

**CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL
FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST
WOMEN (CEDAW)**



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**COMBINED 4th, 5th, 6th & 7th PERIODIC REPORT ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CEDAW IN UGANDA**

**MINISTRY OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

2009

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACFODE	Action for Development
AMwA	Akina Mama wa Afrika
ANC	Ante Natal Care
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Children Against Abuse and Neglect
ART	Anti - Retro Treatment
ARVs	Anti - Retro Virals
AUPWAE	Association of Professional Women in Agriculture and Environment
AWEPA	African Women's Parliament
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEDOVIP	Centre for Domestic Violence
CEEWA	Council for Economic Empowerment of Women in Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CWLA	Common Women's Legislative Agenda
DDP	District Development Project
DFID	Department for International Development
DPP	Directorate of Public Prosecutions
DRB	Domestic Relations Bill
EASSI	Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative
EmOC	Emergency Obstetric Care
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
FALP	Functional and Adult Literacy Program
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FIDA - U	Uganda Association of Women Lawyers
FOWODE	Forum for Women in Democracy
FP	Family Planning
FPAU	Family Planning Association of Uganda
FSI	Female Scholarship Initiative
GoU	Government of Uganda
HCT	HIV Counseling and Testing
HSSP	Health Sector Strategic Plan
ICEIDA	Icelandic Development Agency
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IPT	Intermittent Preventive Care
IRI	International Republican Institute
ITN	Insect Treated Nets
JLOS	Justice Law and Order Sector
JSC	Judicial Service Commission
LABF	Legal Aid Basket Fund
LAC	Legal Aid Clinic

LASPNET	Legal Aid Service Providers Network
LAW - U	Law and Advocacy for Women in Uganda
LCCs	Local Council Courts
LGDP	Local Government Development Plan
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MARPS	Most At Risk Populations
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFI's	Micro Finance Institutions
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NAPW	National Action Plan on Women
NAPW	National Action Plan on Women
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organisation
NAWJ	National Association of Women Judges
NAWOU	National Association of Women's Organisations in Uganda
NCW	National Council of Women
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSP	National Strategic Plan
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PDAU	Public Defenders' Association of Uganda
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PEAP/GG	Poverty Eradication Action Plan/Gender Group
PFA	Prosperity For All
PHAs	People Living with AIDS
PIASCY	Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Young People
PMA	Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture
PMAU	Poverty and Monitoring Analysis Unit
PRDP	Peace and Recovery Development Plan
PWDS	People With Disabilities
REACH	Reproductive Educative and Community Health
SACCO	Savings and Cooperatives
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STF	Straight Talk Foundation

UAC	Uganda Aids Commission
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UEDCL	Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UIA	Uganda Investment Authority
ULRC	Uganda Law Reform Commission
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPDF	Uganda Peoples Defence Forces
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPF	Uganda Police Force
UPPAP	Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process
UPS	Uganda Prisons Service
URA	Uganda Revenue Authority
UWONET	Uganda Women's Network
UWOPA	Uganda Women's Parliamentarian Association
VAGs	Voluntary Action Groups
VAW	Violence Against Women
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WSC	Water and Sanitation Committee
WUC	Water Users Committee
YEAH	Young Empowered and Healthy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	2
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1 METHODOLOGY FOR PREPARATION OF THE REPORT	9
ARTICLE 1.....	10
DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION.....	10
2.0 ARTICLE 2	11
2.1 OBLIGATION OF THE STATE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION.....	11
2.2 MEASURES TAKEN TO REMOVE DE JURE DISCRIMINATION.....	11
2.2.1 Progress registered by the State Party and remaining difficulties	11
2.3 RAISING AWARENESS ON GOVERNMENT’S INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL OBLIGATIONS TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN	15
2.3.1 Progress registered by the State Party and remaining difficulties	15
3.0 ARTICLE 3	17
3.1 THE DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN.....	17
3.1.2. Progress registered by the State Party in Gender Mainstreaming and remaining difficulties	17
4.0 ARTICLE 4	22
4.1 THE ACCELERATION OF EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN.....	22
4.1.2 Progress registered by the State Party and remaining difficulties in implementing Affirmative Action	22
5.0 ARTICLE 5	24
5.1 SEX ROLES AND STEREOTYPING.....	24
5.1.1 Progress registered by the State Party in eliminating Gender Stereotyping and remaining difficulties.....	24
6.0 ARTICLE 6	26
6.1 SUPPRESSION OF THE EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN	26
6.1.1 Progress and remaining difficulties registered by the State Party in providing assistance to Female Prostitutes.....	26
7.0 ARTICLE 7	30
7.1 REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE OF UGANDA..	30
7.1.1 Progress registered by the State Party in addressing Gender Inequalities in Political Representation	30
7.2 WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE BUILDING AND RECONCILIATION EFFORTS	34
7.2.1 Progress registered by the State Party in Facilitating Women’s Participation in Peace Building and Reconciliation Efforts and remaining difficulties	34
8.0 ARTICLE 8	37
8.1 INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN.....	37
8.1.1 Progress registered by the State Party in Encouraging Women to enter the Diplomatic Service and International Organisations	37
9.0 ARTICLE 9	39
9.1 NATIONALITY	39
9.1.1 Progress registered by the State Party in Amending the Passport Regulations	39
10. ARTICLE 10	40

10.1	EQUALITY IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION	40
10.1.1	Progress registered by the State Party in ensuring Equality in Education and remaining difficulties 40	
11.	ARTICLE 11	43
11.1	EMPLOYMENT	43
11.1.1	Progress registered by the State Party in Eliminating Discrimination in Employment and remaining difficulties.....	43
12.0	ARTICLE 12.....	48
12.1	EQUALITY AND ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE.....	48
12.1.1	Progress registered by the State Party in ensuring Equality and Access to Health Care and remaining difficulties	48
13.0	ARTICLE 13.....	59
13.1	ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS	59
13.1.1	Progress registered by the State Party in Reducing Prevalence of Poverty among Women and remaining difficulties	59
14.0	ARTICLE 14.....	61
14.1	RURAL WOMEN.....	61
14.1.1	Progress registered by the State Party in Improving the Socio-Economic Status of Rural Women and remaining difficulties	61
14.2	EDUCATION SECTOR.....	63
14.2.1	Progress registered by the State Party in addressing the low literacy levels of rural women 63	
14.3	HEALTH SECTOR.....	64
14.3.1	Progress registered by the State Party in enhancing access to health services for rural women 64	
14.4	RURAL FINANCIAL SERVICES.....	65
14.4.1	Progress registered by the State Party in Improving Rural Women's Access to Financial Services 65	
14.5	MEASURES TAKEN BY THE STATE PARTY TO ADDRESS NEGATIVE CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONAL PRACTICES WHICH AFFECT FULL ENJOYMENT OF THE RIGHT TO PROPERTY BY WOMEN AND REMAINING DIFFICULTIES.....	66
15.0	ARTICLE 15.....	67
15.1	EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW	67
	ENHANCING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR WOMEN	67
2.4.1	Progress registered by the State Party and remaining difficulties	67
	ARTICLE 16.....	72
16.0	EQUALITY IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE.....	72
16.1.1	Progress registered by the State Party in ensuring Equality in Marriage and Family Life and remaining difficulties	72
17.0	CONCLUSION.....	73

