Consolidated Disability Findings from the 2015 United States Department of State Reports on Human Rights and Practices

Africa

Introduction to the Department of State Report on Disability Human Rights

The U.S. Department of State Report on Human Rights in 2015 is based on research performed by the State Department, specifically the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. The reports focus on the role of government in establishing policies to protect the human rights of all citizens.

USICD has consolidated the references on disability from each country report into one comprehensive document. Each country summary within the document is organized into four possible subheadings:

1. **Constitution and Laws**: If and how a country’s constitution or laws cover disability rights.

2. **Persons with Disabilities**: Material drawn from the report’s section on “Persons with Disabilities.”

3. **Other Relevant References**: Disability highlighted elsewhere in a country’s report (e.g. within the section on children, women, or prison and detention center conditions, etc.).

4. **The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**: The status of a country’s signature and ratification of the CRPD (Note: ratification dates are in a date/month/year format).

The following condensed reports are intended to be a resource only and do not necessarily reflect an endorsement of the quality of content or perspective contained within the reports. All content is pulled directly from the State Department reports with the exception of the CRPD status, which was added by USICD staff.
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Angola

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, religion, disability, language, or social status, but the government did not effectively enforce these prohibitions. The constitution does not specifically address sexual orientation or gender identity. Violence and discrimination against women, child abuse, child prostitution, trafficking in persons, and discrimination against persons with disabilities were problems.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities, including persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities, in employment (see also section 7.d.), education, and access to health care or other state services, but the government did not effectively enforce these prohibitions. The constitution grants persons with disabilities full rights without restriction and calls on the government to adopt national policies to prevent, treat, rehabilitate, and integrate persons with disabilities to support their families; remove obstacles to their mobility; educate society about disability; and encourage special learning and training opportunities for the disabled. It does not specifically mention the rights of persons with disabilities with regard to transportation, including air travel.

Persons with disabilities included more than 80,000 victims of land mines and other explosive remnants of war. The NGO Handicap International estimated that as many as 500,000 persons had disabilities. Because of limited government resources and uneven availability, only 30 percent of such persons were able to take advantage of state-provided services such as physical rehabilitation, schooling, training, or counseling.

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities is responsible for verifying that all such persons are protected from discrimination and have access to the same rights and privileges as citizens without disabilities. Persons with disabilities, nevertheless, found it difficult to access public or private facilities, and it was difficult for such persons to find employment or participate in the education system (see also section 7.d.). Women with disabilities were reported to be vulnerable to sexual abuse and abandonment when pregnant. The antitrafficking law specifically punishes sexual abuse of vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities. The Ministry of Assistance and Social Reintegration sought to address problems facing persons with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities, and several government entities supported programs to assist individuals disabled by landmine incidents. During the 2012 election, the government provided voting assistance to persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities were allowed to select someone of their own choosing to accompany them into the voting booth to fill out the ballot and were allowed to move ahead of others waiting in line to vote.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The labor law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, sex, religion, disability, or language, and the government in general effectively enforced the law in the formal sector. The constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination, although it does not specifically address political opinion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity (see section 6). The law provides for equal pay for equal work, and many women held high-level positions in state-run industries and in the private sector or worked in the informal sector. There were no known cases of official or private sector gender-based discrimination in employment or occupation. For example, the country sends a team from the Ministry of Finance to Washington every year for meetings at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and ensures that the delegation includes both men and women. Women have held and continued to hold ministerial posts.

Despite the law, persons with disabilities found it difficult to gain access to public or private facilities, and it was difficult for such persons to participate in the education system and thus find employment. There were no known reports of discrimination in employment or occupation.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Angola ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 19 May 2014

Benin

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights problems included arbitrary arrest and detention; prolonged pretrial detention; abuse of women and children, including sexual harassment, child sexual exploitation, early and forced marriage, and infanticide; trafficking in persons; discrimination against persons with disabilities; vigilante violence; and child labor.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and laws prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, disability, language, and social status, but societal discrimination against women continued. Persons with disabilities were disadvantaged. The government took some measures to address these problems but fell short of providing a comprehensive response.

Children
Infanticide or Infanticide of Children with Disabilities: Despite widespread NGO campaigns, the traditional practices of killing babies considered deformed, breech babies, babies whose
mothers died in childbirth, and one from newborn twins (because they were considered sorcerers) continued in the north.

**Persons with Disabilities**

The law does not explicitly prohibit discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities in education, access to health care, or provision of other state services; however, the law provides that the government care for persons with disabilities. There were no legal requirements for the construction or alteration of buildings to permit access for persons with disabilities. Legislation is general in nature and addresses equality, equity, and nondiscrimination among all citizens. Several laws, however, including the labor code, the social security code, the persons and family code, and the 2011 law establishing general rules for elections, contain specific references to persons with disabilities. The country also has a National Policy for the Protection and Integration of Persons with Disabilities. Children with mental, visual, and physical disabilities, however, continued to suffer social exclusion and had no access to the conventional educational system.

The government operated few institutions to assist persons with disabilities. The Office for the Rehabilitation and the Insertion of Persons with Disabilities under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Family coordinated assistance to persons with disabilities through the Aid Fund for the Rehabilitation and Insertion of Persons with Disabilities (Fonds Ariph). In Cotonou on July 14 and 15, the Ministry of Family, in conjunction with associations of persons with disabilities, held a workshop to approve draft action plans for the National Policy for the Protection and Integration of Persons with Disabilities. On October 19, the Ministry of Family donated white canes and tricycles and offered scholarships to 115 persons with disabilities in the departments of Atlantique and Littoral.

