

## QUICK GUIDE TO ADDRESS WOMEN'S ISSUES DURING THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW ON VANUATU<sup>1</sup>

These Guides include:

- A list of issues mentioned in the National Report, the Compilation of official UN Documents and the Summary of Other Stakeholders Submissions, with references to the particular paragraphs in which they can be found.
- The full text of those paragraphs
- A reference to "gaps", that is, issues on which the National Report should/could have applied a gender perspective but failed to do so.
- Suggested questions and recommendations

References in the two working languages of the Council (English and French) have been kept in their original language.

**Issues** are highlighted. References from the National Report are *in Italics*.

All women's rights issues (included sexual rights' issues related specifically to women) are referred to in this Guide. Other sexual rights issues are referred to in the Sexual Rights Guides for each state under review

CEDAW ratified. OP-CEDAW ratified. Rome Statute not ratified. Palermo Protocol not ratified.

### Gaps

The National Report should/could have applied a gender perspective -that is, make reference to how the issue affects women and men in particular ways- but failed to do so in the following sections: Arbitrary or unlawful deprivation of life (15-16), Prison and Detention Center Conditions (17-19), Juvenile Justice (20-22), Warrants (23-25), Freedom of Speech and Press (26-27), Elections (28-31), Government corruption and transparency (32-42), Acceptable conditions of work (51-59), Achievements (89-97).

ISSUE	N Report	Compilation	Summary
<b>Access to justice</b>		Recommendation to enhance it, including through awareness raising (25). Obstacles (26)	
<b>Disabled women</b>	Disability desk officer in Women's Affairs Department (64)	Commended for establishing National Disability Committee (10)	
<b>Domestication of CEDAW /</b>		Need to incorporate CEDAW into	Call for implementation of recommendations and

<sup>1</sup> These Guides were produced by the Sexual Rights Initiative, a coalition of organizations based in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and North America whose mandate is to advance women's issues broadly and sexual rights issues in the Human Rights Council. For questions, comments, suggestions please contact Alejandra Sardá-Chandiramani at [alejandra@mulabi.org](mailto:alejandra@mulabi.org)

<b>Harmonization of laws with international treaties.</b>		legislation (4) and complete legislative reform (5). Awareness raising and appeals for customary courts (25)	instruments protecting women's rights (11)
<b>Economic rights/ Right to development</b>	Women ownership of leaseholds (50)	Unequal access to economic resources, jobs, property, land, skills (16)	Constitutional guarantees not enforced, customary discriminatory traditions on land ownership prevail (10).
<b>Equality and Non discrimination</b>	Constitutional status (8)	Equal status of customary norms and legal norms. Need to achieve de jure and de facto women equality. Need for sensitization on CEDAW principles. (4)	Call for domestication of ratified human rights treaties and its application in courts (3)
<b>Harmful traditional practices</b>	Bride price practice (45)	Human rights considered in contradiction with traditional beliefs and practices (4)	Bride price justifies domestic violence. Need for <i>Malvatumauri</i> sensitization (15)
<b>Laws that discriminate against women</b>		Polygamy and <i>kastom</i> allowed (28) Need to amend Citizenship Act (17) Call for equal marital rights (18) Unequal marriage age for women(29)	Need to reform Citizenship Act and Family Law 12,(13) Discriminatory in customary institutions and courts, Need for legal training to magistrates and Island courts (11)
<b>Patriarchal attitudes/stereo types</b>		Cultural norms impair women public and private life. Need to eliminate cultural discriminatory practices /stereotypes (15)	
<b>Public and political participation</b>	Programs to promote women's participation (46) Few candidates (47). Policies to ensure women public representation (49)	Call for measures to increase public, political and decision-making participation. (16,30)	Special measures requested to promote women participation in government ( 13)
<b>Reproductive health/rights</b>	Contraceptive coverage rate 20% to 30% (87). Reproductive Health Policy and Strategy (109) Reproductive Health plan	Need to reduce infant and maternal mortality (39). High rate of teenage pregnancies. Need to strengthen	