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic and Political Context

1. NRM Government leadership has been characterized by political stability achieved through the development of a new Constitution passed in 1995, based on the frame work of rights and giving particular attention to the status of women. The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) has been implemented since 1997 as the policy framework guiding the country's development priorities to reduce poverty. Uganda has seen a considerable reduction in poverty from 56% in 1992 to 31% in 2006.
2. A 5- Year National Development Pan (NDP) is being developed in succession of PEAP under the theme: "Growth, Employment and Prosperity". The medium term objective of the government is to achieve average GDP growth rate of at least 8% per annum. In the Financial Year 2007/8, the economy grew by 8.9% and real GDP is projected to grow at 8.1% in the current Financial Year 2008/9. Two years ago, half of Uganda's budget was supported by development partners. With the steady growth in economic performance, domestic revenue now supports 66% of the national budget.
3. The government is committed to re-directing public investment to the critical growth sectors, which include human development, industrial development, agriculture and infrastructure (roads, telecommunications & energy), which will lead to productivity enhancement. Expenditure will therefore be focused on areas that will increase employment opportunities and accelerate investment in vital infrastructure through public-private partnerships
4. Uganda's population is 30.6 million (2009). Women constitute 51% of the population, and 88% of Ugandans are rural based. Life expectancy at birth is 50 years and the average population growth at 3.2% remains one of the highest in the world. Whereas this provides a strong labour force, it has put enormous strain on the government's ability to address issues of access and quality service delivery. The abolition of graduated tax has increased local governments dependence on central government transfers and has to some extent limited their ability to provide and monitor service delivery.
5. Uganda has benefited from a strong period of growth since the-1990s. GDP per capita has grown by 2.7% per annum since 1990/91 enabling the country to restore relatively stable economic and social conditions. The economy of Uganda is still highly dependent on the agricultural sector, which accounts for less than 40% of GDP but employs around 80% of the labour force. Although the agricultural sector has not attained the anticipated levels of growth, improvements in extension and advisory services have contributed to a raise in farm incomes. In addition there has been an increase in rural

people finding off-farm sources of income. Although there have since been some fluctuations in the growth rate from an average of 6.3% in 1998-2003 to 5.8% in 2003-06, the depth of extreme poverty has improved. There however, remain significant disparities within households, on account of gender as well as between rural - urban communities and regions. For example, poverty levels remain above the national average in the conflict affected areas. It is therefore plausible that if peace, which has been restored in the north prevails; the MDG goal of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty could be met.

6. Progress has also been registered on other human development indicators including an increase in school enrolment to 90% although there are challenges with retention; an increase in rural water coverage to 61%; a reduction in HIV/AIDS prevalence from 30% to 6%; a reduction in infant mortality from 87 per 1000 live births in 2001 to 75 in 2006; and maternal mortality from 505 to 435 during the same period.
7. Following a referendum in 2005, a multi-party dispensation has been restored in Uganda after 20 years. Consequently multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections were held in 2006. This new scenario has created both opportunities and challenges for women. While it expands the leadership spectrum for women as evident by the increase in the number of women in Parliament from 75 in 2001, to 100 in 2008, emerging challenges include the process of *engendering* the policies and structures of the different political parties; and *coalescing* women around women's issues above their party interests and priorities.
8. Government of Uganda is also actively participating in efforts aimed at strengthening regional integration. At the regional level new developments include processes leading to strengthening regional integration. These include revival of the East African Community (EAC) and subsequently the establishment of the East African Legislative Assembly with representatives from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. There are nine Ugandan Representatives in the Legislative Assembly, four of whom are women. Regional integration provides new opportunities for the labour market and trade among others. For the people of Uganda and the region as a whole, this presents opportunities of engagement and cross-border trade. For the women, enjoyment of these benefits will very much depend on how well gender concerns are captured and addressed in the subsequent agreements.
9. Other developments that have occurred since the last status report of 2002 include concerted efforts by the GoU and other stakeholders to sign a Peace Agreement with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in order to end the 20 year conflict in northern Uganda. Unfortunately the process has been dogged by several hitches mainly from the LRA and the process remains in the balance. Women and children have borne the brunt of the conflict and

women in particular have been at the fore-front of sustaining the community and traditional social structures in the conflict affected regions. Because of this important role, efforts are underway to involve women in the peace building, reconciliation, rehabilitation and recovery processes as reflected in the Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) 2007 - 2010 - a framework that is expected to guide the recovery and rehabilitation process in Northern Uganda.

10. **Uganda's Reporting Status to the CEDAW Committee**
Uganda ratified CEDAW in 1985 without reservations. Government of Uganda's commitment to adhere to the provisions of CEDAW has been demonstrated by the submission of Country Status Reports in 1992, 1999 and 2002 to the Committee. According to the CEDAW Committee's guidelines and report on the status of submission of reports by States Parties under article 18 of the Convention issued on 16th July 2008, GoU was expected to submit the Fourth periodic report in 1998 and subsequent reports in 2002, and 2006. This report therefore is a combined **fourth fifth, sixth, and seventh periodic report** for consideration by the CEDAW Committee.
11. The report is structured according to the sequence of articles in the Convention. Each article begins with a re-statement of the concern and recommendation of the CEDAW Committee during the meeting to consider Uganda's Third Country Status Report held on 9th August 2002. Analysis of progress made by the GoU and other stakeholders in implementing the recommended action follows thereafter. The exceptions to this are Articles 4, 10, 13, 15 and 16 whereby no concern and corresponding recommendation was raised by the Committee but where the State Party had registered considerable progress. In this case, the progress made has been documented. Remaining and outstanding difficulties faced by the State Party in implementing provisions of the Convention are examined in addition to future, concrete measures and steps to overcome remaining factors and difficulties in implementation of the Convention.

METHODOLOGY FOR PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

12. The methodology adopted entailed literature review of documents published by Government and CSOs. Consultations were also undertaken with Government Ministries and Departments agencies, NGOs and UN agencies. At the district level consultations were undertaken in 8 districts with the District Community Development Officers.¹ Regional consultations on the National Action Plan on the Implementation of CEDAW provided input to issues to be included in the report.

¹ The districts were Kapchorwa, Lira, Gulu, Bushenyi, Kasese, Kyenjojo, Kalangala and Soroti.

ARTICLE 1

DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION

13. During the reporting period the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was established; and in a bid to strengthen constitutional provisions on the definition of discrimination, the EOC Act defines discrimination broadly to include:

Any act, omission, policy, law, rule, practice, distinction, condition, situation, exclusion or preference which, directly or indirectly, has the effect of nullifying or impairing equal opportunities or marginalizing a section of society or resulting in unequal treatment of persons in employment or in the enjoyment of rights and freedoms on the basis of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed, religion, health status, social or economic standing, political opinion or disability

2.0

ARTICLE 2

2.1 OBLIGATION OF THE STATE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION

14. *The Committee expressed concern about the continued existence of national legislation that discriminates against women and the slow law reform process in spite of having in place constitutional provisions that promote equality between women and men and prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sex². In addition the Committee was concerned about the slow progress in removing de jure discrimination and preventing and eliminating de facto discrimination.*

The Committee therefore recommended acceleration of the law reform process to bring national legislation in tandem with the constitutional principles of non-discrimination and equality between women and men. In this regard it was further recommended that the enactment of the draft Land Act, Domestic Relations Bill (DRB) and the Sexual Offences Bill should be expedited. The Government of Uganda (GoU) was also enjoined to introduce public education and legal literacy campaigns on the provisions of the Convention and the Constitution to raise awareness on its international and national obligations to eliminate discrimination against women.