**Section 7. Worker Rights**

**d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation**

The constitution and labor code prohibit discrimination with respect to employment and occupation on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, and disability. The laws, however, do not explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases. The government, in general, effectively enforced these laws and regulations. Women experienced extensive discrimination because of societal attitudes and resistance to behavioral change (see section 6). Employment discrimination continued to occur in the private and public sectors. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Analysis, the employment rate was 73 percent for men and 69.2 percent for women in 2011.

The labor code includes provisions to protect the rights of workers with disabilities, which were enforced with limited effectiveness.

The Office of Labor under the Ministry of Labor and Civil Service and the Ministry of Family are responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.
In August 2014 the president of an Association for the Well-Being of Persons with Disabilities issued an open letter to President Yayi to denounce all forms of discrimination and exclusion suffered by persons with disabilities in the areas of education and employment. The president of the association also asked President Yayi to issue a decree requiring recruitment of 500 persons with disabilities in the public administration in the spirit of equal opportunity for employment.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Benin signed the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 8 Feb 2008. Benin ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 5 July 2012

Botswana

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other significant human rights problems included occasional excessive use of force and abuse by security personnel; police corruption; government attempts to limit press freedom; and shortcomings in the judicial process, including lengthy delays and failure to inform defendants of their pretrial rights. Societal problems included trafficking in persons and discrimination against women and children; persons with disabilities; those with HIV/AIDS; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The constitution and law prohibit governmental discrimination based on ethnicity, race, nationality, creed, sex, or social status, and the government generally respected these provisions. The law does not specifically mention sexual orientation or gender identity, although aspects of same-sex sexual activity remain illegal under the penal code. The employment act protects sexual orientation from discrimination. In addition, as long as a government job applicant is able to perform the duties of the position, he or she may not be discriminated against due to disability or language. The law does not prohibit discrimination by private persons or entities, and there was societal discrimination against women; persons with disabilities; minority ethnic groups, particularly the San; LGBTI persons; and persons with HIV/AIDS.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical and mental disabilities in education, employment, access to health care, or the provision of other state services. The law does not prohibit discrimination by private persons or entities. The law does not specifically prohibit discrimination against persons with sensory or intellectual disabilities. The government has a policy that provides for integrating the needs of persons with disabilities into all aspects of
government policymaking. The government mandates access to public buildings or transportation for persons with disabilities, but civil society sources reported access for persons with disabilities was limited. The law does not specifically include air travel with other modes of transportation, but in general persons with disabilities were provided access to air transportation. Although new government buildings were being constructed in such a way as to provide access for persons with disabilities, older government office buildings remained largely inaccessible. Most new privately owned buildings provided access for persons with disabilities.

Discrimination against persons with disabilities occurred, and employment opportunities remained limited. Children with disabilities attended school; there was no information available regarding patterns of abuse in educational and mental health facilities. The government did not restrict persons with disabilities from voting or otherwise participating in civil affairs and made some accommodations during elections to allow for persons with disabilities to vote.

There was a Department of Disability Coordination in the Office of the President to assist persons with disabilities. The Department of Labor in the Ministry of Labor and Home Affairs is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in the labor force and investigating claims of discrimination. Individuals may also bring cases directly to the Industrial Court. The government funded NGOs that provided rehabilitation services and supported small-scale projects for workers with disabilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

With respect to employment or occupation, labor laws prohibit discrimination regarding race, color, tribe, place of origin, social origin, sex, disability, language, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, HIV-positive status, marital status, creed, or social status. The government effectively enforced these regulations.

Human rights organizations reported anecdotal evidence of discrimination, particularly sex discrimination in the formal workplace as well as discrimination against members of the San community.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Botswana has not signed or ratified the CRPD.
Burkina Faso

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights problems included arbitrary arrest and detention; judicial inefficiency and lack of independence; violence against journalists; restrictions on freedoms of speech, expression, and assembly; official corruption; trafficking in persons; discrimination against persons with disabilities; societal violence; discrimination against members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community; discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS; and forced labor, including by children.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
Physical Conditions: There were no appropriate facilities or installations for prisoners or detainees with disabilities, who relied on other inmates for assistance.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, disability, language, or social status, but the government did not effectively enforce these prohibitions. Discrimination against women and persons with disabilities remained problems.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical or mental disabilities in employment, education, access to health care, or the provision of other state services, but the government did not effectively enforce these provisions. According to the most recent general census of population and housing, the portion of the population with disabilities in the country was estimated to be 1.2 percent. In 2012 the Council of Ministers adopted further decrees to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, including in transportation. The government enacted legislation to provide persons with disabilities less costly or free healthcare and access to education and employment. The law also includes building codes to provide for access to governmental buildings. Authorities did not implement all of these measures effectively.

Although some children with disabilities attended primary and secondary school as well as institutions of higher learning, 66 percent of persons with disabilities had no education, and only 16.5 percent completed primary level education, according to the Burkina Faso Federation for the Promotion of People with Disabilities.

Persons with disabilities encountered discrimination and reported difficulty finding employment, including in government service. Exacerbating these problems was the common perception that persons with disabilities should be under the care of their families and not in the labor force.

A 2012 decree created the Multi-Sectoral National Council for the Promotion and Protection of People with Disabilities, which included 90 members from different ministries, NGOs, and civil
society organizations. State-owned television provided newscasts in sign language for persons with hearing disabilities.

The government had limited programs to aid persons with disabilities, but NGOs and the National Committee for the Reintegraion of Persons with Disabilities conducted awareness campaigns and implemented integration programs. High commissioners, teachers, and NGOs worked together to inform citizens about the rights of persons with disabilities, specifically the rights of children with disabilities. A number of NGOs provided vocational training and equipment to persons with disabilities.

