply points have been added.

200. As regards the fourth phase of the Japanese Programme, 184 boreholes have been drilled in 184 communities in the Centre, South, Littoral and Adamaoua regions. The fifth phase of this programme was begun in 2010 and encompasses the North and Far North regions, with 250 boreholes in 250 communities. These water supply facilities serve more than 20,000 families in rural areas.

201. As regards encouraging industrial entrepreneurship and support for sustainable development, the Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses, Social Economy and Handicrafts has established a programme open to project managers in processing and conserving local products for mass consumption throughout the country. Every entrepreneur or project manager receives individualized guidance. (See table 32.)

Land ownership and women’s access to property rights

202. Although women enjoy the same legislative and regulatory rights as men regarding inheritance, sociocultural practices do not always allow the rights to be exercised. However,

there have been positive developments: women are increasingly heads of household and/or traditional chiefs, which gives them the power to make decisions in managing land and inheritance issues. Regarding traditional chiefs, to date there is just one woman of 78 chiefs at the first-class level and two women of 867 chiefs at the second-class level.

203. As regards familiarity with the law, during the observance of days commemorating women, activities that raise awareness, disseminate information and publicize women's fundamental rights are organized through educational talks, round tables and panel conferences, conducted in local languages. All of these activities are broadcast on community radio stations.

204. In partnership with civil society organizations, MINPROFF regularly organizes information and awareness-training seminars directed toward rural women, pursuant to article 14 of the Convention.

Property rights

205. In response to this concern, a distinction will be made between a woman's status as a child, as an individual and as a wife.

206. In Cameroon, under current legislation, ownership of goods is acquired and transferred through succession, by gifts *inter vivos* or by testament (a will), by the effect of obligations, by accession or incorporation and by prescription (under arts. 711 and 712 of the Civil Code).

207. Landownership is certified by land title. Lands not subject to titles of ownership, lands that do not fall under the public or private domain of the State or of other legal entities governed by public law as of 6 July 1974 are an integral part of the national domain.

208. Traditional communities, their (male and female) members and all other persons of Cameroonian nationality who before 5 August 1974 (the publication date of Ordinance No. 74/1 of 6 July 1974, establishing land tenure) peacefully occupied or made use of category-one areas of national land (land for living, for agricultural purposes, for planting and for grazing and rangeland, whose occupation constitutes a person's evident appropriation of the land and a demonstrable use) may continue to occupy or make use of that land and may apply for and obtain land titles for it (under the Ordinance of 6 July 1974, establishing land tenure, and Decree No. 76/166 of 27 April 1976, establishing the conditions for obtaining a land title).

209. On the other hand, unoccupied land (category-two areas of national land) is administered by the State, which may allocate dependencies to natural persons or legal entities by concession, lease or allocation, under the conditions established by the above-mentioned Decree No. 76/166 of 27 April 1976. Women may gain access to landownership as children by succession or by gift.

210. The Civil Code takes neither the nature nor the origin of property into consideration to regulate succession. Children or their descendants succeed to the estate of their father and mother, grandfathers, grandmothers or other ascendants without regard to gender, primogeniture or whether they are the product of different marriages.

211. Sons and daughters of the deceased succeed to the estate in equal shares and by heads. They inherit per stirpes if they are in whole or in part descendants of a pre-deceased child (art. 745 of the Civil Code).

212. The children to whom this applies are legitimate children or children legitimated through the marriage of their parents, and recognized children born out of wedlock. Their age and marital status have no effect on their right to succeed their parents.

213. No legal provision to the contrary, much less any tradition or custom, can override these legal provisions.

214. The Supreme Court of Cameroon has long reaffirmed this immutable principle through its decisions, which have the force of law.

215. As regards gifts, in accordance with the apportionment of disposable property (under art. 913 of the Civil Code), fathers and mothers have the option of disposing of their property by giving it, in whole or in part, to one or more of their children through deeds of gift *inter vivos* (the donee takes possession of the movable or immovable property during the lifetime of his or her parent) or through a will (the child does not take possession of the property until after the death of the parent). These gifts are made regardless of gender and are legally not subject to challenge (under art. 1048 of the Civil Code).

216. It follows from Cameroonian laws and case-law that, as children, women enjoy the same rights as their brother(s) to inherit land from their parents, whether they are single or married.

217. When distribution does not occur automatically, women must demand their rights before competent authorities and secure their landownership by registering with the land registry.