The Committee noted the prevalence of laws and customs that contravene constitutional guarantees on equality and the limited awareness and access by women on mechanisms to enforce constitutional provisions on non-discrimination. The Committee therefore recommended the adoption of an accessible complaints procedure to enforce constitutional guarantees and the introduction of legal literacy campaigns to make women aware of their constitutional rights and mechanisms of enforcement. The Committee further suggested the development in cooperation with women's groups, legal aid programmes to enable women to demand enforcement of their rights.

2.2 Measures taken to remove De Jure Discrimination

2.2.1 Progress registered by the State Party and remaining difficulties

15. Considerable progress has been made by the State Party in enacting legislation to address de jure discrimination although there's still room for improvement. Following intense lobbying³ the Land Act 1998⁴ was amended to include sections that increase protection of the rights of women to own, use and inherit land.

² Article 21(1), 33(6), Constitution of the Republic of Uganda

³ from women's organisations land rights coalition spearheaded by the Uganda Land Alliance

⁴ Land (Amendment) Act 2004

Section 39A of the Land Amendment Act details security of occupancy on family land, while section 40 prohibits the sale, transfer, exchange, pledge, mortgage or lease of family land except with prior consent of the spouse.

Although the sections fall short of recognizing *co-ownership* of land between spouses as was desired by the pressure group,⁵ they confer an equitable interest in family land to spouses i.e. through the consent clause. Women are now able to lodge a caveat on a certificate of title or certificate of customary ownership, indicating that a property is subject to a requirement of consent, prior to any sale and transfer of ownership. The co-ownership clause was relegated to the proposed law on domestic relations where it was deemed more appropriate.

16. The Act also protects the rights of women to use customary land.⁶ Whereas the Act bestows legal recognition on the decisions taken by customary authorities in relation to land held under customary tenure, for such decisions to be valid they must not deny women access to ownership, occupation or use of land or deny them their rights. This provision is in consonance with Art 246 (4) of the Constitution which prohibits customs, practices, usages or traditions relating to a traditional or cultural leader which detracts from the rights of any person. This qualification is significant given previous reports of the customary authorities' subjectivity on account of traditional norms and attitudes towards women.
17. There are, however, some weaknesses that ought to be rectified in order to strengthen women's tenureship rights. The fact that the Land (Amendment) Act does not require for a spouse's consent to be in writing could jeopardize women's interests in land. This observation is vindicated by the common practice where buyers of land who have failed to adduce evidence of written consent have adduced oral evidence which has been accepted by courts and local authorities.⁷ The process of acquiring certificates of ownership, which is vital for effecting the '*security of occupancy clause*', has also not been widely disseminated particularly to communities in the rural areas. This increases women's vulnerability to land evictions.
18. Progress on the Domestic Relations Bill (DRB) has been slowed after it was withdrawn to allow for further consultations, following protests from sections of society on some contentious clauses⁸. The proposed law seeks to reform as well as consolidate the laws relating to marriage, separation and

⁵ The co-ownership clause which aimed at increasing women's security of tenure through joint owning of land with spouses was not passed because Parliament was of the view that it was more suited to the DRB. It was hence relegated to the DRB

⁶ S. 17 Land Act

⁷ UWONET (2006) Gender Audit of Key Laws Affecting Women in Uganda

⁸ Objections were raised in regard to the clauses on co-habitation, polygamy, co-ownership of matrimonial (particularly land) and marital rape.

divorce. The Uganda Law Reform Commission (ULRC) was tasked to reconcile the interests of different stakeholders and has since split the draft Bill into two pieces of legislation: the first Bill contains provisions on Civil, Christian, Hindu and Bahai Marriages; whereas the second Bill provides for the establishment of Khadi Courts to deal with matters relating to Islamic Marriages and Divorce. A draft Bill will be presented to the Attorney General for tabling before Cabinet.⁹ Suffice to note that these delays have not deterred lobbying by MGLSD, UWOPA, Gender Sessional Committee and the Equal Opportunities Standing Committee of Parliament for a fair and just family law.¹⁰

19. CSOs have also been actively involved in advocacy for enactment of a fair family law under the DRB coalition. With regard to the proposed Bill on Domestic Relations there are on-going initiatives¹¹ to ensure that women, regardless of their religions, are accorded their full rights in marriage and its dissolution.
20. The position adopted by the ULRC as regards enactment of the Sexual Offences Bill is to amend sections of the Penal Code Act in response to some of the proposals put forward in the Bill. This amendment addresses the concerns raised by the Committee in particular with regard to marital rape and availability of redress and protection and prosecution of offenders. The Sexual Offences (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2004 recognizes the criminal offence of marital sexual assault and provides that a person convicted of marital sexual assault shall, in addition to a sentence of imprisonment or a fine, be ordered to compensate a victim. Such amount of compensation shall take into account factors such as medical and other expenses incurred by the victim.
21. The Employment Act, 2006 is another piece of legislation that contains provisions that seek to address discrimination against women in the field of employment. (the provisions of this Act are discussed in detail under Art .11)
22. Other significant measures to eliminate de jure discrimination include the enactment of the Equal Opportunities Commission Act-2007 and the National Equal Opportunities Policy.

⁹ Interview with Prof. Kakooza, Chairperson, Uganda Law Reform Commission, 10th February 2008

¹⁰ MGLSD is currently involved in raising awareness on the problems in domestic relations on a pilot basis for purposes of mobilising support for the enactment of the DRB

¹¹ UWONET is studying and identifying opportunities for strengthening women's rights within the framework of the Sharia law.

The Act derives its mandate from Arts 32 (3), (4) and 21 of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda which require Parliament to make laws to establish the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and provides for the equal treatment of women with men, respectively. The EOC Act provides a legal basis to challenge laws, policies, customs, traditions, etc. that discriminate against women

Progress with regard to operationalising of the EOC entails nominating five commissioners who are soon to be appointed and an initial budget allocation in FY 2008/9 to the tune of Ushs. 1 billion.

23. CSOs¹² have been instrumental in using strategic litigation to successfully challenge existing laws that discriminate against women. Chief among these laws are the Divorce Act with particular reference to the grounds for granting a divorce, Penal Code Act in particular the provision on Criminal Adultery and the Succession Act.

The Divorce Act required women to prove two grounds when petitioning court for divorce while a man was required to prove only one ground.

The Penal Code Act had different definitions for the offence of criminal adultery for women and men. The definitions effectively approved for a married man to have sexual intercourse with any woman provided they are not married, while married women were prohibited from having sexual intercourse with any man regardless of their marital status

The provisions in the Succession Act on heirship, distribution of intestate estates, appointment of a testamentary guardian, choice of domicile and remarriage while in occupancy of the matrimonial home, were also challenged as discriminating against women.

24. The Constitutional Court has declared provisions of these laws unconstitutional as they contravened constitutional principles of non-discrimination and equality between the sexes.¹³ The Attorney General (AG) has tasked the Department of Administrator General, to come up with proposals on how to amend the sections in question which will then be tabled before Cabinet¹⁴. The amended provisions on adultery and divorce will be contained in the draft Bill on Domestic Relations.