Since 2014 the government made the necessary arrangements to allow candidates with visual disabilities to take part in the public administration recruitment exams by providing the tests in braille. Additionally, authorities opened special counters at enrollment sites to allow persons with disabilities to register more easily for public service admission tests.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect for Employment and Occupation

The law and regulations prohibit discrimination regarding race, sex, gender, disability, language, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity, HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases, or social status. The government did not effectively enforce those laws and regulations. Discrimination occurred based on the above categories with respect to employment and occupation.

By law persons with disabilities may receive a disability card allowing them to benefit from lower health care costs and access to education and employment. The law also includes building codes to provide for their access to governmental buildings. Penalties for violations range from 50,000 to one million CFA francs ($87 and $1,733). The government did not consistently enforce these rights. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS (see section 6).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Burundi

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Discrimination against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community, persons with disabilities, and persons with albinism occurred. Authorities did not respect labor rights, and forced child labor existed.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution provides for equal status and protection for all citizens, without distinction as to race, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, age, language, HIV-positive status, or having other communicable disease. The government did not enforce the law in many cases.

Persons with Disabilities
The constitution prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, mental, sensory, or intellectual disabilities. The government nevertheless did not promote or protect the rights of persons with disabilities with regard to employment, education, or access to health care (see section 7.d). Although persons with disabilities are eligible for free health care through social programs targeting vulnerable groups, authorities did not widely publicize or provide benefits. Employers often required health certification from the Ministry of Public Health, a practice that sometimes resulted in discrimination against persons with disabilities.

The Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights, and Gender coordinates assistance and protects the rights of persons with disabilities. The government did not enact legislation or otherwise mandate access to buildings, information, or government services for persons with disabilities. The government supported a center for physical therapy in Gitega and a center for social and professional reinsertion in Ngozi for persons with physical disabilities.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Burundi signed the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 26 April 2007. The government ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 22 May 2014.

Cabo Verde

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, religion, disability, language, or social status. The constitution stipulates the government should create conditions for the gradual removal of all obstacles to the full exercise of human rights and equality before the law. The law also prohibits racism, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination, but violence and discrimination against women and children remained significant problems.
The government enforced the above prohibitions somewhat effectively.

**Persons with Disabilities**
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, access to health care, or in the provision of other state services (see section 7.d.). The law does not prohibit discrimination in air travel or other transportation services. The government generally enforced these provisions, with problems remaining in a number of areas. For example, persons with disabilities faced daily obstacles that hindered their integration. Physical accessibility, communication means, and public transport appropriate for persons with disabilities often were lacking. The government worked with civil society organizations to implement programs to provide access for wheelchair users including building ramps to enhance access to transportation and buildings.

According to the Ministry of Education and Sports, the ministry had enrolled 1,200 children and youth with special educational needs in primary, secondary, and higher education. There was no information available regarding abuse of persons with intellectual disabilities or mental disabilities in prisons or psychiatric hospitals. Persons with physical disabilities continued to experience difficulties in accessing prison facilities such as bathrooms and other services. Inmates with mental disabilities did not have access to psychiatric care or specific therapy. The government did not legally restrict the right of persons with physical disabilities to vote or otherwise participate in civic affairs and public life, unless the person was deemed not to have the mental capacity to exercise that right. According to the Electoral Code, blind persons or those with other physical disabilities that prevent them from voting on their own can be escorted by a citizen of their choice to cast their vote. Persons with intellectual or mental disabilities, as determined by the Ministry of Health, are not allowed to vote, according to the National Commission for Elections, which claimed such persons do not have the ability to make decisions on their own.

The government has a quota system for granting scholarships and tax benefits to companies that employ individuals with disabilities. NGOs recognized these measures as partially effective in better integrating these citizens into society but also noted nonenforcement and inadequate regulations continued to be obstacles (see section 7.d.).

Several NGOs worked to protect the interests of persons with disabilities. A 2012 Law on Mobility sets technical standards for accessibility for persons with disabilities for a variety of public facilities and services.

The Ministry of Employment, Human Resources, and Youth is the government organization responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. The National Council on the Status of Disabled Persons works in partnership with the ministry as a consultative body responsible for proposing, coordinating, and monitoring the implementation of a national policy.

The public television station, through a partnership with the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship, Handicap International, and the Cabo Verdean Federation of Associations of People with Disabilities, included in its nightly news a sign-language interpreter to facilitate access to the news for deaf persons who sign.

The law stipulates a quota of 5 percent of educational scholarships be allocated to persons with disabilities, but this percentage had not been reached.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The labor law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, color, sex, gender, disability, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, political opinion, ethnic origin, age, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases, or social status, and the government in general effectively enforced the law.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Cabo Verde signed the CRPD on 30 Mar 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 10 Oct 2011

Cameroon

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Children
Child Abuse: During the year local security officials uncovered two illegal and informal prisons at unregistered Quranic schools in the North and Adamawa regions. A total of 80 children and adults were found in the detention centers. Girls as young as 14 reported being raped in detention, while boys and men were chained in iron cuffs, starved, and tortured. Many of the detainees reportedly were left at the schools by parents or local religious leaders who wanted to rid themselves of children with behavioral problems or mental disabilities.

Persons with Disabilities
The law does not specifically address discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities, although the constitution explicitly forbids all forms of discrimination, providing that “everyone has equal rights and obligations.” The government made efforts to enforce this effectively with regard to persons with disabilities. The law requires that new government and private buildings be designed to facilitate access by persons with disabilities and that existing buildings be modified to do so. Secondary public education is tuition free for persons with disabilities and children born of parents with disabilities, and initial vocational training, medical treatment, and employment must be provided “when possible,” and public assistance “when needed.”