	includes abortions/infertility, safe motherhood, sexual violence, cervical cancer and family planning and improving services (116)	measures to prevent adolescent STI, provision of health services, sexual education and awareness (40)	
<b>Right to education</b>	Gender Equity in Education Policy 2005-2015 (72) Girls schooling: 47% in primary school, 50% in secondary education. 38% of awards to young women. (73)	Need to increase girls schooling, improve quality and introduce local languages (42). Low secondary enrolment of girls. High rate of women's illiteracy and girls' drop-out. (43). Call for improvements and gender-sensitive curricula (44)	Lower rate of girls' enrolment in primary education. Need to implement strategies to increase girls schooling (28s)
<b>Right to social security</b>		Need to open insurance benefits access to domestic, informal, casual and non-wage workers. (32)	Need to enact an employment bill to provide maternity security (23)
<b>Right to work</b>		Inequalities in wages, employment opportunities and legal provisions. Need for measures esp. to protect maternity leave (32)	Need for equal job opportunities for young women (22)
<b>Rural women</b>		Need to implement strategies to improve health, educational and economic opportunities (35)	
<b>Sexual Violence</b>		Criminalization of victims of incest. Sexual harassment not included in criminal code (22)	
<b>State Institutions/ Plans of Actions</b>		Need to strengthen Department of Women's Affairs (8)	National Plan of Action for Women 2007-2011 (18)
<b>Violence against Women /Gender Violence</b>	Laws and policies to decrease domestic violence (44)	Denounces are withdrawn. Customary methods of punishment. Domestic offences not	Cultural norms and practices perpetuate domestic violence. It is not considered discrimination nor contemplated in laws.

		considered by criminal law (19) Need to combat all forms of violence. (20) Legal aid available for all victims, esp. rural women. Need for judiciary / public officials and police sensitization. Call for "no drop" policy for complaints. (21).	(15). Lack of statistics and under-reported (16). Need to strengthen measures and find strategies to address domestic violence (17)
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### Access to justice

According to CEDAW, women's access to justice is, in practice, **limited**. The Common Country Assessment (CCA) stated that the **police force is weak**, many **court cases are overdue**, there is a **lack of appropriate laws** to protect women ( ), and **inadequate staff** within the Public Prosecutor's and Public Solicitor's Offices. The capacity, neutrality and independence of the judiciary needs further enhancement. **Abuse of power** and of public offices continues, as well as the **manipulation of the laws** designed to prevent such behaviour. (Para 26, Compilation)

### Disabled women

*The Ministry of Justice and Community Services is currently undertaking a restructuring exercise to include for the first time a **disability desk officer** within the Department of Women's Affairs (Para 64, NR).*

CEDAW welcomed Vanuatu's attention to women with disabilities in the **national disability policy** and its endorsement of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action Towards an Inclusive Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific during the Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012. It **commended Vanuatu on establishment of the National Disability Committee** (Para 10, Compilation).

### Domestication of CEDAW

CEDAW, in 2007, expressed concern that the Convention had not yet been fully incorporated into domestic legislation and **urged Vanuatu to do so without delay** (Para 4, Compilation). CEDAW requested Vanuatu to complete its **legislative reform** to ensure that all discriminatory legislation is amended or repealed to bring it into compliance with the Convention (Para 15, Compilation).

### Economic rights/Right to development

*Women own a total of 584 leaseholds and are joint owners of 656 leaseholds totalling up to 1,240 leases being wholly owned and jointly owned by women ( ). There are a total of 4,398 leases under the names of individuals and companies and **women own 28.2 per cent of the total leases** (Para 50, NR)*

The 2002 Common Country Assessment (CCA) noted that a growing and significant number of households are headed by women, but certain jobs as well as **access to property, land, skills** and other **economic resources** are in effect only open to men. Many social obstacles limit

adequate recognition of **women's unpaid work** and their indispensable contribution to society (Para 16, Compilation).