¹² LAW – Uganda

¹³ UGANDA ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS, AND OTHERS Vs. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL; Constitutional Petition No.2 of 2003; LAW & ADVOCACY FOR WOMEN IN UGANDA Vs. ATTORNEY GENERAL; Constitutional Petitions Nos. 13/05 & 05/06; LAW & ADVOCACY FOR WOMEN IN UGANDA Vs. ATTORNEY GENERAL (supra)

¹⁴ Interview with Deputy Attorney General, 11th January 2008

25. The Attorney General has given his consent to Uganda to ratify the Optional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women.
26. A key challenge that has been identified is the delayed follow up of constitutional court rulings and the protracted process of enacting the DRB. In absence of new amendments, judicial officers are making judgments on a discretionary basis which might not always be in the best interests of women.
27. Expediting the law reform process is therefore recognized as a matter of urgent priority by the State Party.

2.3 Raising awareness on Government's international and national obligations to eliminate discrimination against women

2.3.1 Progress registered by the State Party and remaining difficulties

28. Another significant development is the adoption of the first National Action Plan for monitoring the implementation of CEDAW for the period 2007 – 2010. The National Action Plan is framed against the context of CEDAW Committee's recommendations adopted with respect to Uganda's Third Periodic Report and outlines specific activities and responsible actors for each recommendation. It is due to be reviewed on an annual basis.
29. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has conducted regional awareness sessions on the provisions of CEDAW in addition to disseminating the National Action Plan on CEDAW. At district level, LCs, CSOs, judicial officers, etc. have participated in the elaboration of regional action plans for the follow-up of CEDAW recommendations.
30. Awareness sessions conducted by other Government Departments have contributed to the development of institutional mechanisms for promoting and protecting human rights of women in the Justice, Law and Order Sector.¹⁵ These mechanisms include¹⁶:
 - the Family and Child Protection Unit of the Uganda Police Force (UPF) which receives and handles complaints from women and children;
 - Human Rights Desk in Prisons; and
 - Directorate of Human Rights in the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF)¹⁷ with a specialised unit to handle cases of women and children.

¹⁵ The UHRC has the constitutional mandate to create public awareness on the provisions of the Constitution in accordance with Article 52, Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995

¹⁶ Interview with Dora Kabuye, Director, Research, Education and Documentation, Uganda Human Rights Commission, 30th January 2008

¹⁷ The UPDF and Prisons have also integrated human rights in the training curriculum for recruits and promotional courses

31. The State Party has facilitated women's improved access to information on their constitutional rights through the creation of *Voluntary Action Groups* (VAGs) and district human rights desks whose members have been trained to conduct community awareness and legal literacy sessions in their communities.¹⁸ Other activities include translation of materials into local languages.¹⁹ Drama groups and male action groups are currently being utilized to disseminate the legal literacy materials. Legal literacy activities targeting IDPs have also been conducted.²⁰
32. CSOs have also been actively involved in creating awareness on CEDAW provisions through training and designing and implementing programs to make women change agents by developing their capacity to question their status quo.²¹
33. The legal literacy campaigns of both the Government and CSOs have contributed to empowerment of women in terms of improved participation in governance, economic activities, improved maternal health, improved literacy rates, reduction of child marriages and increased reporting of rights' violation by women.
34. In spite of these interventions women are inundated with a number of challenges which constrain their efforts in enforcing their constitutional rights. These include; high poverty levels, low literacy rates, negative cultural practices, limited access to resources and institutional weaknesses in law enforcement agencies. On the other hand, insufficient resources have restricted the coverage of key actors.
35. It is recognized that there is a need therefore, for increased coverage of awareness and conscious-raising programmes throughout the country and at all levels which the State Party is committed to undertaking.

¹⁸Topics covered have included political participation of women, right to inherit property, girl – child education, gender based violence, economic empowerment of women, women's health and reproductive rights.

¹⁹ These include land, inheritance and maintenance of women and children, domestic violence which have been developed by the MGLSD

²⁰ These were conducted by MGLSD in partnership with the UHRC in the districts are Kitgum, Gulu and Pader.

²¹ ACFODE has developed a training manual titled, A Training Manual on Principles enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women; while NAWOU is implementing a program titled "CEDAW in a woman's everyday life."

3.0

ARTICLE 3

3.1 THE DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

36. *The Committee was concerned about the absence of comprehensive, systematic strategies and support mechanisms to facilitate sustainable implementation of the provisions of the Convention.*

A comprehensive program of gender mainstreaming in all government ministries and a comprehensive awareness campaign which should also target civil servants on the provisions of the Convention was proposed.

3.1.2. Progress registered by the State Party in Gender Mainstreaming and remaining difficulties

37. Gender mainstreaming activities have been undertaken at two levels – national and local government. At the national level, the State Party is currently conducting *gender and equity budgeting* training for relevant sector officials.²² Training materials on gender and equity budgeting have also been developed for sectoral planning staff and facilitators.²³
38. Gender mainstreaming efforts have resulted into the inclusion of gender and equity budgeting guidelines in Budget Call for local government and sectors. Consequently gender mainstreaming is included as one of the criterion in the assessment of Local Government Development Plans (LGDP). In a bid to further strengthen gender budgeting, the State Party has generated gender disaggregated data in health, education, access to productive resources and employment.²⁴
39. Gender mainstreaming in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) has also been undertaken during the reporting period. The PEAP is the comprehensive national development planning framework aimed at guiding policy actions to eradicate poverty in Uganda. Integration of gender in the PEAP has included formation of the PEAP Gender Team (which has been renamed as the Gender and Rights Sub-Committee) which has facilitated the process of gender mainstreaming. This has been implemented through the commissioning of studies that made a strong case for mainstreaming gender

²² MGLSD in partnership with the Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

²³ These manuals are titled, *How to Prepare a Budget Framework Paper that addresses Gender and Equity Issues*, Users Manual, MoFPED, MGLSD, May 2006; and *Budgeting for Gender and Equity: A Manual for Facilitators*

²⁴ David Lawson, *Gender Analysis of the Ugandan National Household Surveys*, October 2003

in the PEAP and development of an action plan to guide engagements with sectors and institutions implementing in the PEAP.

40. An evaluation of the process of mainstreaming gender within the PEAP established that there was varied progress with regard to the extent to which gender issues have been addressed in the PEAP, as well as the effectiveness of the gender strategies employed to implement them.²⁵ The findings with regard to lessons learnt will feed into the process of formulating the National Development Plan (NDP) which will replace the PEAP in the Financial Year 2009/10.
41. Progress has been registered in mainstreaming gender in agriculture, road, education, justice, law and order sector and health sectors of the PEAP. Gender mainstreaming efforts in the education and health sectors are discussed in detail in Arts. 10 and 12 respectively while those in JLOS are examined in Art 15.
42. Gender mainstreaming activities have been implemented in the agricultural sector to ensure that women participate in, and benefit from, agriculture on an equal basis with men. The Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), which is the framework for modernizing agriculture, seeks to increase incomes and improve the quality of life of poor subsistence farmers through increased productivity and share of marketed production as one of its objectives. Gender mainstreaming interventions in this framework have included establishment of a PMA Gender Technical Sub-Committee (which has been renamed the Poverty and Gender Sub-Committee since 2005) which has prepared a gender position paper, commissioned the development of guidelines for mainstreaming gender within the 7 pillars of the PMA²⁶ and Gender Policy Briefs for the PMA, undertaken gender surveys and extended support to the development of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) Gender Strategy.
43. The road sector has mainstreamed gender in its policy documents with technical support from MGLSD and financial support from Danida. Implementation of gender mainstreaming in the road sector have resulted into an increment in the number of women participating in labor based road construction works. For example, the proportion of female contractors and forepersons has increased from 10 percent to 30 percent. Similarly, there has been an increase in the number of women who are employed as both skilled and unskilled labourers in roads construction.