The majority of children with disabilities attended schools, although most of these children attended mainstream schools, rather than specialized schools for children with disabilities. Some specialized schools existed for children with vision, hearing, or physical disabilities. During the year as many as 82 children with disabilities were reportedly granted free tuition to
attend government secondary schools in the Fako Division of the Southwest Region, including three students with vision disabilities in the government bilingual high school, Molyko. At the government bilingual high school Nkol-Eton in Yaounde, two students with visual disabilities, three with hearing disabilities, and more than 30 students with physical disabilities started school in September.

A private training institution, SHILO Special Education and Inclusive Bilingual Teacher Training Institute, opened in September 2014. The school accepted students with vision and other disabilities. The students were trained as teachers for schools that catered to children with disabilities. The first group included approximately 30 trainees, of whom five had visual disabilities and two had hearing disabilities.

Societal discrimination continued against persons with disabilities. A study conducted in 2014 by the Groupe d’Action pour la Promotion des Personnes Handicappées in the Center Region revealed that 93.4 percent of respondents had experienced some form of violence. There was a report of a teacher in the Southwest Region who asked a student with albinism to leave the class whenever the teacher would deliver his lesson. The regional delegation of the Ministry of Social Affairs stopped the harassment. Societal discrimination against persons with disabilities occurred less frequently than in previous years (see section 7.d.).

There is no separate legal framework for the protection of persons with albinism. Due to the discrimination experienced by such persons, the government includes albinism under the legislative framework protecting persons with disabilities. The government stated persons with albinism benefitted from free medical consultations in dermatology, oncology, and ophthalmology.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The constitution and labor laws do not explicitly prohibit discrimination in employment or occupation based on race, religion, gender, disability, or belief. The constitution does not protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV status, having other communicable diseases, or social status. The constitution, however, states that all individuals have the right and the obligation to work.

The government generally attempted to enforce these legal requirements, but the large percentage of the population employed in the informal sector made effective enforcement difficult. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to ethnicity, disability, gender, and sexual orientation, especially in the private sector.

Ethnic groups commonly gave preferential treatment to fellow ethnic group members in business and social practices. Traditional Fulani rulers continued to have great power over their subjects and sometimes subjected them to tithing and forced labor. Isolated cases of hereditary servitude were alleged, largely by Fulani of the Kirdi ethnic group. Elsewhere in the country, especially in the South and East regions, other ethnic group members often treated the Baka as inferior and sometimes subjected them to unfair and exploitive labor practices. There were
reports that persons with disabilities, including albinism, found it difficult to secure employment, especially in the private sector.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
Cameroon signed the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 1 Oct 2008.

**Central African Republic**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**
Discrimination and violence were experienced by women; children; persons with disabilities; ethnic minorities; indigenous people; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons; persons with HIV/AIDS; Christians; and Muslims.

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

**Persons with Disabilities**
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with both mental and physical disabilities but does not specify other forms of disabilities. It also requires that in any company employing 25 or more persons, at least 5 percent of its staff must consist of sufficiently qualified persons with disabilities, if they are available. Additionally, the law states that at least 10 percent of the total number of newly recruited government civil service personnel should be persons with disabilities. There are no legislated or mandated accessibility provisions for persons with disabilities, and authorities did not provide such access.

The government did not enact programs to ensure access to buildings, information, and communications. No information was available on whether any children with disabilities attended school during the year. The Ministry of Labor’s Labor Inspectorate has responsibility for protecting children with disabilities.

When persons with disabilities reached IDP camps, they faced difficulties accessing sanitation, food, and medical assistance.

**Other Societal Violence or Discrimination**
According to the UN independent expert, there were numerous credible reports that “persons accused of witchcraft have been detained, tortured, or killed by individuals or members of armed groups, particularly in the west of the country.” Accusations of witchcraft were usually brought against members of the most vulnerable population groups, including women, the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, and persons with albinism. According to the independent
expert, “Persons suspected of witchcraft also were victims of mob justice, often carried out by anti-Balaka militias with the complicity of local authorities.”

**Section 7. Worker Rights**

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

It is illegal to discriminate in hiring or place of employment on the basis of race, national or social origin, gender, opinions, or beliefs. The law does not explicitly prohibit discrimination in employment and occupation based on disability, age, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, social status, and HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases. There was no documentation as to whether the government effectively enforced the law.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**


**Chad**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Interethnic discrimination occurred, as did discrimination against persons with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals; and persons with HIV/AIDS. Forced labor, particularly forced child labor, occurred.

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

**Persons with Disabilities**

The law prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities, although it does not specify the type of disability or whether the prohibition against discrimination extends to employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or the provision of other state services. The government did not effectively enforce the law. There are no laws that provide for access to public buildings for persons with disabilities. The government operated education, employment, and therapy programs for persons with disabilities.

Children with physical disabilities may attend primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. The government supported schools for children with vision or mental disabilities.

In conjunction with NGOs, such as the Support Group for the Disabled in Chad, the government annually sponsored a day of activities to raise awareness of the rights of persons with
disabilities. The Ministry of Women, Early Childhood Protection, and National Solidarity is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

**Section 7. Worker Rights**

**d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation**
The law and labor regulations prohibit employment or wage discrimination based on race, religion, gender, age, nationality, or membership in a union. There are no laws preventing employment discrimination based on disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases, or social status. Discrimination occurred based on the above categories with respect to employment or occupation.

Women generally were not permitted to work at night, more than 12 hours a day, or in jobs that could present moral or physical danger. Persons with disabilities frequently were victims of employment discrimination.

Workers may file discrimination complaints with the Office of the Labor Inspector, which conducts an investigation and subsequently may mediate between the worker and employer. If mediation fails, the case is forwarded to the labor court for a public hearing. The final decision and amount of any fine depend on the gravity of the case—147,000 to 294,000 CFA francs ($255 to $510) for an initial offense, and fines of 288,000 to 882,000 CFA francs ($500 to $1,530) or six to 10 days in prison for a subsequent offense. The penalties were not always sufficient to deter violations.

