Republic of Guinea
Ministry of Social Affairs and the
Advancement of Women and Children

NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

REPLY TO
THE UNITED NATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE ON
THE MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE CHALLENGES
ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION (SEPTEMBER 1995)
AND THE OUTCOME DOCUMENTS OF
THE TWENTIETH SPECIAL SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (JUNE 2000)

Conakry, April 2004
Part One: Overview of the achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment

(a) A policy on gender equality and women’s empowerment does exist: it is the National Policy for the Advancement of Women, which deals adequately with these topics.

The National Policy, which was prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women and Children (MASPFE) in 1996 and adopted by the Government in 1997, is founded on the recommendations of African Plan of Action adopted at Dakar and the global Beijing Platform for Action.

It offers the Guinean authorities a frame of reference for according access to women in the political, social and economic spheres. It thus lays the groundwork for the elimination of disparities between men and women with a view to improving living conditions at all levels; it is based on the following four strategic aims:

- Improvement of the legal framework for the advancement and protection of women;
- Economic advancement of women;
- Improvement of the social, cultural and political status of women and of their role in the family;
- Strengthening of the institutional framework for the advancement and protection of women.

A National Action Plan for implementation of the National Policy for the Advancement of Women was produced by MASPFE and adopted by the Government in 1997.

But it was actually the formulation and adoption of the Framework Programme on Gender and Development in April 1998 which enabled the State of Guinea, through MASPFE, to deploy an operational tool for giving concrete effect to the National Policy. The Framework Programme has five basic components:
1. Gender, law and power
2. Gender, economy and poverty
3. Gender, education and training
4. Gender, health and population
5. Institution building

The following coordination and management mechanisms have been established:

At the national level:
- A decision-making body: the Joint Steering Committee chaired by the Minister for Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women and Children, which includes the ministers whose departments are involved in measures under the five basic components;
- A coordination and planning body: the Technical Monitoring and Evaluation Committee;
- An executing agency: the Management and Implementation Unit, which is housed in the National Office for the Advancement of Women and headed by its National Director.
At the local level:
Regional, prefecture and sub-prefecture committees have been set up under the authority of the governors, prefects and sub-prefects with a view to the involvement of the various stakeholders in the implementation of activities at both central and local levels.

There is also a national coordination mechanism constituted by the focal points of the different ministerial departments and the three committees on gender and equity in education, which are responsible for ensuring that issues of equality and equity are taken into account in all sectors.

(b) Two documents were produced following the Fourth World Conference on Women: the National Gender and Development Action Plan 1997-2001 (diagnosis and strategies) and the Projects Portfolio. *But it was not until the National Plan for the Advancement of Women (1997-2001) was adopted* that measures for the advancement of Guinean women were introduced. This Plan forms part of the Government’s strategy up to the year 2010 and has four strategic focuses:
- Improvement of the legal framework for the advancement of women;
- Strengthening of the institutional framework for the advancement of women;
- Enhancement of women’s family, social and cultural role and improvement of their status;
- Economic advancement of women.

These strategic focuses cover all the priority areas of the Dakar Plan of Action and indeed of the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing in 1995.

In collaboration with her partners the Minister for Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women and Children identified six priority areas consistent with the sectoral policies of the future national sustainable human development programme:
- Women and legislation and decision-making;
- Women and education;
- Women and health;
- Women and economic advancement;
- Women and the environment;
- Institutional framework.

Although these measures were effective, a new plan entitled “Framework Programme on Gender and Development” was introduced in April 1995; it is implemented through the central and local agencies in collaboration with UNDP and organizations of civil society. The main obstacle to making the Framework Programme an effective tool for the promotion of gender equality is:
- The lack of human, material and financial resources.

(c) *The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* which mainstream the gender dimension constitute for Guinea a strategic frame of reference for harmonious, balanced and sustainable development.

Special attention is given to Goal 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women) in the policies and programmes adopted and implemented for this purpose.
With regard to school attendance by girls, for example, the action taken increased the gross attendance rate from 31.5 per cent in 1995 to 63 per cent in 2002.

A three-year literacy programme for 300,000 women is currently being carried out by MASPFE.

The number of women members of the National Assembly increased from 14 in 1995 to 22 in 2000.

Eighty per cent of the unpaid work in agriculture is done by female labour.

An analysis of the MDGs shows that women’s gender perspectives and concerns are generally being incorporated on a cross-cutting basis.

There are close links between the Framework Programme and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, for the targets set for 2015 also relate to education for all, female literacy, legal reforms, maternal and child health, the fight against AIDS, and women’s access to resources and power. The Framework Programme has the same parameters.

(d) Under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), to which Guinea acceded in 1982, the Government has produced for the CEDAW monitoring committee its initial report, its combined second and third periodic reports, presented in New York in July 2002, and its fourth periodic report. The evaluations of implementation measures contained in the various reports highlight a number of achievements, especially with regard to legislation:

• The referendum on the Constitution, which led to its amendment, including the incorporation of a provision prohibiting discrimination on the ground of sex;
• The amendment of the discriminatory provisions of the Civil Code;
• The drafting and adoption of a non-discriminatory land and property code;
• The drafting and adoption of an economic and commercial code;
• The amendment of the provisions of the Criminal Code on violence against women in general and pregnant women in particular; the decriminalization of adultery and the strengthening of the provisions on rape by incorporation of the offence of marital rape;
• The establishment in the National Assembly of an Observatory on Respect for Women’s Rights;
• The drafting of the Reproductive Health Act (No. L/010/AN of 10 July 2000), which establishes the offence of female genital mutilation;
• The preparation of draft legislation for application of the Reproductive Health Act.

(e) In addition to these legislative reforms, there have been a number of very important political achievements during the past decade:

• The creation in 1994 of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women and Children (MASPFE) to take charge of the preparation, coordination, implementation and monitoring of governmental policies on social affairs and the advancement of women and children;
• The drafting and adoption in 1996 of the National Policy for the Advancement of Women and an action plan for its implementation;
• The emergence of NGOs dedicated to the protection and promotion of women’s rights;
• The arrival of women in appointive and elective posts:
  - Government: five women ministers out of 31;
  - National Assembly: 22 women members out of 114;
  - Supreme Court: three women members out of 11;
  - Economic and Social Council: 12 women members out of 45;
  - National Communications Council: no women members (total membership - nine);
  - Governors: no women (total - eight);
  - Prefects and sub-prefects: no women (33 prefects and 302 sub-prefects);
  - Mayors: three women out of 38 (26.15%);
  - Deputy mayors: 17 women out of 65;
  - Commune councillors: 118 women out of 604 (19.78%);
  - Chairs of rural development councils: no women.

(f) Gender perspectives and the concerns of women are beginning to be taken into account in the preparation of national budgets. And these budgets have undergone a substantial increase (see table on Women and the economy).

(g) There have been no special parliamentary debates on gender perspectives and the concerns of women; however, women’s issues are raised and discussed during the parliamentary sessions on the budget and finance acts.
• The constitutional reform of November 2001 included the incorporation of a definition of discrimination in the Constitution;
• The main problems connected specifically with women are social and cultural backwardness, illiteracy, ignorance of the law, failure of some justice personnel to apply the law, poverty, and inadequate monitoring of the implementation of CEDAW.

(h) The Republic of Guinea, long the host country for refugees from the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, suffered rebel attacks on its frontier with Liberia in 2000.

These conflicts, which have produced very harmful human, economic and social effects, have had a particularly powerful impact on women and children.

However, it is women who will play the most important role in the settlement of the conflicts.

The Mano River Women’s Network for Peace, which draws its membership from women from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, has worked with the parties to the conflicts and succeeded in bringing them to the negotiating table. In 2003 the Network received a commendation from the Secretary-General of the United Nations for protecting human rights.

(i) The introduction of information and communications technology, globalization, market liberalization and changes in trading patterns have strengthened the role of women in national development in terms of productivity and substantially higher incomes.
In addition to the National Policy for the Advancement of Women and the action plan for its implementation, mentioned earlier, policies, strategies and specific action plans for promotion of gender equality exist in a number of areas, including:

**Education and training**
- The three-year women’s literacy programme initiated by MASPFE is designed to achieve literacy for 300,000 women in groups or associations over three years and to provide them with financial resources for their activities;
- The preparation of a national action plan as part of the implementation of the “Education for All” programme, which seeks, in accordance with objective V of the Dakar Plan of Action, the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and the establishment of equality in education by 2015;
- The Action Plan 2004-2005 for implementation of the “25 by 2005” initiative concerning girls’ education in accordance with the recommendations of the conference on girls’ education held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in 2002, which was launched on 9 April 2004 in Conakry;
- The establishment and initiation of a UNESCO Chair (“Women, gender, society and development”) in the University of Conakry with the aim of developing analysis and interpretation skills to deliver suitable responses to the many problems connected with gender inequality and with gender-based social, economic and political roles.