218. Women as individuals, as human beings, regarded individually in relation to the community, can acquire landownership by all methods, as provided for by the above-mentioned provisions of the Civil Code, and can freely and fully enjoy and use it.

219. Consequently, when a woman inherits a parcel of registered land or receives it by gift or through a will, she must transfer the land title to her name to certify her property. If it is an indivisible property, she may apply for partition of the title, to circumvent the undivided co-ownership after the distribution. If the land is occupied or made use of customarily by its donor, the woman may either continue to make use of it as a member of the community or petition the administration to issue the land title under the above-mentioned conditions. She can purchase land from any landowner and have it registered in her name. The woman can, finally, request a grant or a lease of national land if it is not occupied or under exploitation, and make use of the property to implement development projects.

220. In rural areas, married women, almost all of whom are under a community property regime, are domiciled with their husbands on land inherited from their parents, which constitutes private property; they abandon their property to their brothers and other blood relatives.

221. Consequently, married women cannot lay claim to ownership of that land, with which their husbands can do as they please because it is not part of the marital property. However, by exercising their right to use household assets to meet the needs of the family, they can make use of the land belonging to their husbands to engage in farming.

Effect of marriage regime on management of marital property

222. The Civil Code does not address polygamy, which is prohibited under French law. Consequently, its provisions apply to monogamous marriage only. After it gained independence, Cameroon legislated on marriage, providing for monogamy and polygamy as a marital status whose choosing is left to the married couple, with mutual consent required under penalty of nullity of the marriage (under the law of 11 June 1968, repealed by the Ordinance of 29 June 1981).

223. There is no domestic legislation that organizes marital laws, including in the context of property management. Polygamy is provided for as a form of marriage, but the terms and

consequences of this choice as regards property regimes are not established. In a similar vein, the Ordinance of 29 June 1981 does not specify whether polygamy or monogamy is the common-law matrimonial option. The case law has acknowledged that if neither option is specified, the marriage is deemed polygamous. According to doctrine, the husband and each of his wives constitute a distinct household to which the legal provisions of marriage are applied, but in practice, managing these households is not easy.

224. Legally and judicially, it can be said that women enjoy the right to ownership of land, also called land rights, without discrimination in relation to men. Therefore, women can inherit land, acquire it, administer it and make use of it as personal property, which they may leave as any inheritance to their children.

225. When she is not the landowner, as in the case of a married woman without private property or who is a member of a traditional community, the woman can make use of land to engage in farming by exercising her right of use and right of usufruct.

226. It would all appear to be a matter of educating and raising the awareness of women and men regarding the scope of their rights, and of claiming those rights. That was the rationale for including the sub-theme Rural Women and Land Rights in the observance of the 15th International Day of Rural Women, on 15 October 2010.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 45 of the concluding observations of the Committee

227. The draft of the decree implementing Act No. 2005/006 of 27 July 2005, on the status of refugees in Cameroon, which has already been drawn up, is about to be signed. This document governs registration, the determination of refugee status and the issuance of certificates that establish asylum-seeker or refugee status. To reach this point, much reflection and research has been necessary. A team of experts travelled to Benin for that purpose in April 2010, to immerse themselves in the experience of that country as it relates to refugee status determination.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 47 of the concluding observations of the Committee

228. The response of Cameroon on this matter, included in the document CEDAW/C/CMR/Q/3/Add.1, remains current. It has been supplemented by the responses provided for recommendations 5, 11 and 19 above.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 49 of the concluding observations of the Committee

229. In Cameroon there is a true lack of statistical data disaggregated by gender. This gap is explained on the one hand by the high cost of conducting gender-sensitive surveys, support for which generally exceeds domestic capacities, and on the other hand by the comprehensive nature of the earlier development policies before the Beijing guidelines entered into force.

230. However, efforts are currently being undertaken, with a view to gradually resolving this problem and laying the foundation for development planning, by taking into account the differentiated needs of men and women.

231. Apart from the statistical yearbook published periodically by MINPROFF on the status of women in all sectors of national life, and along with the Cameroonian Household Surveys (ECAM II and III), which incorporate gender variables, the National Institute of Statistics recently initiated a National Capacity-Building Programme to Produce Data Disaggregated By Gender.