The government did not effectively enforce these laws and regulations. Although the law prohibits discrimination based on nationality, foreign nationals often had difficulty obtaining work permits, earned lower wages, and had poor working conditions.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
Chad signed the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 26 Sep 2012.

**Comoros**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**
Other human rights problems included poor prison conditions, long pretrial detention, restrictions on press freedom and freedom of assembly, violence and societal discrimination against women and persons with disabilities, and criminalization of consensual same-sex sexual activity.
Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
Although the law prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, disability, language, or social status, there were reports of discrimination against women and persons with disabilities.

Persons with Disabilities
The constitution and applicable laws, particularly the labor code, prohibit discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities (see section 7.d.). A 2014 law mandated improved access to buildings, information, communication, education, air travel, and other transportation for persons with disabilities. The government did not effectively enforce that law. Despite the absence of appropriate accommodation for children with disabilities, such children attended mainstream schools, both public and private.

Handicap Comores, the country's nongovernmental center for persons with disabilities on Grande Comore, was run by local NGO Shiwe, or Pillar. The center, recently renovated with help from foreign donors, also imported wheelchairs and prostheses.

Section 7. Worker Rights
d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation
Labor laws and regulations do not address discrimination regarding race, sex, gender, disability, language, sexual orientation and gender identity, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases, or social status. There were no reports that such discrimination occurred in the country.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Comoros signed the CRPD on 26 Sep 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 16 Jun 2016.

Congo, Democratic Republic of the

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Societal discrimination and abuse, particularly against women; children; persons with disabilities; ethnic minorities; indigenous persons; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons; and persons with albinism as well as trafficking in persons, child labor, use of forced civilian and child labor, and lack of protection of worker rights also were major problems.
Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution includes a general provision that all citizens are entitled to equal protection, and it specifically prohibits discrimination based on race, ethnicity, citizenship, gender, social origin, age, disability, political opinion, language, culture, or religion. The government did not enforce prohibitions against discrimination effectively.

Persons with Disabilities
The constitution prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, intellectual, or mental disabilities; stipulates all citizens regardless of disability should have access to public services; and provides specific government protection to persons with disabilities. The constitution states all persons should have access to national education regardless of their mental, physical, or sensorial state. The law states that private, public, and semipublic companies may not discriminate against qualified candidates based on intellectual, sensorial, and physical disabilities. The government did not enforce these provisions effectively, and persons with disabilities often found it difficult to obtain employment, education, and government services.

The law does not mandate access to government buildings or services for persons with disabilities. While persons with disabilities may attend public primary and secondary schools and have access to higher education, no special provisions are required of educational facilities to accommodate their special needs. Some schools for persons with disabilities, including persons with visual disabilities, received private and limited public funds to provide education and vocational training. Persons with disabilities have the right to vote, although lack of physical accessibility constituted a barrier for some persons with disabilities in exercising that right.

The Ministry of Social Affairs, in cooperation with other concerned ministries (Labor, Education, Justice, and Health), had the lead in seeking to provide for the equitable treatment of persons with disabilities.

According to UNICEF, society sometimes branded children with disabilities or speech impediments as witches.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, gender, language, or social status. The law does not specifically protect against discrimination based on religion, age, political opinion, national origin, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV-positive status. Additionally, no law specifically prohibits discrimination in employment of career public service members. The government did not effectively enforce relevant employment laws.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
The Democratic Republic of the Congo ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 30 Sep 2015.

Congo, Republic of the

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other major human rights abuses included harsh detention conditions; lack of due judicial process; infringement of citizens’ privacy rights; restrictions on freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association; harsh treatment of undocumented immigrants; restrictions on the ability of citizens to change their government peacefully; restrictions on the activities of opposition political groups; corruption on the part of officials and lack of transparency; discrimination against women; sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence, child abuse, and early marriage; trafficking in persons; lack of access for persons with disabilities; societal discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, particularly toward indigenous persons (Baka); discrimination based on nationality, particularly toward individuals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR), and Rwanda; discrimination based on sexual orientation and HIV/AIDS status; and child labor.

The government seldom took steps to prosecute or punish officials who committed abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in the government, and official impunity was a problem.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Persons with Disabilities
The law specifically prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, access to health care, or in the provision of other state services. The Ministry of Social Affairs is the lead ministry responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. In 2009 the ministry introduced a national plan to provide access for persons with disabilities, and the ministry’s 2013-16 Social Plan of Action includes an eight-point plan for improving the lives of such persons. There are no laws, however, mandating access for persons with disabilities. The government did not take action during the year to provide equal access for persons with disabilities to public spaces or transportation. The government provides special schools for students with hearing disabilities in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. The government mainstreamed children with visual disabilities and children with other physical disabilities into regular public schools. In December 2014 the government started a school to train social workers, teachers for children with disabilities, and sign language instructors.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Cote d’Ivoire

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
There were allegations made by opposition groups of torture of political prisoners and of extrajudicial killings. There was a case of forced disappearance; and there were reports of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment; arbitrary arrest; and prolonged pretrial detention. The government restricted press freedom and freedom of assembly. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) faced insecure and difficult living conditions. Statelessness remained extensive. Discrimination, sexual assault, and violence against women and children occurred. Societal discrimination against ethnic groups, persons with disabilities, and victims of HIV/AIDS was a problem. Employers subjected children and informal-sector workers to forced labor and hazardous conditions, particularly in rural areas.

The government seldom took steps to prosecute officials who committed abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in the government. Security forces impunity continued to be a serious problem.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The law prohibits discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, disability, or HIV status, but the government did not effectively enforce the law.