**Health**
- The preparation of an integrated national action plan for the decade 2003-2013 to combat female genital mutilation (FGM), which is based on the global plan to eliminate this practice;
- The drafting and implementation of the Population and Reproductive Health Programme 2000-2010, whose various components are targeted on vulnerable groups such as women; in collaboration with the World Bank;
- The establishment of the National Safe Motherhood Programme, whose overall target for 2010 is to reduce the country’s maternal and neonatal mortality rates by 50 per cent.

The new directions of national policy based on the “discussion” programme of 22 December 1985 have encouraged inter alia the establishment of various kinds of organization: NGOs, and local development associations, groups and cooperatives. Most of the women’s NGOs operate under the umbrella of the Coordinating Office of Guinean Women’s Non-Governmental Organizations (COFEG). COFEG provides a framework for debate and coordination and acts as a spokesperson vis-à-vis the Minister responsible for women’s questions in the conduct of activities for the advancement of women. The NGOs thus strengthen the national mechanism and carry its work into the field.

Other groupings of voluntary organizations and NGOs help to consolidate the partnership for the implementation of programmes on gender equality and women’s empowerment: the Network of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians of Guinea (REFAMP/GUI), the Guinean Association of Women Leaders (AGUIFEL), the National Coalition of Guinea for Women’s Rights and Citizenship (CONAG/DCF), the Guinean Association of Women Entrepreneurs (AFEG), the Guinean Businesswomen’s Group (GFAG), etc.
Foreign NGOs and intergovernmental bodies make a significant contribution to the advancement of women by working at the grass roots in the efforts to reduce social inequalities and poverty.

(1) Although the development activities for the advancement of women place women in the foreground, there is little chance of achieving the planned results unless both men and women are brought into the undertaking.

That is why the existing policies, programmes, strategies and plans for the advancement of women mainstream the gender dimension, for it is indeed in relation to men that gender equality and women’s empowerment must be addressed.
Part Two: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects

1. Women and poverty: here attention may be drawn to:
   • The mainstreaming of the gender dimension in the poverty-reduction strategy;
   • The implementation of a project to support women’s economic activities initiated by MASPFE with funding from the Government and the African Development Bank for a total cost of four billion Guinean francs. This project is designed to reduce poverty among women by building up their capacity to manage micro-projects and micro-finance and by granting loans to women in the urban, peri-urban and rural areas of Conakry and Upper Guinea;
   • The creation of an independent agency to furnish integrated assistance to enterprises. With the support of development partners, this agency has contributed to the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises and industries and micro-enterprises and to the building up of the entrepreneurial and managerial capacities of businesswomen. Between 1998 and 2001 it disbursed 918 million francs to 32 groups of 500 women and 32 women entrepreneurs, creating 300 jobs;
   • The Framework Programme on Support and Development of the Private Sector, produced by the Government in September 1998 with UNDP and UNIDO assistance, whose components set three specific objectives to be attained in terms of the economic advancement of women:
     - To promote women’s access to the business world and increase their productivity and incomes;
     - To expand women’s access to financial agencies;
     - To encourage women’s economic activities.
   • The expansion of the Yété Mali savings and loans networks; these are financial cooperatives formed by persons who decide to pool their resources and use them to give each other loans. They offer two types of account: day-of-deposit savings accounts, and term savings accounts. This project, which was initiated by the Government in conjunction with the Caisse des Jardins, has proved a popular success. The Yété Mali networks have granted loans totalling 149 million francs to 340 women’s groups with 1,190 members and 189 women entrepreneurs, making a total of 1,379 women.

PRIDE Finance (Promotion of Rural Initiatives and Development Enterprises Ltd.), which was launched in 1991 as a USAID project, has grown into an agency funding activities in the following areas:
   • Handicrafts;
   • Marketing of farm-food products;
   • Small-scale commerce;
   • Restaurants and catering;
   • Provision of services;
   • Transport.
As of 31 December 2001, PRIDE Finance had registered 10,160 clients, 74 per cent of them women, and had granted loans totalling 2,644 million francs, 65 per cent of them to women. Since the start of its operations, it has granted 100,000 loans totalling over 30 billion francs, 70 per cent of them to women.

The African Development Training Centre (CENAFOD) provides training and grants small loans from the prior savings of rural women members of economic groups, with the following results:

- Well-trained personnel and managers;
- Funds (over 75 million francs disbursed) for small-scale commerce, agriculture, market gardening, and small-scale economic and social investments;
- Easy access to credit;
- Self-managed savings banks;
- Participation of women in family and community decision-making;
- More than 2,000 savers;
- Strengthening of solidarity in villages and urban districts.

2. Education and training of women

The following measures have been successful:

The implementation of the Education for All programme, the first phase of which started up in November 2001. The total cost is $US 420.14 million, contributed by the Government and the development partners. This programme seeks to secure fair access for all to a quality education system. It is aimed in particular at school-age children and illiterate adults.

It has funded the training components for 2,000 literacy workers and the production of training booklets for 12,000 women’s groups under the three-year women’s literacy programme. Attention is also drawn to the results of the implementation of the basic education programme:

- School building: 678 classrooms built between 2000 and 2002, out of a total 5,800 due by the end of the programme;
- Expansion of multi-grade education in areas where this is needed; this approach has helped to bring girls to school and reduce the likelihood of repeated years and of dropping out because the school is too far away;
- Reduction of the cost of schooling: between 2000 and 2002 more than 10,000 girls received free science textbooks, exercise books and other school supplies;
- Award of prizes and scholarships to girls coming top in the examinations;
- Development of curriculum content for girls;
- Expansion of support programmes for girls with learning difficulties (some 4,000 girls benefited between 2000 and 2001);
- The establishment of the National Coordination Office for Basic Education (CONEBAT) and the three gender and equity committees in the three education ministries has contributed to the encouraging results where school attendance by girls is concerned.

3. Women and health

One of the general principles of Guinea’s health policy is that every Guinean shall have the benefit, in good time and at affordable cost, of promotional and preventive measures and the
treatment required by his or her state of health. The following health programmes and projects have proved successful:

• The Expanded Programme on Immunization, Primary Health Care and Essential Medicines:
  - Sixty per cent of the population has access to basic health services;
  - Sixty-nine per cent of children receive vaccinations;
  - Sixty-five per cent of pregnant women are monitored;
  - Twenty-five per cent of confinements are attended;
  - The family-planning coverage increased from seven per cent in 2000 to eight per cent in 2001.

However, these coverages remain low in relation to the country’s target level of 80 per cent.

• The National Safe Motherhood Programme, the overall aim of which is to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality rates by 50 per cent by the end of 2010. The results achieved between 1999 and the present day are very encouraging and testify to the efforts made;

• The Population and Reproductive Health Programme, which is operational only in Maritime Guinea, Middle Guinea and Conakry, has made it possible to strengthen institutional capacities, improve the delivery of quality services, and increase the people’s awareness. This project must give special emphasis to efforts to combat female genital mutilation (FGM);

• The formulation of the National Strategic Plan to Combat FGM 2001-2010 and its harmonization with the world plan;

• The remarkable work of the coordination unit to combat traditional practices affecting maternal and child health (CPTAFE), which has led to the surrender of excision knives by women and excisers in Kouroussa (1999), Kérouané (2000), Conakry (2001) and Mamou (2002); and the formulation, with World Bank support, of economic retraining and other training projects for women who surrender knives;

• The drafting and adoption of the Reproductive Health Act (No. L/010/AN of 10 July 2000), which focuses closely on FGM;

• The ongoing production of legislation for the application of the Act;

• The Population and Reproductive Health Programme, which is targeted specifically on women of childbearing age, young people and children, has delivered very encouraging results:
  - The awareness of 75 per cent of leaders and decision-makers has been enhanced;
  - Twenty-five per cent of births outside health facilities are attended;
  - Sixty-five per cent of health districts have a monitoring system.

• The National AIDS Programme is being implemented within the framework of a strategic plan, and the activities are being coordinated by the National AIDS Committee. The following are the Programme’s goals:
  - To reduce the spread of HIV infections;
  - To care for people living with AIDS;
  - To reduce the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS;
  - To promote research on HIV/AIDS.

The battle against AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) requires the involvement of individuals, families and communities in the development of effective multi-sectoral and
multi-disciplinary collaboration. It is in this area that the NGOs involved in this battle are active in the field, focussing their efforts on such activities as awareness campaigns to secure changes of behaviour and care for infected persons. This is particularly true of the Association of Guinean Women against Sexually Transmitted Diseases, including Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, the Hope Foundation of Guinea, SIDALERTE, etc., and since May 2001 of the NGO Network to Combat AIDS in Guinea (ROSIGUI).