232. Since November 2010, a by-product of this programme has been a list of indicators for assessing the gender situation in Cameroon. The following sectors are included in the list:

- Sovereignty (justice, legislation and decentralization, diplomacy);
- General and financial administration (territorial command, finances);
- Education, training, employment and research (higher education and teaching, vocational training, employment and work, scientific research);
- Communications, culture, youth, sports and recreation (communications, sports and recreation, culture, traditions and customs);
- Health;
- Social development (social affairs, discrimination/marginalisation, the female child, family, violence, poverty);
- Infrastructure (environment and forests, habitat, transportation, mines, water and energy);
- Manufacturing and trade (agriculture, rural women, tourism, livestock and fishing, commerce and industry);
- Community movements (civil associations, religion).

233. The indicators, grouped by sector, serve as a frame of reference and as data-collection instruments for a national field survey geared toward developing a national statistical yearbook on women and families. This survey, which will also help establish a national catalogue of female-specific skills and decision-making posts held by women at all levels, will provide data on the evolution of the status of women across all sectors.

234. The above-mentioned programme has already received financing from the African Development Bank. However, additional support is necessary to cover the cost of operations, which must be repeated periodically to provide updated information and better communicate current and future policies on social development in general and on advancement of women in particular. The Government relies on the support of development partners to meet the identified need.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 51 of the concluding observations of the Committee

235. The drafting of the fourth report, which combines the fourth and fifth periodic reports on implementation of the Convention, is part of a participatory process stemming from a MINPROFF-created inter-ministerial committee composed of, in addition to personnel from that ministerial department, the following representatives of public administrations, international organizations and civil society organizations: the Department of the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of External Relations, the Ministry of Secondary Education, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, the Ministry of Basic Education, the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses, Social Economy and Handicrafts, UN Women, UNFPA, UNHCR, the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, the Canadian Agency, the Cameroonian Association of Women Doctors, the Cameroonian Association of Women Lawyers, Women, Health and Development, Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices-Cameroon and others.

236. This committee has worked on all phases of the document. The following have gathered to approve it: members of the committee, and representatives of other pertinent ministerial departments, civil society and development partners (see annexed rosters).

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 52 of the concluding observations of the Committee

237. Created and implemented in Cameroon, the strategic development plans are based on the 12 critical points from the Beijing Platform for Action.

238. The most recent planning framework is the Republic of Cameroon Document on National Gender Policy. Its organization is consistent with the letter and spirit of Beijing. The Government's objective, through this document, is to promote a society that is fair and equal to both women and men, with a view to ensuring sustainable development; the overall goal is the systematic elimination of inequality between men and women at all levels, in accordance with the Beijing recommendations and the commitments made by the States parties. The areas of focus dedicated to this are as follows:

- Advancing the equal access of girls and boys and women and men to education, training and information;
- Improving women's access to health-care services, including the area of reproductive health;
- Advancing equal economic and employment opportunities for women and men;
- Promoting a sociocultural environment conducive to respecting women's rights;
- Increasing women's participation and representation in public life and decision-making;
- Strengthening the institutional framework for advancing women.

239. Implementing these areas will surely allow the Cameroonian Government to fulfil the commitments made as regards the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action and related documents including the Dakar Plan of Action.

240. In any event, the national strategic policy frameworks for advancing women are in compliance with the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action, including the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper and the Cameroon Development Vision 2035.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 53 of the concluding observations of the Committee

241. In Cameroon, achieving the Millennium Development Goals is part of the Cameroon Development Vision 2035, the first decade (2010–2020) of which is based on the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper. That paper, which is the revised version of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, emphasizes gender mainstreaming as part of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. This political resolve is realized in action through developing and implementing the programme and targeted projects. As regards achieving the second and third MDGs, in addition to free primary education, which is already in force and was mentioned in the preceding report, awareness-raising campaigns for traditional authorities, families and community leaders in support of educating girls have been ongoing throughout the country, particularly in regions with a deep sociocultural lag, called "priority education zones", with support from UNICEF. Also of note:

- Adopting a declaration on the new education policy aimed at ending girls' exclusion from school;
- Implementing a committee to revise textbooks, to remove sexist stereotypes;

- Creating a special fund to support young women in the sciences, and providing scholarships to those who earn the highest grades on the official examinations.

242. In June 2011, 87,500 women had already been trained in ICT capacity-building through the 100,000 Women by 2012 (“100.000 femmes à l’horizon 2012”) programme. Moreover, there have been programmes related to female entrepreneurship, self-employment for women and educating women about their fundamental rights.

Response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 55 of the concluding observations of the Committee

243. As regards the dissemination of the concluding observations of the Committee, see the response to recommendation 1 above.