Persons with Disabilities
The law requires the government to educate and train persons with physical, mental, visual, auditory, and cerebral motor disabilities; hire them or help them find jobs; design houses and public facilities for wheelchair access; and adapt machines, tools, and work spaces for access and use by persons with disabilities. Wheelchair-accessible facilities were not common, and there were few training and job assistance programs for persons with disabilities. The law prohibits acts of violence against persons with disabilities and the abandonment of such persons, but there were no reports that the government enforced these laws.

Persons with disabilities reportedly encountered serious discrimination in employment and education. While the government reserved 800 civil service jobs for persons with disabilities, government employers sometimes refused to employ such persons.

The government financially supported special schools, training programs, associations, and artisans’ cooperatives for persons with disabilities, but many persons with disabilities begged on urban streets and in commercial zones for lack of other economic opportunities. Although the
public schools did not bar persons with disabilities from attending, such schools lacked the resources to accommodate students with disabilities. Persons with mental disabilities often lived on the street.

The Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs, and Professional Training and the Federation of the Handicapped are responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law prohibits employment and occupation discrimination based on sex, age, national origin, citizenship, race, religion, and social origin, but it is silent on discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. A 2014 law specifically prohibits workplace discrimination based on HIV/AIDS status. The new labor code passed in July includes provisions to promote access to employment for handicapped. It stipulates that employers must reserve a quota of jobs for qualified handicapped applicants.

The government did not always effectively enforce the law. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to gender, nationality, persons with disabilities, and LGBTI persons (see section 6). While women in the formal sector received the same pay and paid the same taxes as men, some employers resisted hiring women.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Cote d'Ivoire signed the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 7 Jun 2007. Cote d'Ivoire ratified the CRPD on 10 Jan 2014
Djibouti

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Other human rights problems included the use of excessive force, harsh prison conditions, arbitrary arrest and prolonged pretrial detention, denial of fair public trial, interference with privacy rights, restrictions on freedom of association and religion, lack of protection for refugees, corruption, discrimination and violence against women, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), trafficking in persons, discrimination against persons with disabilities, and government denial of worker rights.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, or language. Nevertheless, the government did not enforce the law effectively. The constitution does not directly address discrimination based on religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, age, disability, social status, sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV-positive status, or status of other communicable diseases.

Persons with Disabilities

The constitution does not prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities, although the labor code prohibits discrimination in employment against such persons (see section 7.d.). Both the Ministry of National Solidarity and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Family Planning had responsibility specifically to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Nevertheless, the law was not enforced. The government did not mandate access to government services and accessibility to buildings for persons with disabilities, and buildings were often inaccessible. The law provides persons with disabilities access to health care and education; however, the law was not enforced. The law does not prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in air travel and other transportation.

Authorities held prisoners with mental disabilities separately from other pretrial detainees and convicted prisoners. They received minimal psychological treatment or monitoring. Families could request to have relatives with mental disabilities who had not been convicted of any crime, but who were considered a danger to themselves or those around them, confined in prison. There were no mental health treatment facilities and only one practicing psychiatrist in the country.

Societal discrimination against persons with disabilities occurred. The National Human Rights Commission conducted awareness raising campaigns, and NGOs continued to organize seminars and other events that drew attention to the need for enhanced legal protections and better workplace conditions for persons with disabilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation
There is no law prohibiting discriminatory hiring practices based on disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV-positive status, or having other communicable diseases.

The government did not effectively enforce applicable law. According to disability advocates, there were not enough employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, and legal protections for such individuals were inadequate. The law does not require equal pay for equal work (see section 6).

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Djibouti ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 18 Jun 2012.

**Equatorial Guinea**

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

**Persons with Disabilities**

The law does not provide persons with disabilities any protection from discrimination in employment, education, or the provision of other state services, nor does it mandate access to buildings or transportation for persons with disabilities (see section 7.d.). Inaccessible public buildings and schools were an obstacle for persons with disabilities, and some newly constructed government buildings lacked such access.

Children with disabilities attended primary, secondary, and higher education, although no accommodations were made for their disabilities. The local Red Cross, with financial support from the government, managed a school for deaf children in Malabo. A privately run school for deaf children affiliated with a foreign religious group operated in Bata.

Two privately funded mental health clinics offered limited services in Bata. A private mental health facility, funded primarily by the Ministry of Health, operated in Malabo.

During the year an Office of Disabilities and the Elderly was created within the Department of Human Rights. The national social security program provides assistance to disabled workers, and the national health-care system provided some wheelchairs and promoted government employment for persons with physical disabilities. The first lady, through her personal civil society organization, also provided wheelchairs and assistance to persons with disabilities. In May a seminar of the National Organization of the Blind of Equatorial Guinea focused on improving conditions of the visually impaired, including increasing employment opportunities.

There were no legal restrictions on the right of persons to vote or participate in civic affairs based on their disability, but lack of access posed a barrier to full participation.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation

Labor laws and regulations prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex, political opinion, national origin, social status, or union affiliation. Labor laws do not prohibit discrimination based on age, language, or HIV-positive status. The government did not effectively enforce these laws and regulations. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and HIV-positive status (see section 6). Discrimination also occurred based on political affiliation (see section 3). Discrimination against foreign migrant workers occurred (see section 7.e.).

There is no agency responsible for the protection for those unable to work due to permanent or temporary illness or other health condition. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security did not effectively enforce the legal mandate to employ a specific percentage of persons with disabilities in companies with 50 employees or more.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Equatorial Guinea has not signed or ratified the CRPD or Optional Protocol.