- The establishment of ministerial committees to combat AIDS, and the initiation of a project for the formation of a National Women and AIDS Coalition on 8 March 2004;
- The three-year action plan of the National Women and AIDS Coalition.

These activities at all levels are producing a beneficial change of behaviour, which is helping to slow the spread of AIDS.

4. Violence against women

These are the achievements:

- Conduct of a national workshop on violence against women and children, organized by the Ministry of Health in Conakry in 2000 in collaboration with WHO;
- Conduct of a national forum for debate and awareness-raising on the subject of violence against women and children, organized by MASPFE in March 2001 in collaboration with UNICEF;
- Production of a study on battered women (1991-2001) by forensic scientist Dr. Hassan Diallo (Ignace Deen University Hospital Centre);
- Creation of a coordination unit to combat traditional practices affecting maternal and child health (CPTAFE) in 1984;
- Statement by the Military Committee of National Recovery in 1989 condemning harmful traditional practices, in particular FGM;
- Conduct of a national survey in Upper Guinea and Middle Guinea with technical assistance from path-Guinea and funding from USAID and Mothercare (1996-1997);
- Launch by WHO on 17 March 1997 of a regional action plan to speed up the fight against FGM;
- Surrender of knives under pressure from CPTAFE and with the support of the Government and the development partners by women in Kouroussa, Kissidougou, Kérouané, Mamou and Conakry;
- Congratulations offered by the international community to Guinea through CPTAFE at the summit meeting of the Network of African Women Former Ministers and Members of Parliament in Windhoek in July 2000;
- Promulgation of the Female Genital Mutilation Act (No. L/2000/010/AN) by the President of the Republic. This Act was adopted by the National Assembly;
- Ten-year strategic plan harmonized with the world campaign against FGM;
- Mobilization of women and surrender of excision scissors through the National Traditional Midwives Association;
- Broadcast of 14 radio and 27 television programmes on FGM, with funding from the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI-Guinea), UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA and USAID;
• Publication of 35 articles in public and private newspapers, with funding from UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA and CPTAFE;
• Production and distribution of a video cassette containing 10 songs on FGM composed by leading Guinean musicians;
• Production of a short film in local languages by theatre groups, which was broadcast on national television, with UNICEF funding;
• Production of subtitled films on FGM in French and English under the title “Burden”, in which the then Archbishop of Conakry, Msg. Robert Sara, and the former Minister for Religious Affairs, Elhadj Abdourahmane Bah, made statements on the lack of religious justification for excision;
• A programme to combat violence against women in the refugee camps;
• A programme to combat violence in schools;
• Conduct of a round table on the consequences of FGM in October 2003, organized by MASPFE in collaboration with CPTAFE.

5. Women and armed conflict
On the eve of the rebel attacks in Guinea, women were the first to recognize the warning signs and report them to the authorities through the Guinean branch of the Mano River Women’s Network for Peace.

This Network intervened and succeeded in restarting the dialogue between the Governments of the three countries (Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia) at a time when 17 official delegations, including some heads of African and Western States, ministers and other special envoys, had failed in their mediation mission.

The Network’s Guinean branch has done much hard work in the area of prevention. Its activities have included:
• Participation in the various ECOWAS and OAU summits to revive the interest of African leaders in the tragic experience of women and children in the conflicts;
• Organization of several training sessions on conflict-resolution and conflict-transformation techniques with a view to strengthening the advocacy and lobbying capacities of branch members and voluntary organizations and involving them in the peace process in the subregion;
• Awareness-raising and social mobilization of the public at large through the private and public media;
• Periodic meetings with the development partners, political, religious and traditional leaders, women’s and youth groups, artistes and traditional communicators to convey the message of women as war victims and their determination to work hard for the cause of peace;
• Dissemination of information on a number of national and international legal instruments on human rights for the information of all strata of society;
• Publication of a guide for village mediators with a view to the establishment of a process of conflict resolution at the grass-roots level;
• Participation in various national, African and international peace conferences, including: - The conference on “Conflicts and development policies in the Mano River countries and Côte d’Ivoire: the regional factors of stabilization and reconstruction”, Paris, 13-14 May 2003;
- The international colloquium on “Exchanges of experience and determination of agendas for the construction and consolidation of peace in West Africa”, Bamako, 13-16 May 2003;
- The meeting on the final implementation of the action plan for the West African organizations and the establishment of the centre for follow-up of the United Nations Special Session on Children, Bamako, 1-6 June 2003;

6. Women and the economy
In carrying out its policy of development with a human face, Guinea has undertaken since 1998 many initiatives, programmes, projects and approaches involving both the State and civil society, the private sector, the people itself and the development partners. Included in this activity are a number of sectoral policies carried out under five framework programmes:
1. Gender and development
2. Support and development of the private sector
3. Support for decentralization and local agencies
4. Support for grass-roots initiatives
5. Support for the consolidation of macro-economic management

Study of the implementation of these policies shows that the female dimension has been effectively mainstreamed in a specific, cross-cutting and sectoral manner, in accordance with the provisions of CEDAW.

In fact, since the advancement of women is a social and economic reality, it brings together the sectoral policies of other ministerial departments whose goals and support programmes for the MASPFE mission make a coherent contribution to the implementation of the activities.

1. Governmental agencies

The Government has made large budgetary allocations to MASPFE for the implementation of its policies for the advancement of women. These allocations have shown a net increase of 33.08 per cent. In addition to the governmental funds, the development partners have made substantial contributions to the execution of MASPFE projects, thus facilitating the direct and indirect contributions of other sectors to the advancement of women (education, health, agriculture, livestock, fisheries, village water supplies).

2. Non-governmental agencies

The creation of thousands of NGOs, associations, cooperatives, women’s groups and other organizations for the promotion of women’s activities is demonstrated by the improvement in the extent of women’s organization and the strengthening of their capacity for management and back-up.

As a means of speeding up the attainment of de facto gender equality, special temporary measures have been used to create support funds for women’s economic activities, and specific
projects for the advancement of women have been incorporated in the investment programmes of a number of ministerial departments. These projects include:

1. Projects funded by MASPFE:
   - Women, population and development, (total amount of 0.66 billion francs in 1998);
   - Support for blind young people in Kankan, including partially sighted girls and women (0.95 and 0.43 billion in 1998 and 2001);
   - Support for income-generating activities for women; initially planned to run from 1998 to 2001 but extended to the present (3.91 billion);
   - Support of the effort to secure a substantial increase in school attendance by girls (0.5 billion from 1998 to 2001);
   - Institutional back-up for the Framework Programme on Gender and Development (0.45 billion from 1998 to 2001).

2. Projects funded by other departments
   Education 1998 2.16 billion  2001 6.63 billion
   Equity in schools 1998 1.10 billion  2001 6.83 billion
   Population and reproductive health 2001 16.83 billion
   Health and nutrition 1998 7.20 billion  2001 3.80 billion
   Combating STI/HIV/AIDS 1998 0.36 billion  2001 3.80 billion
   Support for women fish-curers 2001 0.42 billion

Thanks to the shifts in budgetary allocations between 1998 and 2002, substantial progress has been made in reducing the gender disparities, even though much remains to be done. Guinean women are thus enabled to exercise the rights established in laws and regulations to participate in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the nation.

**Budgetary allocations for women’s activities, 1995-2004**

**A. Current expenditure (thousands of Guinean francs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>Title II</th>
<th>Title III</th>
<th>Title IV</th>
<th>Annual total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>HIPC subsidies, women’s literacy workers</td>
<td>1,310,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>2,025,000</td>
<td>3,535,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s literacy programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for women’s economic activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>HIPC subsidies, women’s literacy workers</td>
<td>550,020</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>2,700,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s literacy programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for women’s economic activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Heading</td>
<td>BND</td>
<td>FINEX</td>
<td>Annual total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>HIPC subsidies, women’s literacy workers</td>
<td>446,400</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>696,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for women’s economic activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>HIPC subsidies, women’s literacy workers</td>
<td>240,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>340,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for women’s economic activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. Investment expenditure (thousands of Guinean francs)**

**National Development Budget (BND) and external financing (FINEX)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>BND</th>
<th>FINEX</th>
<th>Annual total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Support for income-generating activities for women</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>2,951,400</td>
<td>3,301,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Support for income-generating activities for women</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>1,431,100</td>
<td>1,581,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocacy for girls and women’s self-help centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for Gender and Development Programme</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>408,000</td>
<td>958,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Advocacy for girls and women’s self-help centres</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>305,100</td>
<td>1,005,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for Gender and Development Programme</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>400,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Support for income-generating activities for women</td>
<td>148,500</td>
<td>718,400</td>
<td>1,462,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s self-help centres</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>375,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocacy for girls</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Support for women’s economic activities</td>
<td>104,000</td>
<td>650,000</td>
<td>924,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s self-help centres</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Support for income-generating activities for women</td>
<td>134,000</td>
<td>1,081,800</td>
<td>1,881,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women, population and development</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>625,600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Women entrepreneurs</td>
<td>116,000</td>
<td>538,200</td>
<td>885,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women, population and development</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>191,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Women entrepreneurs</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>1,015,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women, population and development</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>125,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Women, population and development</td>
<td>39,600</td>
<td>233,600</td>
<td>273,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* National Budget Office
7. Women and decision-making

The problem of women’s participation in the management of public affairs has been a source of concern to governmental authorities ever since the first year of Guinea’s accession to independence in 1959. This concern stemmed from the decisive role played by women in the process of national liberation and was in keeping with the revolutionary approach taken by the Government of the First Republic, which clearly affirmed the principle of gender equality in all fields.