The Vanuatu Rural development Training centre Association; Transparency International Vanuatu Red Cross Society; Youth Challenge International; Vanuatu Young People Project; Live and Learn Environmental Education; and Wan Smol Bag Theatre (NGO Coalition) highlighted that the **legal system fails** to enforce the **constitutional provision guaranteeing equal status** between men and women. Amnesty International stated that **customary rules** in the context of land ownership are often used to deny women or their direct descendants the sharing of land resources **equally with those who are descendants of the male lineage** (Para 10, Summary)

### **Equality and non-discrimination**

*The Republic of Vanuatu recognises, that, subject to any restrictions imposed by law on non-citizens, all persons are entitled to the following fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual **without discrimination on the grounds of ( ) sex** but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and to the legitimate public interest in defence, safety, public order, welfare and health: (k) No law shall be inconsistent with this sub-paragraph insofar as it makes provision for the **special benefit, welfare, protection or advancement of females.*** (Para 8, NR)

UNDAF noted ( ) that while some women have achieved success in public and private sectors, there remain many cultural and social **constraints to gender equality in the family, employment and decision-making. Rural women** carry heavy physical and child rearing workloads (Para 14, Compilation). CEDAW was deeply concerned that according to Vanuatu's Constitution, **cultural and religious norms**, some of which **have an adverse impact** on women's enjoyment of their human rights, have **equal status** with legal norms. (Para 4, Compilation).

### **Harmful traditional practices**

*The **bride price** is widely practiced in Vanuatu. However, in 2006, the Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs' discouraged the practice and encouraged the exchange of gifts between the bride and bridegroom's family* (Para 45, NR)

The 2003-2007 UNDAF and the CCA noted that some leaders are prone to **considering human rights ideas as contradictory to traditional principles and beliefs**. This has a particularly profound impact on the way the rights of women ( ) are interpreted (Para 4, Compilation)

The culture of the groom or his family giving **bride price** to a woman's family in exchange for her hand in marriage has often been used **to justify violence against the women** ( ). This practice effectively **puts a commercial value on women**, leading to an oft heard excuse that 'because I have paid for her, I can do whatever I want with her'. AI said that, in spite of the revocation of 80,000 Vatu minimum bride price by the *Malvatumauri* (Council of Chiefs) in 2006, the practice of bride price is still widespread. (Para 15, Summary)

### **Laws that discriminate against women**

CEDAW was concerned about discriminatory provisions in the **customary law governing marriage and family relations**, permitting **polygamy** and the **practice of kastom**, and with regard to **land and inheritance** (Para 28, Compilation). While noting efforts to identify and amend discriminatory legal provisions, CEDAW was concerned about the delay in the revision

of the **Citizenship Act**. It was concerned that a man married to a ni-Vanuatu woman is not entitled to citizenship, whereas a woman married to a ni-Vanuatu man is ( ). Furthermore, a 2007 UNDP and UNIFEM report noted that while a woman who renounces her citizenship after marriage to a non-national can only regain citizenship in her country of origin upon evidence of the breakdown of her marriage, the provision does not apply to men. (Para 17, Compilation). (Para 18, Compilation). CEDAW and CRC expressed concern that the law provides for different ages of marriage for women and men - **16 years for women** and 18 for men. (Para 29, Compilation).

AI noted that the **Citizenship Act (Cap 112) is discriminatory** against women. ( ) AI stated that the Ombudsman highlighted these discriminatory provisions in 1999. The Government outlined in its combined CEDAW report of 2007 that a review of the Citizenship Act was imminent. To date, however, there has been no development on this. (Para 12, Summary). AI stated that the use of **customary law** can also be used to **deny women equality** in other areas, **despite Constitutional guarantees** against such discrimination. Until recently, women were **not allowed to speak in nakamals** (traditional meeting houses) when important issues affecting the community were discussed. While this has changed in some areas, there are still parts of Vanuatu where women **are banned from speaking in nakamals**. In addition, the **island courts** (the lowest in the hierarchy of courts), which are community-based and serve the majority of the population, adopt decisions **based on customary laws and practices**, which are often discriminatory against women (Para 11, Summary)

### **Patriarchal attitudes/stereotypes**

CEDAW was concerned about the persistence of **adverse cultural norms, practices and traditions**, as well as patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes, regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life. Such customs and practices, it noted, are reflected in **women's disadvantageous** and **unequal status** in many areas, including in public life and decision-making, and in marriage and family relations, and the persistence of violence against women. (Para 15, Compilation).