Eritrea

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

The COI found that extrajudicial executions and arbitrary killings had been widely committed since independence. The COI’s findings included extrajudicial killings before the border war of war veterans with disabilities and political opponents, including Muslim scholars and others; extrajudicial executions of political opponents, smugglers, and others for less serious or “speculative” crimes; mass killings against certain ethnic groups; use of lethal force, mainly by the military, to punish persons for less serious crimes; and systematic execution by the military of soldiers accused of cowardice or desertion during the border war.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The law and unimplemented constitution prohibit discrimination based on race, religion, political opinion, ethnic origin, social or economic status, disability, gender, age, and language, but the government did not enforce these prohibitions.
Persons with Disabilities
The law and unimplemented constitution prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, education, or in the provision of other state services. There are no laws on discrimination in air travel and other transportation and in access to health care. The unimplemented constitution and law do not specify the types of disabilities against which they prohibit discrimination. The government did not effectively enforce prohibitions, although it implemented programs to assist persons with disabilities, especially combat veterans. The government dedicated substantial resources to support and train thousands of persons with physical disabilities, especially those missing limbs as a result of the war for independence and the later conflict with Ethiopia. No laws mandate access for persons with disabilities to public or private buildings, information, and communications. An increasing number of hotels and government offices provided such access or employed guards who offered assistance as needed. There were separate schools for children with hearing, visual, mental, and intellectual disabilities. Most of these schools were private. The government provided some support to them. Information on whether there were patterns of abuse in educational and mental health facilities was not available. The Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities including mental disabilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights
d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
With respect to employment and occupation, labor laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex, disability, social origin, nationality, political orientation, or religion. The law does not prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity, HIV-positive status, language, or age. The government did not effectively enforce the laws.

Discrimination against women was common in the workplace and occurred in an environment of impunity. There is no legal prohibition against sexual harassment (see section 6, Women).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Eritrea has not signed or ratified the CRPD or Optional Protocol.

Ethiopia
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights problems included alleged arbitrary killings; harsh and at times life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; detention without charge and lengthy pretrial detention; a weak, overburdened judiciary subject to political influence; infringement on citizens’ privacy rights, including illegal searches; alleged abuses in the
implementation of the government’s “villagization” program; restrictions on freedom of expression, including continued restrictions on print media and the internet, assembly, association, and movement; restrictions on academic freedom; interference in religious affairs; restrictions on activities of civil society and NGOs; limited ability of citizens to change their government; police, administrative, and judicial corruption; violence and societal discrimination against women and abuse of children; female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); trafficking in persons; societal discrimination against persons with disabilities; clashes between ethnic minorities; discrimination against persons based on their sexual orientation and against persons with HIV/AIDS; and limits on worker rights, forced labor, and child labor, including forced child labor.

Section 5. Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

The CSO law prohibits charities, societies, and associations (NGOs or CSOs) that receive more than 10 percent of their funding from foreign sources from engaging in activities that advance human and democratic rights or promote equality of nations, nationalities, peoples, genders, and religions; the rights of children and persons with disabilities; conflict resolution or reconciliation; or the efficiency of justice and law enforcement services. The law severely curtailed civil society's ability to raise questions of good governance, human rights, corruption, and transparency, and forced many local and international NGOs working on good governance and human rights to either cease advocacy, or reregister under the law and focus on activities other than rights-based advocacy. In 2012 the UN high commissioner for human rights expressed concern that civil society space “has rapidly shrunk” since the CSO law’s enactment. By year's end 3,056 NGOs had registered under the CSO law. Of these, however, only four groups were actively engaged in human rights-based advocacy.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Persons with Disabilities

The constitution does not mandate equal rights for persons with disabilities. The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical and mental disabilities in employment and mandates access to buildings but does not explicitly mention intellectual or sensory disabilities. It is illegal for deaf persons to drive.

The law prohibits employment discrimination based on disability. It also makes employers responsible for providing appropriate working or training conditions and materials to persons with disabilities. The law specifically recognizes the additional burden on women with disabilities. The government took limited measures to enforce the law, for example, by assigning interpreters for hearing-impaired civil service employees (see section 7.d.). The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Public Servants Administration Commission are responsible for the implementation of the Proclamation on The Rights of Disabled Persons to Employment.

The law mandates building accessibility and accessible toilet facilities for persons with physical disabilities, although specific regulations that define the accessibility standards were not
adopted. Buildings and toilet facilities were usually not accessible. Property owners are required to give persons with disabilities preference for ground-floor apartments, and this was respected.

Women with disabilities were more disadvantaged than men in education and employment. The 2010 Population Council Young Adult Survey found young persons with disabilities were less likely to have ever attended school than those without disabilities. The survey indicated girls with disabilities were less likely than boys to be in school: 23 percent of girls with disabilities were in school, compared with 48 percent of girls and 55 percent of boys without disabilities. Overall, 48 percent of young persons with disabilities surveyed reported not going to school due to their disability. Girls with disabilities also were much more likely to suffer physical and sexual abuse than girls without disabilities. Of sexually experienced girls with disabilities, 33 percent reported having experienced forced sex. According to the same survey, approximately 6 percent of boys with disabilities had been beaten in the three months prior to the survey, compared with 2 percent of boys without disabilities.

There were several schools for persons with hearing and vision disabilities and several training centers for children and young persons with intellectual disabilities. There was a network of prosthetic and orthopedic centers in five of the nine regional states.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs worked on disability-related problems. The CSO law continued to affect negatively several domestic associations, such as the Ethiopian National Association of the Blind, the Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf, and the Ethiopian National Association of the Physically Handicapped, as it did other civil society organizations. International organizations and some local CSOs were active, particularly on issues concerning accessibility and vocational training for persons with disabilities.