²⁵ Evaluation of Gender Processes and Outcomes in Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) 2004 – 2008 (Draft Report)

²⁶ These include Agricultural research and technology development; Agricultural advisory services; Rural financial services; Agro-processing and marketing; Agricultural education; Sustainable natural resource management and use and Supportive physical infrastructure

44. At local government level, gender mainstreaming efforts have focused on developing the capacity of local government officials to integrate gender in their district development plans and budgets.²⁷ Efforts have also been targeted at putting in place institutional mechanisms to support the gender mainstreaming process. Such institutional mechanisms include the Uganda Gender Forum, Gender Mainstreaming Task Force, Women Leaders Forum and the District Gender/Women Leaders Fora. Significant achievements attributed to gender mainstreaming efforts at local government have been registered in the following sectors in the district project areas:²⁸

Primary Education

- A staffing structure that reflects gender parity - Promotion of women to positions of head and deputy head teachers
- Construction of staff quarters for female teachers under the School Facilities Grant taking into account their family management responsibilities
- Putting in place gender responsive facilities in primary schools such as construction of separate sanitation facilities for girls and boys
- Engendering the school environment by appointing women as school counselors

Health

- Provision of user- friendly services at health centres for female attendants of patients such as construction of water tanks, incinerators and provision for cooking space
- Targeting men's participation in reproductive health programs

Works and technical services

- Putting in place affirmative action for firms whose employees are either predominantly women, or women occupying top management positions during the tendering process
- Promoting labor based road works to enable female owned firms qualify

Finance and Administration

- Ensuring gender parity in technical positions. For example in Kayunga district the ratio of female to male heads of department and sub-county chiefs is 4:5
- Targeting women firms to collect taxes in some district

Community Based Services

- Institutionalization of a gender mainstreaming task force that articulates gender issues
- Establishment of a Pre-Budget Women Caucus which has been instrumental in identification of gender specific interventions
- Institutionalization of gender mainstreaming interventions such as annual Gender Concern Analysis; Gender Status Index; Gender Analysis of Poverty Trends; all of which have been utilized for effective gender responsive planning

45. The creation of the Department of Women and Gender Studies of the Faculty of Social Sciences in 1991 is viewed as strategy at mainstreaming gender at Makerere University. The Department's mission is to provide the intellectual

²⁷ Jane Ekapu, Status of DDP II Gender Mainstreaming Component, February 2007

²⁸ The districts were Arua, Yumbe, Kayunga, Mukono, Jinja, Kabale

leadership for mainstreaming gender in all aspects of economic, political and socio-cultural development at the university. The department is credited for offering a gender studies curriculum.

46. Related to these developments is the creation of the Gender Mainstreaming Program (GMP) and the corresponding Gender Mainstreaming Division (GMD) at Makerere University. The Senate Standing Committee on Gender Mainstreaming, which is the key policy making body on gender issues and has oversight function over the GMP, has been instrumental in engendering the University's strategic planning process. The GMD is credited with commissioning a study titled "*Situational Analysis of the Gender Terrain at Makerere University*"; which identified gender inequalities and recommended interventions for reduction of gender inequalities. Sensitization sessions for new university students during the orientation week have been spearheaded by the GMD.
47. The State Party's commitment to implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been demonstrated by the development of two National Action Plans on Women (NAPW), 1999-2004 and 2006-2010. The goal of the revised NAPW is to achieve equal opportunities for all women in Uganda by empowering them to be active participants and beneficiaries of the social, economic and political developments in Uganda. The NAPW identifies five critical areas for action which should result in women's empowerment and advancement. These are legal and policy framework and leadership; social and economic empowerment of women; reproductive health, rights and responsibilities; girl child education; peace building, conflict resolution and freedom from violence.
48. In a bid to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of the NAPW, key actors under each strategic action have been identified in addition to strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development (MGLSD). Progress on implementation of the NAPW to date entails distribution of copies of the guidelines for implementing and monitoring the NAPW to key stakeholders such as districts, Government Ministries, Departments/Agencies CSOs, academic institutions and representatives of the Private Sector. Training on use of the guidelines has been conducted for local government actors.
49. CSOs have also been actively involved in implementing gender mainstreaming initiatives.²⁹ Significant achievements attributed to their gender mainstreaming interventions are similar to those registered by the State Party.
50. A number of gaps still exist with regard to implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives. At the national level, failure to follow guidelines

²⁹ The CSOs include, FOWODE, Akina Mama wa Afrika, EASSI, AUPWAE,

for mainstreaming gender by the PMA line Ministries has resulted into uncoordinated gender mainstreaming efforts. Lack of indicators for monitoring and evaluation has made it difficult to assess impact attributable to gender mainstreaming efforts in the road sector.

51. At local government level there is limited availability of gender disaggregated data for effective program design, lack of standard gender analysis tools and, as a consequence, many programmes implemented at that level do not necessarily address women's priority concerns. In addition, implementation of gender mainstreaming at local government is still weak; given that resources are rarely allocated to implement gender mainstreaming initiatives.
52. In a bid to further strengthen gender mainstreaming; the State Party will continue with capacity development of relevant technical officers, development of sector specific gender mainstreaming guidelines and generation of gender disaggregated data.
53. The State Party has drafted an Auditor General Bill; which contains provisions for conducting a gender audit to track budgetary allocations and expenditure.

4.0 ARTICLE 4

4.1 THE ACCELERATION OF EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

4.1.2 Progress registered by the State Party and remaining difficulties in implementing Affirmative Action

54. A number of appropriate measures have been taken by Government in the sector to ensure the full development and advancement of women for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

Affirmative Action in Political Representation is discussed in Art. 7

55. Art. 78 (1) (c) of the Constitution provides for representation of special interest groups such as youth (two of whom must be women), persons with disabilities and workers.
56. The Uganda Gender Policy, a revision of the National Gender Policy of 1997, and approved by Cabinet in 2007. This policy provides a framework for identification, implementation and coordination of activities designed to achieve gender equality.
57. Implementation of affirmative action strategy for special interest groups has resulted into Parliamentary representation of these groups. These include the youth (two of whom must be women), persons with disabilities and workers. Corresponding bodies such as the National Women's Council (NWC) and National Youth Councils have also been constituted and have provided an important forum for raising and addressing issues of concern to women. The NWC has been actively involved in implementing interventions that have facilitated the socio-economic development of women through capacity building and awareness raising.
58. Affirmative action has been extended to the composition of constitutional commissions, including the Sempebwa Commission that reviewed the 1995 Constitution in 2001. Women were appointed as Commissioners, Assistant Lead Counsel and Assistant Secretary.
59. Affirmative action has been implemented in the water and sanitation sector in a bid to address gender issues in the sector. In order to ensure meaningful involvement of women in the sector, the Water and Sanitation Policy and corresponding Water Sector Gender Strategy reserve 50% of the composition of Water User Committees and Water and Sanitation Committees at community level for women. In addition, the Policy encourages election of women to the position of Chairperson and Treasurer of the WUC/WSC to ensure empowerment of women in decision making and management

processes at the community level. The WUC/WSCs are critical entry points for user involvement and participation in the water sector.