244. As regards the dissemination of the Convention text, see the response to recommendation 4 above.

IV. Part Three

Constraints, challenges and opportunities

245. The Government of Cameroon reaffirms its full adherence to the provisions of the Convention and is endeavouring to apply those provisions fully in all sectors of national life. So that the strategies adopted for this purpose will have the full impact desired, it is essential to identify appropriate responses to certain major obstacles through supplementary measures that the Government, with the support of partners, is considering in terms of challenges and opportunities.

Constraints

246. As regards implementing its policy of advancing and protecting human rights in general and with specific regard to applying the Convention, the Cameroonian State is facing certain realities that limit the impact of its actions and, sometimes, impede the realization of plans that have already been developed. These realities largely involve deep sociocultural lags and a lack of resources.

Sociocultural obstacles

247. Women’s ability fully to enjoy their rights is limited by two major obstacles: the role traditionally assigned them by society and women’s own perceptions of their social status.

248. As regards the role that society assigns women, Cameroonian stereotypes and cultural practices, different from region to region, portray women as integral to the fulfilment of men (fathers, brothers, husbands, and so on); hence the difficulty of accepting the fact that women have not only rights but the same rights as men. This role is at the root of discrimination and results in, among other things, food taboos, early and forced marriage, excessive dowry requirements, violation of inheritance rights and restrictions on the right to an education. Violence of all types, in particular female genital mutilation, caning (the “right” of correction), widowhood rites, premarital virginity tests, the obligation to procreate and so on, are a result of the same conception of the role of women.

249. Merely changing legislation is not enough, as it does not change the mentality. Awareness-raising strategies that take the specifics of each community into account would seem to be instrumental. However, developing and implementing these strategies require the mobilization of considerable human, material and financial resources.

250. As regards women's own perceptions of their social status, even in areas governed by gender-equality legislation or regulations, women, who have long internalized their inferiority to men, deem that legislation to be antisocial; so, to keep the peace and maintain social cohesion, they surrender their rights and their demands that those rights be respected.

Insufficiency of resources

251. The State's general budget does not allow it to realize all its goals for optimal development. The funds allocated to the promotion and protection of women's rights, already insufficient for accomplishing the scope of the mission, have tended to decline over the years a result of the international financial crisis.

252. For example, the budget of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family increased from 4,300,000,000 CFA francs in 2007 to 5,090,000,000 CFA francs in 2009, then decreased to 4,078,000,000 CFA francs in 2010, decreasing further to 3,061,000,000 CFA francs in 2011. This decrease has an absolute value of 1,017,000,000 and a relative value of 24.48 per cent. At the same time, the budget of the Ministry of Justice, a governmental institution charged with monitoring human rights issues, in particular the implementation of international conventions on the rights of the human person, decreased from 26,329,000,000 CFA francs in 2010 to 15,570,000,000 CFA francs in 2011. This decline in absolute value increased to 10,759,000,000 CFA francs, with a relative value of 40.86 per cent. The Cameroonian Government depends on its development partners to help it meet the challenges identified.

Challenges and opportunities

253. Since 2008, in addition to awareness-raising initiatives, a human rights education programme developed by the Government with support from the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa has been implemented in all schools, universities and vocational schools, with a view to instilling the culture of human rights in Cameroonian youth.

254. An assessment of the implementation of this programme, performed in 2009, revealed major obstacles. Specifically noted were a shortage of equipment and funding; a shortage of training for trainers and stakeholders; a lack of awareness-training; and the reluctance of the programme's recipients, who are the main focus of women's rights education: the women themselves. Among the challenges to be met are:

- Ownership and implementation of the Convention's provisions by all stakeholders;
- Institutional and social ownership of gender perspectives;
- Matching the resources allocated to advancing women with the range of actions to be undertaken in this area.

255. Raising awareness of their rights among women themselves necessarily involves formal and non-formal education that can reach all social strata, the ultimate goal being that women know their rights, that they claim them and that they instil in their children the idea of gender equality, from an early age.

256. The foregoing involves:

- Pursuing ongoing legislative reform, with a view to better incorporating the Convention;
- Strengthening institutions by adopting both the Document on National Gender Policy and a multi-sectoral plan of action through which to implement it;

- Speeding the gender-mainstreaming process by systematizing gender-budgeting measures;
- Continuing to publicize the Convention and advocating its implementation;
- Intensifying the capacity-building initiatives of stakeholders at all levels by educating awareness-trainers to reach and convince the target audience: the leaders of communities, Government organs and civil society organizations.

257. Aware of its limited ability, despite strong political will, to fully implement the provisions of the Convention, the Government of Cameroon is appealing for international cooperation in order to reach this goal.