### **Public and political participation**

*Out of 52 members of Parliament, only one is a woman. From 2001 to 2002, the DWA has run pilot trainings in Port Vila and Luganville on **Women and Leadership training**. In 2007 and 2008, the DWA has taken up the initiative to run a **Voters' Education for women** in eight biggest constituencies to boost women's participation in the political arena (Para 46, NR). One of the major problems has been the lack of women candidates. In 2004 snap election, there were **seven women from a total of 22323 candidates** and in 2008 General election; there were **18 women from a total of 328 candidates** (Para 47, NR).*

*Resolutions of a workshop on Special Measures for Women in Papua New Guinea last year: **recommended and agreed that to ensure women representatives are put back or re-instead into Provincial Government Councils as nominated members**. The Department of Local Authorities has taken this recommendation seriously to ensure the equal participation of men and women in **decision making** and also included provisions of nominated members in the Provincial budgets for 2009. The **Department of Women's Affairs** is to consult with relevant women groupings and advise the Provincial Government Councils of who the representatives are (Para 49, NR)*

CEDAW was concerned about **under representation of women** at all levels of political and public life, particularly in Parliament, the judiciary, the diplomatic service and appointed decision-making bodies in education and administration, such as the Teachers' Services Commission. A 2008 United Nations Statistics Division source indicated that the proportion of **seats held by women** in the national **parliament** was **3.8 per cent** in that year. (Para 30, Compilation)

### **Reproductive health/rights**

*The national **Contraceptive Coverage** record is between 20 to 30 per cent. The remaining percentage reflects the **unmet family planning needs** (Para 87, NR). The Ministry of Health initiated the development of a **Reproductive Health Policy and Strategy ( )** that include **strengthening family planning with Men and Women and improve adolescent reproductive health and sexual health for all; Strengthen primary Health care to deal with Reproductive and Sexual Health issues and strengthen community ownership of these social issues** (Para 109, NR). The Ministry of Health has developed a **Reproductive Health Policy and three-year strategic plan covering eight thematic areas of HIV/STIs, adolescent health, gynaecological morbidities including abortions/infertility, safe motherhood, sexual violence, cervical cancer and family planning with a goal of strengthening services** (Para 116, NR)*

( ) CEDAW and CRC expressed concerns about the **high rate of teenage pregnancies**, and that **existing sex education programmes are insufficient**. A 2005 UNAIDS report noted that in Port Vila some 6 per cent of pregnant women have been found to be infected with gonorrhoea, 13 per cent with syphilis and more than 20 per cent with Chlamydia. (Para 40, Compilation)

### **Right to education**

*The Ministry of Education has in place a **Gender Equity in Education Policy 2005-2015**. Attention focused on ensuring that both males and females benefit equally from their participation in education with the goal to **provide equal opportunities** for boys and girls in education (Para 72, NR). In 2007 the Ministry of Education has reported **47 per cent** of female enrolled in primary education and **50 per cent** in secondary education. In 2008 the Scholarship Unit under the Ministry of Education has reported providing 38 per cent of new awards to young female students (Para 73, NR)*

Appreciating Vanuatu's achievement of parity in primary education, and its commitment to achieve, by 2015, access for all children to free and compulsory primary education of good quality, CEDAW was concerned at the **high levels of adult women's illiteracy, and girls' high drop-out rates**. CEDAW and CRC expressed concern about low enrolment of girls in secondary and higher levels of education, CEDAW was also concerned by the marked difference in the quality of and **access to education in urban and rural/remote areas**, including the lack of sufficient boarding facilities for girls (Para 43, Compilation). The NGO Coalition indicated that **girls** are underrepresented in primary school and represented **42.1 per cent of pupils in primary schools** in 2001. (Para 28, Summary)