60. National Women and Youth Councils are still exploring how to position themselves in a multi-party dispensation given that they represent all women and youth irrespective of their political leaning.
61. Proposals are being considered to make a law guiding the Women's and Youth Councils on how to operate within a multi-party dispensation. The need to develop indicators to assess the quality and extent of women's participation in the User Committees in the water and sanitation sector has been acknowledged.

5.0

ARTICLE 5

5.1 SEX ROLES AND STEREOTYPING

62. *The Committee expressed concern about the persistence of patriarchal patterns of behaviour and the existence of stereotypes in relation to the role of women in the home and society, and expectations of women's subordination to men.*

The Committee recommended the revision of school text books and curricula at all levels of the education system. The Committee further proposed awareness raising and public education campaigns targeting women and men to address traditional stereotypes regarding the role of women. In addition the GoU was tasked to assess the impact of these measures in order to identify shortcomings and improve them accordingly.

5.1.1 Progress registered by the State Party in eliminating Gender Stereotyping and remaining difficulties

63. Art 33 (1), (2) and (4) of the Constitution seek to eliminate discrimination against women in the political, economic and social spheres of life and below are interventions which seek to implement the constitutional provisions.
64. A Gender in Education Policy is being formulated by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), to address gender concerns in the education sector. The overall goal of the Policy is to achieve gender parity at all levels of education and aims at gender equality in terms of opportunities, benefits and outcomes in the education and sports sector. Envisaged strategies to address gender stereotyping in the learning environment include engendering the education curricula and operationalising the Guidelines for mainstreaming gender in education. Proposed activities to be implemented include: designing gender responsive teaching, learning materials, methods and facilities, sensitization of publishers on gender, development of gender sensitive language, rules and practices and ensuring equity in the classroom.³⁰
65. MOES is also developing a handbook to guide primary school teachers on how to create a gender responsive learning environment. The handbook provides a background to gender issues in the society and how they impact on the learning process. It highlights areas that require specific attention at school and community levels in order to minimise barriers to education that arise from gender imbalance or neglect of the gender issues. The handbook is intended to help stakeholders in education; focusing on the teacher to create a gender responsive learning environment. It points out some of the gender related issues at school, at home, in the community and the challenges they

³⁰ The Draft Gender in Education Policy, Ministry of Education and Sports, January 2008

pose to children's participation in the learning process. It suggests strategies that can be employed and practical action that can be undertaken by the teacher, with active involvement of pupils and community members, to reduce gender inequality and enhance learning.

66. During the reporting period, UHRC has developed a Human Rights Reader for primary schools.³¹ The Reader among other human rights concerns addresses issues of rights of the girl child. A taskforce to oversee the implementation of the Plan of Action for human rights education in the school system has been constituted. Plans include mainstreaming human rights education at all levels of education. A National Human Rights Education Coalition to spearhead implementation of the first phase of the Plan of Action will be established soon.³² In addition, a concept note on the national implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights in Education has been formulated. The program will include human rights education in primary and secondary schools.
67. Legal literacy activities discussed under Art. 2 have contributed to addressing traditional stereotypes regarding the role of women.
68. Patriarchal patterns of behaviour still exist and the levels of discrimination against women remain relatively high. This discrimination is reflected in the following spheres of life:-
 - Economic - preference for male to female employees
 - Political-restricting women to middle level political positions
 - Access to information
 - Social and cultural-discrimination against women and girls with regard to inheriting property; preference of boy to girl-child education; expelling pregnant school girls from school without corresponding action on boys and relegating responsibility for domestic chores to women and girls.
69. Implementation of the Gender in Education Policy and putting the handbook into use by school teachers will contribute to efforts to address gender stereotyping in the learning environment.

³¹ The Uganda Human Rights Commission under its Human Rights Education Program

³² Uganda Human Rights Commission, 9th Annual Report

6.0 ARTICLE 6

6.1 SUPPRESSION OF THE EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

70. *The Committee expressed concern about the increasing levels of exploitation of female prostitutes. Another area of concern was the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases among female prostitutes.*

The Committee proposed the development of programmes targeting female prostitutes whose main focus should be to improve their socio-economic status in terms of providing appropriate health care facilities and services and alternative income generating activities. In addition stronger penalties for exploitation of female prostitutes were suggested.

6.1.1 Progress and remaining difficulties registered by the State Party in providing assistance to Female Prostitutes

71. The increasing focus on female prostitutes has come about as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan (NSP) 2007/8 - 2011/12 recognizes female prostitutes as one category of the *most at risk* groups³³ which are extremely vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. The NSP recognises that by the nature of their work, female prostitutes have numerous sexual partners which places them at high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. Two surveys conducted over a two year period (2001-2003) showed a 75% increase in HIV prevalence among this category of women. Another survey³⁴ showed an STD prevalence rate of 59.6% and hence the need for urgent and specific interventions.

Table IV: Cross sectional surveys conducted among Female Prostitutes in Kampala

Year of Survey	No of Female prostitutes involved in survey	% of those found to be HIV positive	Age-group with highest prevalence rates
2001	195	28.2%	20-24
2003	216	47.2%	20-24

Source: Draft NSP 2007/8 - 2011/12

72. At the policy level, the NSP as part of its multi-sectoral & holistic approach to HIV/AIDS (prevention, care & treatment and social support) has identified the following strategies that could improve the welfare of female prostitutes and their access to health care:

³³ High risk groups include: Female prostitutes and their clients, the military (uniformed services), people engaging in transactional sex, truckers, fishermen, people who use condoms inconsistently, people engaging in multiple sexual relations, and people engaging in extramarital sexual relations

³⁴ The 2003 Ministry of Health's Sero Survey on HIV/Aids and STIs,

- the development of prevention interventions targeting the *high risk* groups;
 - the provision of *targeted* STI treatment services for these high risk groups which include female prostitutes;
 - improve relevant legislative and policy framework that promote the support of vulnerable groups and criminalizes deliberate transmission of HIV and AIDS; and
 - provision of formal and informal education, vocational and life skills development for OVC, PHAs, IDPs, PWDs and other disadvantaged groups
73. In terms of health care, the Government has instituted a policy for free STI treatment in all government health care facilities from which female prostitutes can access care & treatment. HIV/AIDS Counseling and Testing (HCT) and STI treatment is available in public health care facilities across the country. In addition, there are initiatives for scaling up HCT services to the *Most At Risk Populations* (MARPS) who include fishing communities, commercial sex workers, uniformed personnel and sexually active youth in higher institutions of learning, by increasing the number of outreach services.³⁵
74. Government's programmes are being supported by the complementary efforts of a number of Civil Society Organisations. CSOs are running clinics where female sex workers can access a range of occupational health and safety services at no or minimum cost.
75. It is recognised that many female prostitutes are in this business on account of their dire socio-economic circumstances. There are a number of on-going initiatives focusing on creating alternative income generating activities for women. Mainly implemented by CSOs³⁶, the programmes have included rehabilitation, skills/vocational training and enrolment in schools for some of the female prostitutes.
76. Legal literacy and equipping female prostitutes with information and knowledge on their basic human rights is also another area that some women organisations are embarking on. Self-advocacy groups³⁷ by former female prostitutes have also been established and among others provide psycho-social support services, HIV/AIDS education and skills training for former sex workers.
77. However, the main challenge in reaching female prostitutes in all these programmes has been the *labeling* and stigma associated with prostitution; which therefore makes it difficult for female prostitutes to identify themselves and seek support and assistance where they need it. Even groups established to, among others, advocate for the rights of female prostitutes e.g. freedom from harassment and fear of arrest; and equal access to health care,

³⁵ The AIDS Information Centre and Ministry of Health

³⁶ UYDEL, ANPPCAN, Kids in Need, RHEMA

³⁷ Lady Mermaid

are yet to do so effectively. There are on-going efforts, albeit slow, to make reproductive health services as user friendly as possible. An approach that has worked successfully for CSOs has been through the use of prostitutes to mobilize their peers and a clinic that is dedicated to the prostitutes.