However, while in principle and in official talk women are not subject to any discrimination, when it comes to access to responsibility and decision-making power the reality shows that only very few women effectively enjoy this right.

The new approach to women’s participation in the decision-making process has facilitated the access of ever increasing numbers of women to senior administrative and political posts. For example, the number of women ministers in the Government has risen from four before 2004 to five in 2004. And their representation in the National Assembly increased in 2003 from 11 to 22 out of 114 deputies.

The commune elections in June 2000 produced the following results:
- 604 councillors, including 108 women (about 19.78%);
- 65 deputy mayors, including 17 women (about 26.15%);
- 37 mayors, including three women (about 8.1%);

Women won approximately 5.8 per cent of the seats in the 2002 elections to the Legislature. There are two women ambassadors, but no woman secretary-general of a ministry (out of 32) and only two women principal private secretaries (out of 32).

Despite the efforts of women’s lobbying groups, planning, managerial and supervisory posts remain mostly in the hands of men, as do positions on boards of directors:
- Councillors of State and inspectors-general: three out of 14;
- Regional inspectors: two out 48;
- National directors, units: 12 out of 155;
- Principal private secretaries: two out of 32;
- Secretaries-general: none out of 32;
- Secretaries-general of prefectures and sub-prefectures: one out of 65;
- National Communications Council: none;
- Economic and Social Council: 12;
- Supreme Court: three;
- Judges of first instance and justices of the peace: four out of 35;
- Chairpersons of boards of directors of national companies: one out of 12;
- Women lawyers: four out of 10;
- Women bailiffs: four out of 41;
- Women notaries public: one out of five;
- In private schools, there are 408 (10 per cent) women in a total of 4,121 teachers;
- In the hotels sector Novotel, for example, has seven women heads of service out of 38 (18%);
• The Telecommunications Corporation of Guinea has one woman manager (out of seven), six women service heads (out of 52) and nine women section heads (out of 67), giving a total representation of women of 13 per cent;
• In the civil service, there are 11,373 women holding middle-management and executive posts out of a total of 51,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H A 32 per cent</td>
<td>86 per cent</td>
<td>14 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H B 40 per cent</td>
<td>76 per cent</td>
<td>24 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H C 17 per cent</td>
<td>63 per cent</td>
<td>37 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual posts</td>
<td>79 per cent</td>
<td>20 per cent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of public employment by grade and service

In the trade-union movement, two of the six central associations are headed by women, including the biggest: the National Confederation of Guinean Workers.

8. Human rights of women
In 1981 the Republic of Guinea ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. That political commitment expressing its concern for the advancement and protection of women was given concrete form in a number of measures:
• The establishment of national and regional committees to monitor CEDAW;
• The drafting and presentation of the initial report, and the submission of the combined second and third periodic reports to New York in July 2002;
• The establishment of legal assistance centres for women under the auspices of MASPFE;
• The amendment of the discriminatory provisions of the Civil Code;
• The conduct by MASPFE of several awareness days for the general public on women’s human rights;
• The referendum on the Constitution, which led to its amendment, especially its provisions relating to gender equality;
• The preparation and adoption of the fourth periodic report on implementation of CEDAW;
• The production and distribution of the first and second editions of the guide to women’s rights;
• The conduct by MASPFE of studies on cases of violation of women’s rights and solutions to the problem (1991-2003);
• The translation and distribution of CEDAW in the national languages;
• The introduction and distribution of the equality passport;
• The NGO contribution to the dissemination, promotion and protection of women’s rights, including:
  - Publicity, awareness-raising and advocacy of women’s rights by the Coordination Office of Guinean Women’s Non-Governmental Organizations (COFEG);
  - The formulation and implementation of the programme on women’s rights and citizenship in French-speaking Africa (known as DCF) by COFEG in collaboration with MASPFE and the Ministry of Justice, with funding from CECI-Guinea, which enabled 10,000 rural women to obtain their national identity cards;
- The training of several paralegal workers and their deployment in the capital and in the regions and prefectures;
- The creation of a network known as the National Coalition of Guinea for Women’s Rights and Citizenship (CONAG/DCF), which has a ten-year action plan for dissemination and defence of women’s rights and whose activities have led to the revision of the discriminatory provisions of the Civil Code. The draft revision of the Civil Code is before the National Assembly;
- The opening of a legal clinic in Conakry and provision of mobile legal clinics in the regions by the Association for the Defence of Women’s Rights in Guinea, a member of CONAG/DCF;
- The organization in 2002-2003 by an NGO (Mother and Child) of awareness-raising visits and meetings with women and girls in conflict with the law in its central office in Conakry;
- The drafting by MASPFE in collaboration with the coordination unit to combat traditional practices maternal and child health (CPTAFE) of a ten-year integrated action plan to combat FGM, and the surrender of excision knives in some prefectures;
- The drafting and adoption of the Reproductive Health Act (No. L/2000/010/AN of 10 July 2000);
- The organization of meetings and awareness campaigns on women’s access to decision-making posts by the Guinean Association of Women Leaders (AGUIFEL);
- The compilation by MASPFE of a compilation of legislation on women’s rights in Guinea under the project on support for the economic activities of women.

9. Women and the media

Achievements
- The arrival of new information and communications technologies in the latter decades of the 20th century had a profound impact on people’s minds in terms of the new capacities which they offer and the opportunities which they open up in the production, circulation, acquisition and exchange of knowledge and know-how throughout the world;
- Guinea entered the era of new information and communications technologies in September 1997 with the installation, to take one example, of the national Internet package by the Guinean Telecommunications Corporation under the USAID “Leyland initiative” project.

Women too are getting their voices heard and putting across their messages in all the media (press, radio and television). This development is very important, for it is by this means that Guineans can communicate with the outside world. Today women journalists play almost the same role as their male counterparts.

More and more women are making careers in the media and communications. The enrolment of women in the journalism faculty increased sharply from two in 1993-1994 to 76 in 2001-2002, in a total of 280 students. The number of women working in public and private press enterprises has almost doubled over the last five years.

In the former Ministry of Communications (Ministry of Information since 2004), headed by a woman, women journalists account for 39 per cent of the staff but occupy only eight per cent of posts of responsibility.
There are no women among the nine members of the National Communications Council, the agency responsible for regulating communications in Guinea.

Some women have of course created private press enterprises, but only a few of these enterprises have coped with the practical constraints and even they are finding it difficult to operate.

There are several NGOs working in the communications field, such as the Association of African Communications Professionals (APAC) and others, which carry out programmes and projects to enhance the image of Guinean women. APAC has also produced films and documentaries on the rights of rural women.

Despite their increased numbers, the representation of women in the media remains poor.

10. Women and the environment
Achievements
The drafting and adoption of a national action plan for the environment with a view to the preservation of wildlife and of nature in general; the protection of natural resources in the light of their necessarily limited supply in relation to the needs; and the fight against pollution and other nuisances stemming from human activities as diverse as industry, agriculture, domestic life, and misuse of water and soil.

However, Guinea’s abundant and diversified natural resources, the product of its ecosystem-friendly climate, have not escaped environmental degradation. Water, soil and wood are not inexhaustible and may run short in the future as a result of irrational management.

Women have a fundamental role to play, as mothers, housewives and educators, in securing sustainable development for present and future generations.

Since they are the cornerstone of the development process, women must participate in activities at all levels in order to improve the living conditions of their families. They engage in several activities in the informal sector, such as commerce, fish-curing, painting, weaving, wickerwork, soap-making, pottery, mining of salt and precious metals, etc.