### **Right to social security**

While noting the expansion in membership of the National Provident Fund, CEDAW was concerned that many women have limited or no access to the **insurance benefits** provided by the Fund. (Para 32, Compilation)

### **Right to work**

UNDAF also noted ( ) that there is a pressing need to address the **disparities in income earning opportunities** between men and women and between urban and **rural** areas (Para 31, Compilation). CEDAW expressed concern at the discrimination faced by women in employment, as reflected in the **wage gap** and **occupational segregation**. It was also concerned about the differential treatment of women working in the **public and private sectors** (Para 32, Compilation)

### **Rural women**

CEDAW expressed concern about the difficult situation of women in rural/remote areas, including **access to health care, education and literacy programmes, and income-generation opportunities**. It invited Vanuatu to use the successful example of existing microfinance programmes to give women enhanced access to savings and income-generation projects. (Para 35, Compilation)

### **Sexual Violence**

The 2007 UNDP and UNIFEM report also noted that, in non-compliance with CEDAW, incest is an offence for a girl aged 15 years or above attracting a penalty of seven years. **Criminalizing all parties to an incestuous sexual encounter is contrary to CEDAW and may dissuade a victim from reporting it for fear of being charged with an offence.** Moreover, **protection from sexual harassment is absent under the criminal code of Vanuatu** (Para 22, Compilation)

### **State Institutions/Plans of Action for Women's Rights**

Concerned that Vanuatu's Department of Women's Affairs does not have the institutional authority, capacity and resources to effectively promote implementation of the Convention, (Para 8, Compilation)

The NGO Coalition underlined that the **National Plan of Action for Women 2007-2011** (NPAW 2007-2011) is the outcome of the first ever National Women's Forum organized by Government. The NPAW 2007-2011 plans on taking integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women, study its causes and consequences, eliminate trafficking in women and **assist victims of violence** due to **prostitution** and trafficking (Para 18, Summary)

### **Violence against Women/Gender Violence**

*Violence against women, particularly **domestic violence, is common.** In order to address this issue, the Government has enacted a **Family Protection Act.**( ) **Domestic Violence Order and Family Protection Orders** may be obtained by the victims of domestic violence and **provision is made to punish those who commit domestic violence** (Para 44, NR)*

CEDAW expressed concern about the prevalence of violence against **women and girls, including cultural practices** that constitute, or perpetuate, such violence. A 2006 UNFPA report noted that many cases of domestic violence that are **initially reported** to the police are **later**

withdrawn, sometimes because chiefs intervene. CEDAW was especially concerned about the use of customary methods of punishment (*kastom faen*) in cases of rape ( ). The UNDP and UNIFEM report also noted that domestic violence offences have not been incorporated into criminal law, in non-compliance with CEDAW (Para 19, Compilation).

The UNFPA report noted that a "no drop" policy, which requires that all cases that come to the attention of the police must be taken forward even if the complaint is dropped by the victim, has yet to be adopted (Para 21, Compilation).

AI stated that there is increasing awareness of this issue, mainly due to the work of women's NGOs. The NGO Coalition stated that domestic violence is not specifically included as discrimination in the law, nor is it viewed as discrimination. AI added that the prevalence of domestic violence in society is further compounded by social and cultural norms and practices. (Para 15, Summary). AI reported that Parliament passed the Family Protection Act in June 2008, because of civil society lobbying and campaigning ( ). The Act clearly states that the custom of bride price is not an acceptable excuse for violence in the home. The NGO Coalition acknowledged that this Act criminalizes domestic violence and aims at improving the family situation, notably for women and children. (Para 15, Summary).