78. Recent proposals to legalise prostitution have been strongly resisted on account of the practice being at variance with the country's religious and cultural values. Sections 131-134 of the Penal Code Act of Uganda outlaws *acts associated with prostitution* and not the act of prostitution. However, female prostitutes are frequently arrested by the Police on account of being *idle and disorderly*. Plans are underway to review the provisions on idle and disorderly in the Penal Code Act.

79. Although they are not legally recognised, the Government acknowledges the existence of female prostitutes and its role in addressing their welfare needs as a special category of its citizenry. Government efforts are thus geared towards rehabilitation and provision of economic opportunities and alternative sources of income for female prostitutes outside the commercial sex industry.

6.2 Measures taken by the State Party to Curb Trafficking and remaining difficulties

80. The country currently has no law on trafficking. However, the *Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Bill* has been tabled before Parliament. The Bill aims at criminalizing the offences of human trafficking as well as protection, assistance and support to victims of trafficking with full respect of their human rights.

- *Offenders engaged in trafficking shall be liable for imprisonment of five years upon conviction;*
- *Any member of the community who is aware of the practice but fails to report the matter to the Police shall be liable for imprisonment of six months;*
- *The Bill provides for the protection of victims through provision of medical and psycho-social support, repatriation, safe accommodation and in the case of children, education and other welfare needs.*

81. As legislation is awaited, there are some on-going sensitisation/awareness activities³⁸ for the public, policy makers and law enforcement agencies.

82. There are, however, several challenges. There is general lack of public awareness and data on the prevalence of human trafficking. The practice has been fuelled by poverty, the lack of education and civil unrest. The other challenge in this area is the absence of a co-ordinating agency and the requisite skills within the law enforcement agencies. The absence of such skills has sometimes resulted into mishandling of trafficking cases; failure to

³⁸ conducted by LAW - Uganda and UWOPA

recognise the plight of the victims; and sometimes criminalizing their trafficking situations.³⁹

83. Capacity building through training for the institutions which handle matters of human trafficking is an area of priority in order to enable the effective identification, investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of human trafficking cases.

³⁹ Damallie Lwanga: Human Trafficking in Uganda

7.0 ARTICLE 7

7.1 REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE OF UGANDA

84. *The Committee noted with concern the low numbers of women in decision-making positions inspite of implementing temporary measures aimed at addressing gender inequalities in political representation. The persistence of patriarchal attitudes that view men as natural leaders and thereby preclude women from seeking positions of leadership was another area of concern.*

It was therefore recommended that efforts should be intensified to encourage women to take up leadership positions through further temporary measures in accordance with Article 4, Paragraph 1 of the Convention. It was further proposed that the GoU should offer or support programmes for current and future women leaders and undertake awareness - raising campaigns on the importance of women's participation in decision- making.

7.1.1 Progress registered by the State Party in addressing Gender Inequalities in Political Representation

85. There have been some modest improvements in women's participation in the political and public life of Uganda, since the last status report. Women are more visible in formal decision-making institutions and the legislature has for the first time achieved the 30% minimum. The outcome of the 2006 election - the first under a multi-party dispensation, reflected a 35% increase in the number of women Parliamentarians, from 75 in 2001 to 100 in 2006 out of a total of 333 MPs. The number of women holding Ministerial positions, chairing Standing Committees in Parliament and holding senior positions in political party structures has risen. The number of women heading critical public bodies⁴⁰ has also risen.

⁴⁰ Uganda Revenue Authority, Uganda Investment Authority, Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited, the Inspectorate of Government

Table V: Women in Leadership Positions

Women in Leadership Positions	2001 - 2005			2006 - 2008		
	F	%	M	F	%	M
Cabinet & Ministers of State	15		51	14	19%	58
Parliament	75	24.6	230	102	30%	231
Top Civil Service ⁴¹				15	38%	24
Judiciary ⁴²				31.3%		68.9%
Local Government						
District Chairs and Vice Chairpersons	1	1.8	55	1	1.4%	68
Municipality (Local Council 111)	2			1	5.5%	17
Sub County Chairpersons	16		673	11	1.1%	969

Measures to increase women's representation in the political life of the country have included:

- *Affirmative action policy* which has expanded leadership opportunities for women. In addition to enabling them break through the *glass ceiling*, the policy has enabled women to exhibit their leadership capabilities and thereby challenge the negative stereotyping on women's leadership. As a result, more and more women have been encouraged to venture into politics. This is evident in the increased number of women competing for the open seats against their male counterparts during the 2006 elections, 15 of whom were successful. The same election had for the first time ever, a woman standing as a Presidential Candidate. This is a major break from the past where this position has been considered a male preserve; and it is expected to inspire more women into vying for the highest leadership positions.
- *Capacity building programmes* supporting women's political activities. Mainly championed by women's organisations⁴³ and some district councils, a number of capacity building programmes have targeted aspirants and current women leaders in response to systemic barriers (limited education, experience, time poverty, leadership skills). Other institutions have also organized capacity building initiatives targeting political parties with the intention of increasing women's profile within the party structures.⁴⁴ There have also been leadership development programmes for women parliamentarians aimed at increasing their effective participation and capacity to influence the inclusion of women's concerns in policy frameworks. Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) has since become a strong lobbyist for women's representation on public boards and regional bodies.

⁴¹ Permanent Secretaries, Under Secretary and Director level

⁴² Judges, Registrars, Magistrates

⁴³ (AMWA/ ACFODE/FOWODE/UWONET/UWOPA

⁴⁴ Such as NDI, IRI and AWEPA

- *Civic education activities* albeit limited, have increased communities' awareness on leadership issues in general and citizens' political rights. Other Government initiatives including the FAL and NAADs programmes which are implemented at the district level have boosted women's confidence to step out in the public and contest for local council positions. The MGLSD has undertaken mentoring of women leaders at the local government level and initiated the formation of District Gender Forums, and Caucuses for women leaders. These initiatives have also contributed to increased gender sensitivity within the district councils and their capacity to mainstream gender issues.
- *Advocacy campaigns* by women's organisations for increased women's representation. Using the *Women's Manifesto* and "*Women's Minimum Demands to Political Parties and Organisations*" as advocacy tools, the Coalition on Political Accountability for Women demanded for affirmative action with a minimum of 40% women's representation in their party structures. While the numbers were not uniformly attained, the competition for women's votes has expanded the leadership spectrum for women and has brought to prominence a number of women who now hold top executive ranks in the political parties.
- *The decentralization policy* and specifically the creation of new districts to improve local governance and the equitable distribution of resources, has also created new leadership opportunities. Women leaders were able to acquire an additional 24 seats emerging from the newly created districts.