Women’s role in maintaining good health is very important for the environment:
• To care for their families, they need medicinal plants;
• To obtain medicinal plants, they need forests;
• To fish, they need rivers and streams as fish habitats;
• To raise livestock, they need pastures.

Women play a big part in the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, which was ratified by Guinea on 23 May 2001. An information and awareness-raising project for rural women is being executed in the country’s administrative regions in accordance with article 10 of the Stockholm Convention, which provides that the general public and the less well educated, including women and children, should be informed about and made more aware of the harmful effects of persistent organic pollutants on the environment and human health.
11. The girl child
Since the girls of today will be the women of tomorrow, it is important to accord to girls’ needs in the area of social and economic development the same attention and interest as is accorded to boys’ needs in the development process.

Disabled girls receive special assistance from the Government in the form of provision of any special devices which they may need, even when their families are poor. This assistance ensures their harmonious, equitable and sustainable development by:
• Eliminating discrimination against such girls in education, training, literacy, health and nutrition;
• Eliminating negative cultural attitudes and practices with respect to women and girls;
• Enhancing the girls’ capacities and the esteem in which they are held, especially in the case of girls needing special measures of protection and assistance;
• Increasing the girls’ awareness of social, economic and political questions and problems.

The rights of girls
Achievements
Important steps have been taken with respect to the rights of girls, including:
• The establishment in 1997 of a network of mothers defenders of the rights of the child;
• The establishment of a national “Prime Enfance” network, with the principal goal of bringing people together and facilitating exchanges of experience among all persons from all occupations whose work influences the quality of life of young children, including girls;
• The creation of mechanisms to monitor the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

The main general measures of application are summarized below:
• Creation of the National Committee on the Rights of the Child on 20 November 1995;
• National debate on the care and upbringing of young children;
• Establishment of a Children’s Parliament in the five communes of the capital and in all the prefectures in 1996;
• Dissemination of information about the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
• Support for the commune and prefecture branches of the National Committee on the Rights of the Child;
• Provision of assistance to refugee children, especially girls;
• Celebration of National Children’s Month in June each year;
• Opportunities for disabled girls to enjoy the same rights as all other girls through, for example, activities for the advancement and protection of disabled girls;
• Creation of legal assistance centres for women and girls (in cases of rape, attempted rape, excision, attempted early marriage and early marriage) in the five communes of the capital, with financial support from UNDP in 1998;
• Introduction of the programme on women’s rights and citizenship (1998-2002), with the support of NGO partners such as CPTAFE, COFEG, the Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians (REFAMP), the Guinean Association of Women Lawyers, and the Association for the Development of Community Initiatives, and with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) channeled through CECI-Guinea;
• Radio campaigns to publicize the Convention on the Rights of the Child by plan-Guinea;
• Promotion of girls’ education by the Forum of Guinean Women Educators;
• Launch of the project to improve girls’ education in the Government’s basic education programme, in collaboration with UNICEF (in accordance with the “25 by 2005” initiative).

Follow-up of the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights
Special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, New York, 2001

• Establishment of the National AIDS Committee;
• Creation of 22 ministerial committees to combat AIDS;
• Introduction of an AIDS-diagnosis programme;
• Introduction of a programme for the protection of children orphaned by AIDS;
• Social mobilization and national dialogue in 2001 on HIV/AIDS transmission pathways;
• Marking of National AIDS Month in December 2003 with an awareness-raising campaign on STI/HIV/AIDS, transmission pathways and means of prevention;
• Training of 45 peer educators in social communication to secure a change of behaviour;
• Training of 40 social workers in the psychological care of persons living with AIDS;
• Project to create the National Women and AIDS Coalition (under implementation);
• Introduction of a three-year plan (2004-2007) to combat HIV/AIDS by the National Women and AIDS Coalition;
• Provision of antiretroviral (ARV) treatment for 100 per cent of the women and children diagnosed with AIDS, together with advice on the feeding of newborn babies;
• Provision of ARV treatment for 100 per cent of babies born to seropositive mothers.

Follow-up of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Durban, 2001)
Follow-up of the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, 2002)
Follow-up of the Second World Assembly on Ageing (Madrid, 2002)

• The situation of childless widows is regulated by provisions of the Civil Code which protect such women against any harm;
• Issues affecting the elderly have been incorporated among the Government’s priorities;
• Guinea has a National Office for Social Promotion and Protection, which deals with issues affecting vulnerable groups, i.e. disabled persons and persons of the third and fourth ages;
• Poverty reduction strategy papers were adopted in December 2001 and June 2002;
The main goal of the poverty reduction strategy is to secure a significant reduction of poverty from the 1995 level of 40.3 per cent to 30 per cent in 2010. This goal is in line with the target endorsed in the Millennium Declaration of halving poverty between 1990 and 2015.

The strategy will make it possible to reduce the poverty among elderly women which is the main cause of their exclusion.

Attainment of the objectives will enable the elderly in general and elderly women in particular:
- To continue living in their homes for as long as possible;
- To live in a safe environment which can be adapted to their personal preferences and to changes in their capacities;
- To be supplied with food, water, housing, clothing and health care provided from their incomes and the support of their families and communities and by means of self-help;
- To have the possibility of working or of access to other sources of income.

B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges

(d) In legal terms there is no fundamental discrimination between men and women. However, in implementation there are obstacles, such as social and cultural backwardness, poverty, illiteracy, misinterpretation of religious texts, etc., which encourage gender inequality.

1. Women and poverty
What is understood by “obstacles” is the array of factors and situations which obstruct access to credit, with the result that the lending system does not operate correctly. Generally speaking, all enterprises encounter such difficulties but the most seriously affected are the ones headed by women.

These difficulties usually stem from the dependence on the men in the family imposed on women by market politics and the legal system and by deeply rooted prejudices and customs:
- Women’s weak savings capacity;
- The lack of reliable information;
- The inadequacy of the existing banking practices (with respect to stocks and shares, for example), which prevent better returns on savings;
- Insufficient personnel or funds to ensure the perpetuation of local self-financing systems;
- The lack of legislation to regulate the operation of the savings and loans system.

Remaining challenges
- Establishment of micro-finance mechanisms (creation of a refinancing fund for the decentralized financing systems);
- Continuation and expansion of the project on support for women’s economic activities, funded by the African Development Bank, in the administrative regions not yet covered in the project’s first phase;
- Establishment of a programme to help women entrepreneurs by supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and industries run by women;
- Promotion of farming, handicrafts and tourism activities, which are profitable for women;
- Provision of simple and suitable technologies for women producers.
If businesswomen are to be self-sufficient and make an effective contribution to social and economic development, a number of preconditions must be met, amounting in fact to the implementation of programmes of awareness-raising, training and financial assistance for women.

2. Education and training of women

Constraints
Most of the constraints in this area are connected with the burden of social and cultural backwardness, which relegates women to backstage:

- The misinterpretation of religious teaching;
- The burden of domestic work borne by girls, which prevents them from studying on an equal footing with boys;
- The lack of school infrastructure due to the State’s poor finances;
- The shortage of teachers;
- The high illiteracy rate among parents;
- Early marriage and multiple and closely spaced pregnancies.

Remaining challenges

- Provision of sufficient resources for the implementation of programmes and projects on girls’ education, both formal and informal;
- Use of informal education as a means of expanding girls’ education;
- Strengthening of the capacity of the stakeholders to mobilize material and financial resources and manage them transparently for the promotion of girls’ education;
- Expanding the contribution of pre-school and private education to the improvement of girls’ education;
- Increased participation by the private sector in the efforts to promote education and training for women and girls;
- Development of leadership qualities in girls to improve their personal motivation;
- Involvement of more women in the activities;
- Provision of training for all the teachers in the education system in gender issues, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the draft children’s code;
- Improvement of the coordination of measures for promoting girls’ education, with continuation of the current efforts of the gender-equality committees in this area;
- Close monitoring of activities and, where necessary, timely introduction of corrective measures;
- Expansion and strengthening of the collaboration among the persons involved in girls’ education so that they may become an effective force for changing attitudes and behaviour in schools and training institutions;
- Systematic involvement of communities in the education projects;
- A bigger role for the media;
- Drafting, adoption and application of legislation to punish harassment in schools, refusal to allow girls to go to school, and withdrawal of girls from school;
- Promotion of women’s literacy through implementation of the three-year women’s literacy programme (2004-2007).
3. Women and health
Constraints
- Inaccessibility of health facilities and services;
- Low rate of utilization of health services;
- Inadequate coverage of health services;
- Poor deployment of personnel;
- Lack of plans for recruitment, deployment, career development and improvement of the living conditions of personnel;
- Poor adaptation of facilities and equipment to the needs;
- Weakness of the public system for supply, distribution and management of pharmaceutical products;
- Failure to mobilize internal resources;
- Underdevelopment of mechanisms;
- Low level of grass-roots participation;
- Inadequate provision of health care;
- Poor hygiene;
- Lack of coordination of activities and poor collaboration between the partners in the field;
- Family poverty;
- Lack of communication measures to change people’s behaviour;
- Persistence of a number of social and cultural factors (early marriage and pregnancy, female genital mutilation, food taboos, etc.).