The NGO coalition deplored the lack of data regarding violence against women ( ). AI was concerned that violence against women is under-reported. AI stated that no figures are available on this issue in 5 out of 6 provinces in the country. But it cited figures indicating that the Vanuatu Women's Centre, which works with survivors of violence, has since its establishment in 1992, in Port Vila, a city of approximately 35,000 people, dealt with 2,954 cases of domestic violence (Para 16, Summary)

#### **Suggested questions and recommendations:**

Ask Vanuatu how are the prison conditions for women and for female juvenile inmates and if special facilities and non-confinement options exist for pregnant women and mothers of young children.

Recommend that Vanuatu takes all necessary steps, including awareness-raising and specialized training efforts coupled with monitoring systems and administrative sanctions, to make its judicial system accountable and responsive to the population's needs and particularly to women.

Congratulate Vanuatu for its best practices in addressing disability issues with a gender perspective and ask it to elaborate on the work that will be carried out by the new disability desk officer in the Department of Women's Affairs.

Recommend that, in compliance with CEDAW, Vanuatu repeals the Criminal Code to stop criminalizing incest victims who are 15 or older with seven years of imprisonment and to include penalties for sexual harassment in the workplace.

Treaty bodies' recommendations:

CEDAW:

- To enhance access to justice and to the courts, including by raising women's awareness of their rights (Para 25, Compilation).
- To undertake targeted awareness-raising measures to ensure that customary or "island" courts, the use of which is prevalent particularly in rural and remote areas, are familiar with the concept of equality of the Convention so that their rulings are not discriminatory against women, especially with regard to land ownership and inheritance, and to ensure that decisions of customary courts can be appealed in the formal legal system. (Para 25, Compilation)
- To clarify the primacy of the principle of equality of women and the prohibition of discrimination, over customary law, and to sensitize the judiciary, lawyers and prosecutors to provisions of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, as well as legislators on the need to achieve *de jure* and *de facto* equality for women (Para 4, Compilation)
- To amend the Citizenship Act without delay to bring it into compliance with Article 9 of the Convention and to complete its law reform in the area of family law within a specific time frame, and ensure that spouses have the same rights and responsibilities both during marriage and in the event of its dissolution (Para 17, Compilation)
- To raise the minimum age of marriage to 18 years for women (Para 29, Compilation)
- To view its specific culture as a dynamic aspect of the country's life and social fabric and therefore subject to change, and to put in place without delay a comprehensive strategy, including legislation, to modify or eliminate cultural practices and stereotypes that discriminate against women, including awareness-raising and working with the media (Para 15, Compilation)
- To draw up a concrete plan for the application of temporary special measures in various areas, particularly in education and participation in political and public decision-making, with concrete goals, such as quotas and timetables (Para 16, Compilation).
- To strengthen and implement measures to increase the number of women in elected and appointed office; to use temporary special measures to accelerate women's full and equal participation, particularly at high levels of decision-making; to take steps to make the 30 per cent quota for women in parliamentary elections, recommended by the Electoral Commission of Vanuatu, a requirement for all political parties; and to It conduct training programmes on leadership and negotiation skills for current and future women leaders, and awareness-raising activities on the importance of women's participation in decision-making for society as a whole (Para 30, Compilation)
- To strengthen measures to prevent teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections by increasing awareness, providing comprehensive, youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services, confidence-building programmes and age-appropriate sex education for girls and boys as part of the education curricula (Para 39, Compilation)
- To take concrete measures to enhance all aspects of health care for women, including sexual and reproductive health services (Para 40, Compilation)
- To expand the use of temporary special measures, including incentives to parents, especially in rural/remote areas, and scholarships to girl students; to carry out a comprehensive curricula review and introduction of gender-sensitive curricula and teaching methods that address the structural and cultural causes of discrimination against women; to increase the number of female teachers, especially in rural/remote areas, and to take further measures to improve adult literacy (Para 44, Compilation)