86. Women's presence on the Committees of Parliament has transformed the male dominated character of Parliament. In the 8th Parliament, 5 women MPs head Parliamentary Committees, while 9 are deputies. Of particular importance is their presence on Standing Committees which are critical entry points for addressing gender concerns in government programmes. Women representatives have brought a gender perspective to the legislative process. They have used their positions to draw attention to issues of concern to women such as domestic violence, property rights, gender based violence, reproductive health and have realized some success in ensuring that the laws enacted are more gender sensitive. An example is the Land Act 1998; which contains a clause on spousal consent that increases women's security of tenure.

87. The Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) has, through its Common Women's Legislative Agenda (CWLA), lobbied for a number of Bills aimed at improving the welfare and respect for the rights of women. The Bills brought forward include the following: *Sexual Offences, Trafficking in Persons, Maternal Mortality, Domestic Violence, Domestic Relations, and Female Genital Mutilation*. UWOPA's efforts in this respect are also being supported by the presence of some its members on the Association of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians which voices women's reproductive health concerns.

88. At local government, the Local Government Act, 1997 ensures that a third of all Local Council seats are reserved for women at all levels of the Local Council (LC) structure and has increased the numerical representation of women on local councils.
89. However, although the quota system⁴⁵ is operational, women's participation is still below the desired level. A survey of 10 districts showed that women in the districts have mainly been relegated to councillorship positions, with only a handful making it to the Vice - Chairperson Position. There have been only 8 LC III women Chairpersons, and there's only 1 woman who is a district Chairperson out of the 80 Districts.
90. There are general concerns that much as women's representation has grown quantitatively, their presence is not sufficiently felt. Hence, although they are present within the decision making positions, their power and capacity to influence policies for the advancement of women is very limited. It is recognised that UWOPA has attempted to ensure that gender-based barriers to social, economic and political development are eliminated through gender responsive legislation. However, while UWOPA has succeeded in developing a Common Women's Legislative Agenda (CWLA), the delay in getting the Bills passed is indicative of other challenges.

Factors attributed to this state of affairs include:

- ▶ The gap between policy and practice on gender equality provisions. The deeply entrenched patriarchal character of the institutions within which the women leaders operate continue to undermine women's efforts to make positive changes for their constituency. An example is the resistance to gender responsive legislation, e.g. the proposed law on domestic relations;
 - ▶ the absence of well articulated political ideologies and positions on women's issues which have made it difficult for women to use their support during the elections as a bargaining chip with the different political parties;
 - ▶ the multi-party dispensation which has somehow fragmented the women's voice;
 - ▶ Stereotyping men as natural leaders; and
 - ▶ insufficient collaboration between women in leadership and the women organisations which would otherwise lead to the development of a common agenda and concerted efforts.
91. Other barriers to women's participation in the political activities of the country include the poor socio-economic status of women (associated with low literacy, limited exposure and limited resources) which continue to deter many women from standing for electoral office. Government programs such

⁴⁵ According to the Local Government Act, one third of the positions of the Executive Committees of the Local Councils are reserved for women.

as the *Prosperity for All (PFA)* are geared at improving the low economic status of communities and women are a specified target group for the various interventions of the PFA.

92. A change from the electoral colleges to adult suffrage has increased the financial burden on women aspirants for the Women District Representative in Parliament. During the last election, women in such cases had to cover 24 sub-counties (whole districts) as opposed to 3 for those contesting for the open constituency seats.
93. Limited understanding of the political processes particularly the transition from the Movement to the Multi-party dispensation and how the latter should work was an issue for many citizens including the women and this created a lot of uncertainty. Women were therefore not able to take advantage of the transition to articulate their concerns as well as make new inroads to broaden their representation. It was observed that women's concerns were not adequately emphasized during the last election campaigns and this resulted in limited integration of their concerns into the political agenda.
94. UWOPA is, however, commended for formulating strategies that will help it overcome these challenges. These include the establishment of roundtables which will facilitate discussions with civil society organisations and male members of Parliament around the CWLA.

7.2 Women's Participation in Peace Building and Reconciliation Efforts

95. *The Committee was concerned that many girls and women in the conflict areas have been victims of violence, including abduction and slavery.*

It was recommended that the GoU should include women in national reconciliation and peace-building initiatives. To this end it was suggested that women from all ethnic groups affected by armed conflict should be included in peace negotiations. It was further proposed that the peace negotiations should include measures of accountability, redress and rehabilitation for women and girls who have been victims of violence, including enslavement in these conflicts.

96. Women's participation in the political life of the country goes beyond elective office and has extended to other spheres, including peace building and reconciliation efforts as stipulated by UN resolution 1325(2000).

7.2.1 Progress registered by the State Party in Facilitating Women's Participation in Peace Building and Reconciliation Efforts and remaining difficulties

97. The GoU has previously supported the efforts of women leaders (e.g. Ms. Betty Bigombe) who initially headed the peace talks (1994/2004) with the Lords' Resistance Army (LRA) to end the conflict in Northern Uganda.

Although women have since not enjoyed such high level representation in the Government negotiating team, Government made provisions for women's participation in the Peace Talks in Juba. In addition to the two women directly on the peace team, women were facilitated to attend some of the meetings.

98. These have been backed by CSO initiatives such as the *Civil Society Women's Peace Coalition* which has played an instrumental role in bringing women's voices and issues to the table through its peace campaigns⁴⁶; and capacity building programmes for women leaders/organisations at the community level. These activities are in recognition of women's crucial role in sustenance of the community during the conflict and in rebuilding the society thereafter.
99. With regards to measures of accountability, redress and rehabilitation for women and girls who have been victims of armed conflict, the efforts in the foregoing paragraph have resulted into attempts to engender the 5 items of the Peace Agenda. Redress for victims of human rights violations is being addressed under Agenda No.3. Proposals include the use of traditional justice systems (Mato Put) to resolve and settle grievances. It is not yet clear at this point what forms of redress will be available and particularly to those who have suffered sexual violence.
100. GoU in collaboration with its development partners is currently working on different recovery programmes to resettle and rehabilitate the displaced communities in the conflict-affected regions. Special provisions are being made for the most vulnerable groups which include women under the Peace Recovery Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda. The Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development has initiated the process of engendering this document; so as to ensure the women equally enjoy the opportunities and benefit from the planned interventions.
101. Challenges experienced in ensuring women's participation include a limited understanding of UNSCR 1325 (2000) at all levels. Experience from the previous rehabilitation programme - the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) showed that there is a tendency for women to lose the status they have acquired during the times of conflict and return to the subordinate status. Women are not sufficiently consulted nor involved in decision-making processes on the various resettlement programmes. This is aggravated by women's low literacy levels and the cultural norms on women's position; and inadequate co-ordination of women initiatives at the grass root level.

⁴⁶ The Peace Caravan and Peace Torch were symbolic of women's solidarity for peace and drew attention to the concerns

102. Some of these challenges are being addressed by CSO -led initiatives that have facilitated skills training for women leaders, cross learning visits and consultative meetings at community level in a bid to put UNSCR 1325 (2000) into practice.