Remaining challenges
- Increasing the inadequate flow of information to the public concerning HIV/AIDS;
- Combating the stigmatisation of and discrimination against persons living with AIDS;
- Establishment of voluntary diagnosis centres;
- Combating illiteracy and poverty;
- Reduction of the cost of treating HIV/AIDS;
- Strengthening of multi-sectoral collaboration among the partners;
- Intensification of the promotion of methods of protection against STI/AIDS;
- Promotion of key patterns of behaviour which significantly reduce infant mortality;
- Continuation of the strategy of comprehensive care of children by integration of the various programmes for monitoring children with each other in order to improve their cost-effectiveness;
- Promotion and consolidation of the Safe Motherhood Programme on the basis of observance of human rights: the rights to life, liberty and security; the rights relating to the creation of a family and to a better family life; the rights to health and the benefits of scientific progress, and the rights to equality and non-discrimination by reason of sex or marital status.

4. Violence against women
Constraints
- Burden of social and cultural backwardness;
- Lack of resources to implement development projects for women;
- Lack of frames of reference for caring for women victims of violence;
- Inadequate application of laws, and impunity of perpetrators of violence;
- Women’s ignorance of their rights.
Remaining challenges
• Elimination of social and cultural backwardness;
• Promotion and consolidation of the establishment of referral centres for the psychological and social care of victims;
• Mobilization of increased resources for the implementation of development projects for women;
• Strict application of legislation in respect of perpetrators of violence;
• Consolidation and publicizing of women’s fundamental rights;
• Combating the impunity of perpetrators of violence.

5. Women and armed conflict
Constraints
• Language barriers;
• Vulnerability of refugee or displaced women and girls and those affected by armed conflicts (violence, rape, poverty);
• Inadequate access to drinking water, land and decent housing;
• Inadequate or poor access to loans for income-generating activities;
• Obstacles to the readaptation of refugees;
• Problems of the reunification of families whose members have been separated.

Remaining challenges
• Improvement of the living conditions of refugee and displaced women and those affected by armed conflicts;
• Establishment of basic services for them;
• Training of women in management techniques (material, technical and financial);
• Allocation of adequate loans to refugee and displaced women and women affected by armed conflicts to allow them to develop income-generating activities;
• Encouragement of a culture of peace;
• Regulation of the manufacture, sale and circulation of small arms;
• Reconstruction of areas devastated by the wars.

6. Women and the economy
Constraints
• High illiteracy rate;
• Rural women’s inadequate access to land ownership and loans;
• Women’s inadequate access to the means of production and their marginalization in this regard;
• Women’s burden of household tasks, which take up 80 per cent of their time;
• Lack of equipment and ignorance of processing and conservation techniques (appropriate technology), and inadequate marketing systems for products;
• Women’s lack or low level of economic independence;
• Shortage of resources to fund women’s micro-projects;
• Lack of an operational multi-purpose national framework project;
• Failure to match the vocational training of women and girls to the market needs;
• Weakness of the legal framework;
• Lack of loan-guarantee funds;
• Poor synergy between the various development partners;
• Lack of research funds to cover the cost of formulating projects for women.

Remaining challenges
• Expansion of the vocational training of women in their areas of activity;
• Closer involvement of women in the identification of problems and taking of decisions;
• Expansion of the introduction of conservation techniques in urban and rural areas;
• Encouragement of the sharing of responsibility between men and women within the family and the community;
• Improvement, diversification and promotion of multi-purpose projects;
• Development and consolidation of programmes and projects of subregional, regional and international integration;
• Easier access to loans for women;
• Activation of the support fund for women’s economic activities;
• Inclusion of the teaching of new technologies in the vocational training courses for women;
• Encouragement and support of women entrepreneurs.

7. Women and decision-making

Constraints
• Women’s lack of access to decision-making posts;
• High rate of illiteracy;
• Influence of social constraints;
• Lack of solidarity among women;
• Women’s lowly positions on electoral lists;
• Lack of identity documents for participating in elections;
• Inadequate training in civic affairs;
• Women’s lack of interest in political issues;
• Women’s lack of self-confidence;

Remaining challenges
• Stronger representation of women in decision-making posts at all levels;
• Literacy and political training for women;
• Harder lobbying to increase women’s representation in decision-making posts in all spheres;
• Encouragement of dialogue with all the development players;
• Encouragement of women to take an interest in politics;
• Advocacy with the authorities and officials of political parties to improve women’s positioning on electoral lists.

8. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

Constraints
• Lack of resources for implementing the National Policy for the Advancement of Women;
• Shortage of personnel and failure to fill vacancies in the manning table of the National Office for the Advancement of Women.

Remaining challenges
• Appointment of managerial staff in the local branches of the National Office for the Advancement of Women;
• Personnel recruitment and institutional capacity-building (human, material and financial resources, with special emphasis on training of managerial staff and members of voluntary organizations) in order to improve the effectiveness of policies, programmes and projects for the advancement of women.

9. Human rights of women
Constraints
• Women’s ignorance of their rights;
• Failure to bring cases before the various jurisdictions;
• Incorrect application of legislation by some justice professionals;
• Women’s poverty;
• Poor monitoring of the implementation of the legal instruments on women’s rights ratified by Guinea;
• Scant publicity given to legislation;
• Lack of resources for operating the monitoring mechanisms;
• Lack of a national action plan to combat trafficking in persons;
• Failure to ratify the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights.

Remaining challenges
• More publicity for women’s rights and promotion of their effective exercise;
• Consolidation and reactivation of the national and regional CEDAW monitoring committees and the legal assistance centres;
• Development and reinforcement of the partnership with the NGOs for dissemination of information about women’s rights;
• Monitoring of the regional and international legal instruments ratified by Guinea;
• Ratification of the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights;
• Formulation and implementation of a national action plan to combat trafficking in persons.

10. Women and the media
Constraints
• Poor access to modern means of communication;
• Women’s scant participation in decision-making;
• Lack of access to information;
• High cost of means of communication.

Remaining challenges
• Greater access to information and training;
• Greater access for women to decision-making posts;
• Enhancement of the status of women media professionals;
• Dissemination of women’s success stories;
• Enhancement of women’s image through the media;
• Greater access for women to modern means of communication;

11. Women and the environment
Constraints
• Ignorance of the harmful effects of environmental degradation;
• Non-availability of improved stoves;
• Large-scale destruction of flora by bush fires;
• Impoverishment of soils by monoculture farming;
• Non-involvement of women in environmental protection programmes;
• Shortage of resources for implementing environmental programmes.

Remaining challenges
• Formulation of information and awareness-raising programmes on environmental issues for the general public;
• Improved access for women to environmental skills, resources and technical information;
• Involvement of women at all levels in decision-making on environmental issues;
• Conduct of studies and research and implementation of measures and strategies in the environmental field;
• Revision of national environmental policy to mainstream the gender approach;
• Involvement of women in environmental protection programmes and projects.

12. The girl child

Constraints
• Persistence of discriminatory sexist stereotypes and gender disparities;
• Persistence of practices and customs harmful to girls;
• Poverty and illiteracy of parents;
• Shortage of school infrastructure and teachers;
• Absence of feminine role-models;
• Shortage of resources for promoting and securing respect for the rights of girls;
• Burden of domestic work.

Remaining challenges
• Provision of sufficient resources for implementing programmes and projects on girls’ education, both formal and informal;
• Use of informal education as a means of expanding girls’ education;
• Reinforcement of the stakeholders’ capacity to mobilize material and financial resources and manage them to improve girls’ education;
• Improvement of the specialized facilities of pre-school education with a view to promoting equality and equity between boys and girls;
• Increased participation by the private sector in the efforts to promote the education and training of women and girls;
• Development of leadership qualities in girls to enhance their personal motivation;
• Training of the education system’s trainers in gender issues, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the draft children’s code;
• Coordination of the measures for promotion of girls’ education, with continuation of the current efforts of the gender-equality committees in the area of girls’ education;
• Monitoring of the activities and, where necessary, introduction of corrective measures in good time;
• Reinforcement of coordination among all the persons involved in girls’ education so that they become an effective force for changing attitudes and behaviour in schools and training institutions;
• Greater involvement of communities;
• Greater involvement of the media.
Part Three: Institutional Development

(a) *The following national mechanisms exist for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women:*  
- The Ministry for Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women and Children (MASPFE);  
- The National Office for the Advancement of Women;  
- The Observatory on Respect for Women’s Rights;  
- The national and regional CEDAW monitoring committees;  
- The legal assistance centres;  
- The Social Commission of the National Assembly.