- To expand access to insurance benefits, including by extending membership to additional categories of workers, such as domestic workers, informal or casual workers and non-wage workers (Para 32, Compilation)
- To ensure equal opportunities in the labour market, and that legal provisions apply to the public and private sectors, especially regarding maternity leave (Para 32, Compilation)
- To pay special attention to women in rural/remote areas, particularly with regard to access to health care, education and literacy programmes, and income-generation opportunities, and in access to training opportunities, credit facilities and markets (Para 35, Compilation)
- To enhance implementation of its national action plan for education for all (Para 43, Compilation)
- That implementation of CEDAW by the Department of Women's Affairs be expeditiously strengthened with the necessary authority and adequate resources (Para 8, Compilation)
- To give priority attention to combating violence against women and to adopt comprehensive measures to address it; to raise public awareness that all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, constitute discrimination under the Convention and are unacceptable; and to enact legislation as soon as possible to ensure all such violence, including sexual abuse and sexual harassment, constitutes a criminal offence. Also to ensure that victims have access to immediate and effective means of redress and protection and that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished (Para 20, Compilation)
- That legal aid be made available to all victims of violence, particularly in rural/remote areas. It recommended training for the judiciary and public officials, in particular law enforcement personnel and health-service providers, to ensure that they are sensitized to all forms of violence against women (Para 21, Compilation)

#### Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

- To strengthen reproductive health education programmes for adolescents and to ensure the inclusion of men in training programmes on reproductive health (Para 40, Compilation)
- To continue its efforts to reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; improve breastfeeding practices; and prevent and combat malnutrition (Para 39, Compilation )
- To improve access to education at all levels, increasing enrolment of girls, introducing local languages as additional tools of instruction, and improving its overall quality (Para 42, Compilation).
- To raise awareness of the importance of education, as a fundamental human right and as a basis for the empowerment of girls and women, and to influence cultural attitudes positively in this regard. (Para 43, Compilation)

#### Other civil society recommendations:

##### NGO Coalition:

- To implement specific recommendations made by CEDAW related to the domestication of CEDAW provisions and violence against women and to implement all human rights instruments regarding women's rights, especially CEDAW and its Optional Protocol. (Para 11, Summary)
- To access international organizations and donors for assistance in implementing its international obligations (Para 3, Summary)

- To seriously consider reforming discriminatory laws such as Family Law Legislation (Para 13, Summary).
- To implement the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to increase access and enrolment of girls into the education system (Para 28 Summary)
- To enact an Employment Relations Bill that accords maternity and employment security for women (Para 23, Summary)
- To take responsibility to provide equal job opportunities in all sectors for young men and women and review the current programs of employment opportunities for young people. (Para 22, Summary)
- To work towards effective implementation of the Family Protection Act, criminalizing domestic violence (Para 15, Summary)
- To provide its full support in the implementation of research and the development of multi-sectorial social policies and strategies to address violence against women (Para 17, Summary)

#### Amnesty International:

- To enact laws to reflect the principles of ratified human rights treaties, as well to enact enabling legislation to ensure that these principles are applicable in the courts. (Para 3, Summary)
- To work with the *Malvatumauri* to raise awareness of the revocation of the practice of bride price (Para 15, Summary)
- To amend the Citizenship Act without delay so that it complies with Vanuatu's constitutional provisions and its obligations under the CEDAW (Para 12, Summary)
- To review and amend all relevant laws which discriminate against or perpetuate the discrimination and marginalisation of women and to ensure that there is not only equality in legislation, but also *de facto* equality, in line with Vanuatu's obligations under CEDAW and to allocate resources and capacity to provide effective and ongoing human rights and legal training to judicial officers in the lower courts (Para 11, Summary).
- To allocate adequate resources for effective implementation of the Family Protection Act, criminalizing domestic violence (Para 15, Summary)
- To ensure greater awareness across the country of domestic violence and means to end such violence and to provide ongoing policing and prosecution training for police and other relevant departments on effective ways to address domestic violence (Para 17, Summary)

#### Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (DPAA)

- To develop special temporary measures to ensure that women in Government can advance within the public sector, in line with CEDAW, the Constitution and the 2007 Government's Gender Equity Policy benchmark. (Para 13, Summary)