*The national mechanisms have the following human and financial resources:*  
- The personnel of the civil service;  
- The National Development Budget;  
- Grants from international and bilateral institutions;  
- Subsidies;  
- Sponsors.

*The MASPFE mandate* is to design, draft and implement the Government’s policy in the area of social affairs and the advancement of women and children. To this end it is responsible inter alia for:  
- The drafting, monitoring and application of legislation and regulations relating to social affairs and the advancement of women and children;  
- The design and implementation of promotion and protection policies;  
- The provision of assistance to disaster-stricken and disadvantaged persons and other persons with serious social problems, and monitoring of the use of gifts, grants and subsidies.

*The mandate of the National Office for the Advancement of Women is to:*  
- Improve the coordination among the various stakeholders with a view to facilitating the mainstreaming of women’s needs in local, national and regional development programmes;  
- Prepare technical documentation for national and international meetings, conferences, colloquia and seminars on women’s issues;  
- Collaborate with local authorities in matters connected with the advancement of women;  
- Produce statistical indicators on the female population;  
- Promote women’s access to credit;  
- Coordinate and monitor the activities of the women’s self-help centres;  
- Organize and facilitate women’s access to information, education and vocational training;  
- Contribute to vocational training;  
- Participate in the drafting, dissemination and monitoring of documents on women’s rights;  
- Initiate and implement, in collaboration with the other stakeholders, projects and programmes for the advancement of women.

*The mandate of the Observatory on Respect for Women’s Rights*
The Observatory is a permanent body created in July 2004 by the Network of Guinean Parliamentarians on Questions of Population and Development under the authority of the President of the National Assembly.

Its composition includes members and former members of the Network, competent persons chosen by their departments or agencies because of their involvement in issues of women’s advancement, and any other persons whose expertise is deemed useful. The Observatory’s mandate is to:

- Ensure the correct application of existing legislation on the advancement of women;
- Review and streamline current laws and regulations with a view to facilitating the implementation of the agenda of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development;
- Lobby decision-makers and the Network of Parliamentarians with regard to the drafting of projects and bills to establish gender equality and equity;
- Establish a monitoring system based on reliable indicators and make periodic checks on the degree to which the targets are being attained.

The mission of the national and regional CEDAW monitoring committees is to:

- Monitor the implementation of CEDAW in the capital and the administrative regions in the light of the critical areas of concern and the purposes and objectives of CEDAW;
- Draft regional and national plans for the implementation of CEDAW;
- Reactivate public interest in the outcomes of the regional conferences and the special sessions of the United Nations on women;
- Interpret legal texts in the national languages;
- Identify cases of violence against women and girls;
- Contribute to the solution of problems identified by examination of the various examples of violation of women’s rights;
- Prepare periodic (quarterly and annual) reports;
- Organize awareness-raising measures for the general public on legal texts relating to women.

The legal assistance centres

These centres were created by Decree No. 97/141/PRG/SGG of 19 June 1997. They operate under the administrative auspices of MASPFE with the task of carrying out the Ministry’s policies for the protection of women’s rights. To this end they are responsible in particular for:

- Compiling and disseminating laws, regulations and all international, regional and national instruments on the advancement of women and girls in Guinea;
- Listening to and offering advice to women and facilitating the opening of files by administrative agencies on women in difficult situations, with a view to enabling them to secure effective exercise of their rights in the event of violation;
- Establishing a data bank on cases of violation of women’s rights and their outcomes;
- Training paralegal personnel to disseminate information about women’s rights;
- Producing suitable teaching materials for the purposes of information, education and communication on women’s rights;
- Contributing to the mobilization of men and women in support of programmes for women;
• Raising the awareness of the authorities and the members of voluntary organizations involved in the advancement of the cause of women and lobbying them to take action.

All these bodies work together to implement the programmes and projects for women and children. The national mechanisms are represented at the central, regional and local levels.

*The following are the main partners of the national mechanisms:*

Agencies of the United Nations system (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIFEM), the World Bank, the African Development Bank, CECI, USAID, the focal points of ministerial departments, the National AIDS Committee, COFEG, CPTAFE, and voluntary and other organizations of civil society (trade unions, women’s associations and groups).

*The following networks have been established:*

- The Coordination Office of Guinean Women’s NGOs (COFEG);
- The National Coalition of Guinea for Women’s Rights and Citizenship (CONAG/DCF);
- The Mano River Women’s Network for Peace;
- The Network of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians of Guinea (REFAMP/GUI);
- The NGO Network to Combat AIDS in Guinea (ROSIGUI).

The effectiveness of these networks stems from their coordination of their activities in order to avoid waste of resources, energy and time and facilitate the attainment of their objectives. However, such effectiveness also depends on their ability to raise funds and their capacity for work in the field.

*Proportion of financial resources accruing from international and bilateral donors*

Foreign NGOs and intergovernmental bodies make a significant contribution to women’s economic advancement by working at the grass roots as part of the effort to reduce social inequalities and combat poverty. Attention is drawn to the following initiatives and institutions as examples of the support given to the advancement of women:

(a) **The Support Fund for Women’s Economic Activities**

This is a poverty-reduction project financed by the Government and the African Development Bank, with a total of 3.91 billion francs available for lending. In its current phase it is concentrating on functional literacy and training for women in the management of micro-projects and micro-finance. The lending phase will begin at the end of 2004.

(b) **PRIDE Finance**

This institution was launched in 1991 as a project of USAID, which remains today the principal donor, supported by other sources such as the French Development Agency (AfD) and the World Bank. Its income is channelled into the following activities:

- Handicrafts;
- Marketing farm-food products;
• Small-scale commercial activities;
• Restaurants and catering;
• Provision of services;
• Nation-wide transport.

As of 31 December 2001, PRIDE Finance had registered a total of 10,160 clients, 74 per cent of them women, and had made loans totalling 2,644 million francs, 65 per cent of them to women. Since the start-up of its activities it has made 100,000 loans for a total of over 30 billion francs. This institution is an NGO operated for profit and specializing in micro-finance. Its aim is to make a contribution to the fight against poverty in Guinea by offering financial and non-financial services to small enterprises and micro-enterprises in the informal sector.

Its financial services consist of small loans to operators of micro-enterprises who have no access to traditional bank loans. Its non-financial services provide direct assistance, including monitoring, advice and training. Between 1 January 1992 and 30 June 2000 it granted 63,277 loans for a total of 15,987,625,000 francs, as shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of loan</th>
<th>From 1992</th>
<th>1 January to 30 June 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Total amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>57,324</td>
<td>12,987,125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-term</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>14,896,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>58,179</td>
<td>14,501,725,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Yété Mali savings and loans network or the People’s Savings and Loans Fund is a financial cooperative established by persons who decided to pool their resources with a view to making loans to each other; it offers two types of account:

Day-of-deposit accounts
• Money may be deposited or withdrawn at will from Tuesday to Saturday from 08.30 to 16.00 (closed Sunday and Monday);
• No limits on the amounts of deposits or withdrawals;
• Quarterly maintenance charge of only 1,000 francs.

Term savings accounts
• Client decides on amount to be committed;
• Client decides on length of term;
• Accounts pay interest.

This Fund has lent 149 million francs to 340 women’s groups having 1,190 members and 189 entrepreneurs, making a total of 1,379 women (or 70 per cent of loans made to women).

(b) Focal points for gender equality and empowerment of women have been established in the MASPFE division for the promotion and protection of women’s rights - the National Office for the Advancement of Women - as well as in some 20 ministerial departments which have nominated focal points to monitor the mainstreaming of the gender dimension in programmes.
and projects. There are also three equality committees in the three ministerial departments responsible for education, and a Gender Chair has been established in Conakry University.

The following ministerial departments have focal points:
1. Office of the Prime Minister
2. Office of the Presidency
3. Cabinet Office
4. Office of the Presidency for National Defence
5. Ministry of Security
6. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
7. Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs
8. Ministry of Decentralization and Local Administration
9. Ministry of Communications
10. Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
11. Ministry of Trade and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
12. Ministry of Justice
13. Ministry of Transport
14. Ministry of Public Works
15. Ministry of Energy and Water
16. Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture
17. Ministry of Pre-University and Civic Education
18. Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training
19. Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
20. Ministry of Public Health
21. Ministry for the Plan
22. Ministry for Cooperation
23. Ministry of Information
24. Ministry of the Environment
25. Ministry of Public Administration
26. Ministry of Tourism, Hotels and Handicrafts
27. Ministry of Mining and Geology
28. Ministry of Urban Development and Housing
29. Ministry for Youth, Sports and Culture
30. Ministry of Employment and the Civil Service

The commonest type of support received from these ministries is the provision of human resources and the introduction of measures in which gender issues are mainstreamed:

- Mainstreaming of the gender dimension in their departments’ policies and programmes, with implementation financed from the investment budgets of the ministries themselves;
- Back-up and facilitation of the handling of cases involving women by the various technical departments at inter-ministerial coordination meetings or meetings of the Council of Ministers;
- Participation in awareness-raising campaigns and in advocacy with the authorities and the general public;
- Designation of focal points and other personnel for organizing national and international meetings.
The support furnished by the national mechanism may be summarized as follows:

Training, guidance, listening, support, and referral of problems raised by women to the appropriate agencies for solution.

Effectiveness of the focal points:
- They bring consistency to the team work;
- They facilitate women’s access to services;
- They create synergies among the various stakeholders;
- They help to reduce the inequalities and improve women’s living conditions.

(c) The following monitoring mechanisms have been established to measure progress in implementation of projects:
- MASPFE, the National Office for the Advancement of Women, and its central and local branches;
- Steering Committee of the Framework Programme on Gender and Development;
- National and regional CEDAW monitoring committees;
- Observatory on Respect for Women’s Rights;
- Guinean Council of Women;
- Women’s Fortnight in August 2003, which provided the framework for the evaluation of the global platform for action (Beijing+10) by all the stakeholders, including organizations of civil society.

Accountability for promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women across all ministries is determined by the level of access to decision-making posts:
- Coordination of the activities is the responsibility of MASPFE, which conducts inspection, monitoring and evaluation exercises. In the case of the other ministries, the focal points submit reports to MASPFE;
- Coordination at the highest level of Government is provided by the Council of Ministers chaired by the President of the Republic and Head of State, as well as by the First Lady, who takes part in ceremonies involving women and children.

(d) Levels of capacity for promoting gender mainstreaming:
- Thematic gender groups involved in the fight against poverty;
- The Inter-Projects Gender and Development Group, which debates gender issues;
- The UNESCO Chair “Women, gender, society and development” in Conakry University, which has an adequate education programme thanks to the collaboration of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, which was brought in by MASPFE.

Remaining challenges in the area of capacity building:
- Training of human resources specializing in gender issues;
- Establishment and operation of a sex-disaggregated data bank;
- Changing people’s behaviour so that they take the gender dimension fully into account in their daily lives.
(e) A core set of indicators on women has been established by MASPFE under the project for support of women’s economic activities, which is funded by the African Development Bank:

- The monitoring body is the National Office for the Advancement of Women;
- The following are the problems encountered and the challenges remaining in the area of data and statistics:
  - Difficulties in data collection due to administrative tardiness and the retention of certain strategic information;
  - Poor qualifications of personnel and their lack of specialized training;
  - Shortage of suitable software for storing data and statistics.
- Non-disaggregation of data by sex is still a problem in all 12 areas and especially with respect to:
  - Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women;
  - Human rights of women;
  - Women and the economy;
  - Women and poverty;
  - Women and the environment;
- New types of data need to be collected in the following areas:
  - Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women;
  - Women and decision-making;
  - Human rights of women;
  - Women and the economy;
  - Women and poverty;
  - Women and the environment;
- The National Statistics Office and most of the statistical services of the executing ministries know what information is needed and they are willing to supply it on request and given due notice. For two years now MASPFE has been holding consultations with the statistical services on the design of questionnaires with a view to ensuring that the data take gender questions properly into account;
- This is happening in all sectors, with the collaboration of the various technical departments;
- Sex-disaggregated data are beginning to be used to facilitate the formulation of the technical planning sheets.

(f) The role played by Parliament in the promotion and monitoring of gender equality and empowerment of women is exemplified in the creation of the Observatory on Respect for Women’s Rights.

This role could be strengthened by means of institutional support for Parliament in the form of training of the members of the National Assembly and the other bodies comprising the Observatory in issues connected with gender equality and empowerment of women. They must then be furnished with the technical means of supervising the grass-roots activities carried out in these areas.

NGOs, operating either individually or in networks, play planning, implementation and monitoring roles; most of them have acquired the tools for designing their programmes, operational plans and strategies. The donors require them to produce results. They are also
required to undergo periodic evaluations (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or annual). And they produce periodic or annual reports to demonstrate their performance.

This progress has been achieved since the 1995 Beijing Conference.

NGOs are officially part of the system of mechanisms established as a follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and they have worked as valuable partners in the implementation of the Platform for Action.

NGOs were given opportunities to speak during the Women’s Fortnight held in August 2003 as part of the commemoration of National Guinean Women’s Day so that each of them could offer its own assessment of its performance in the light of the 12 priority areas of the Platform for Action.
Part Four: Main challenges and actions to address them

The implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action has had some success. However, its progress has been slowed by difficulties of every kind.

If this situation is to be remedied, steps must be taken to strengthen certain priority or critical areas (institutional mechanisms, women and decision-making, human rights of women, women and the economy, women and poverty, women and the environment, and the girl child).

4.1 Institutional mechanisms

The public authorities are envisaging the following measures to establish genuine institution building in the mechanisms for the advancement of women:

- Revision of the National Policy for the Advancement of Women, conducted from a gender standpoint but taking other emerging issues into account as well; to be matched by an action plan;
- Gender mainstreaming in the key sectors through the establishment by ministerial decree of gender and advancement of women units or other viable focal points;
- Institutional consolidation of MASPFE;
- Recruitment of personnel to take charge of coordination between NGOs and other associations and the national mechanism for the advancement of women;
- Reinforcement of the implementation capacities of the institutional mechanisms by means of training, provision of equipment and allocation of budgets firmly earmarked for gender activities.

4.2 Women and decision-making

Gradual introduction of quotas to ensure proper representation of women in decision-making bodies at all levels.

4.3 Human rights of women

- Adoption of the revised Civil Code;
- Widespread dissemination of information about the revised Civil Code at all levels;
- Signature of the draft order on the legislation for implementation of the Reproductive Health Act (No. L/2000/AN of 10 July 2000);
- Adoption of measures to ensure the application of the revised Civil Code;
- Reinforcement of the national and regional mechanisms for monitoring CEDAW;
- Consolidation of the legal assistance centres;
- Awareness-raising and advocacy on women’s rights;
- Conduct of a study on the phenomenon of trafficking persons and the possibilities of combating it;
- Ratification by Guinea of the Protocol Additional to the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights;
- Ratification by Guinea of the Convention against Trafficking in Persons;
• Enhancement of the awareness of the authorities at all levels and of the population at large of the trafficking in women and girls and formulation of a national action plan to combat this phenomenon;
• Monitoring of the international, regional and subregional legal instruments relating to women ratified by Guinea;
• Dissemination of the compilation of legislation on women’s rights in Guinea.

4.4 Women and the economy
• Allocation of an operational budget plus one per cent to the national mechanism for the advancement of women;
• Reinforcement and/or effective implementation of the measures taken to facilitate the legal inheritance of real property by women;
• Adoption of measures to guarantee women’s access to the most important services (education, health, credit, technology, etc.).

4.5 Women and poverty
• Introduction of arrangements for funding the micro-finance mechanisms (creation of a refinancing fund for local financial systems);
• Continuation and expansion of the programme on support for women’s economic activities, funded by the African Development Bank, in the areas not yet covered in the programme’s first phase;
• Implementation of a programme for women entrepreneurs through the provision of support for small and medium-sized enterprises and industries;
• Promotion of farm, handicrafts and tourism branches, which are profitable for women;
• Provision of simple and suitable technologies for the benefit of women producers.

4.6 Women and the environment
• Subsidies for alternative energy sources to replace firewood, in particular butane gas and solar energy;
• Introduction of viable arrangements for the collection and recycling of household wastes;
• Development of the wood/energy sector (production of lumber, firewood and charcoal);
• Dissemination of information on the content of articles 7 and 10 of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, which spell out the harmful effects of such pollutants on the health of the public at large, including women and children, and on the environment.

4.7 The girl child
• Introduction of a programme to improve girls’ education in accordance with the “25 by 2005” initiative;
• Promotion of programmes and/or projects to combat violence against girls and their forced or early marriage;
• Formulation and adoption of a policy on girls’ education;
• Development of a partnership between the various stakeholders in the areas of girls’ education and their protection;
• Combating the trafficking in and prostitution of girls and other forms of their exploitation;
• Introduction of arrangements to combat trafficking in women and girls;
• Increased advocacy with the authorities and the public to secure application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.