The right of persons with disabilities to vote and otherwise participate in civic affairs is not restricted in law, although lack of accessibility can make participation difficult. In the May national elections, African Union observers reported voters requiring assistance were always provided with assistance, either by a person of their choice or by polling staff. Most polling stations were accessible to persons with disabilities, and priority was given to them as well as the elderly, pregnant women, and nursing mothers.

Section 7. Worker Rights
d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin nationality, gender, marital status, religion, political affiliation, political outlook, pregnancy, socioeconomic status, disability, or “any other conditions.” The law specifically recognizes the additional burden on pregnant women and persons with disabilities (see section 6.). Sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV-positive status are not specifically protected. The penalty for discrimination on the above grounds is a fine of 1,200 birr ($58). The government took limited measures to enforce the law.
Gabon

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
Prison conditions were harsh and potentially life threatening due to low quality food, inadequate sanitation, lack of ventilation, gross overcrowding, and poor medical care. Conditions in jails and detention centers mirrored those in prisons. There were no special accommodations for persons with disabilities in prisons.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
Although the constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on national origin, race, gender, religion, disability, language, or social status, the government did not enforce these provisions consistently. The constitution and law do not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, age, language, or HIV positive status.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with “physical, mental, congenital, and accidental” disabilities and requires access to buildings and services, including voter access to election polling centers. Most public buildings did not provide adequate access. The law subsumes sensory disabilities under congenital and “accidental” disabilities but does not recognize the concept of intellectual disability. The law provides for the rights of persons with disabilities to education, health care, and transportation. Enforcement was limited--there were no government programs to provide access to buildings, information, and communications for persons with disabilities. Children with disabilities generally attended school at all levels, including mainstream schools. Specialized schools provided education to some children with significant disabilities. There was access for persons with disabilities in air travel but not for ground transportation.

Societal discrimination occurred, and employment opportunities and treatment facilities for persons with disabilities were limited (see section 7.d.). Persons with disabilities faced barriers in obtaining employment, such as gaining access to human resources offices to apply for jobs because buildings were not accessible. The inaccessibility of buses and taxis complicated seeking jobs or getting to places of employment for those without their own means of transportation. Despite these challenges, many persons with disabilities did work and some were successful professionals.
Gambia, The

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, gender, disability, language, or social status, and the government generally enforced these prohibitions. Nevertheless, discrimination against women remained a problem. The constitution and law do not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Persons with Disabilities
The constitution prohibits discrimination against or exploitation of persons with disabilities, although it does not expressly reference the kinds of disabilities protected, particularly as regards access to health services, education, and employment (see section 7.d.); authorities effectively enforced these provisions. Access to air travel and other transportation are not specifically mentioned. There were no laws to provide for access to buildings for persons with disabilities, and very few public buildings in the country were accessible to them. The laws do not explicitly prohibit discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities. No laws or programs stipulate that persons with disabilities should have access to information or communications. The law requires that judicial proceedings involving a person with disabilities take into account the disabilities.

Persons with severe disabilities experienced discrimination and subsisted primarily through private charity. Persons with less severe disabilities encountered less discrimination, including in employment for which they were physically and mentally capable.

The Department of Social Welfare is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and worked with the Gambia Organization for the Visually Impaired and the School for the Deaf and Blind to help educate children with disabilities and to promote relevant skills. Most children with disabilities, however, did not attend school. The department also worked with international donors to supply wheelchairs to some persons with disabilities. Several NGOs sought to improve awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and encouraged their participation in sports and other physical activities. The NHRU sought to promote the rights of women with disabilities. Persons with disabilities received priority access to polling booths on election days.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, disability, sex, property, birth or other status.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Gambia ratified the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 7 Jul 2015.

Ghana

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Other human rights problems included use of excessive force by police that resulted in deaths and injuries; rape by police; prolonged pretrial detention; assault and harassment of journalists; corruption in all branches of government; violence against women and children, including female genital mutilation/cutting; societal discrimination against women, persons with disabilities, and persons with HIV/AIDS; societal discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals; ethnic discrimination and politically motivated violence; and ethnic killings and vigilante violence.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

There were several reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings. For example, in February security personnel killed an amputee in the Ashanti region for allegedly running a police checkpoint (reportedly because he feared arrest under a law prohibiting persons with disabilities from driving). The security personnel followed the victim to his house, entered the premises, dragged him out from under his bed and, unable to restrain him with handcuffs because of his amputation, beat him until one of the security personnel shot him. At year’s end the Attorney General’s Department was determining whether to prosecute the case.

Prison and Detention Center Conditions

Physical Conditions: Ghana Prisons Service statistics available in October indicated 14,061 prisoners (13,870 men and 191 women) were held in prisons designed to hold approximately one-third that number. Authorities neither housed juvenile detainees separately from adults nor
pretrial detainees separately from convicted prisoners, but women were held separately. No staff specifically focused on mental health, and prisoners with mental disabilities were not routinely identified or offered treatment or other appropriate supports.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Persons with Disabilities
The law explicitly prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or the provision of other state services, but the government did not effectively enforce the law. The law provides that persons with disabilities have access to public spaces with “appropriate facilities that make the place accessible to and available for use by a person with disability,” but inaccessibility to schools and public buildings continued to be a problem. Children with disabilities attended specialized schools that focused on their needs, but few adults with disabilities had employment opportunities (see section 7.d.).

Persons with both mental and physical disabilities, including children, were frequently subjected to abuse and intolerance. Psychiatric hospitals were overcrowded and unsanitary, and the country had a severe shortage of mental health professionals. Children with disabilities who lived at home were sometimes tied to trees or under market stalls and caned regularly; some reportedly were killed by their families. The Ghana Education Service, through its Special Education Unit, provided assistive technology devices such as Braille readers to blind and visually impaired students.

Thousands of persons with mental disabilities, including children as young as seven, were sent to spiritual healing centers known as “prayer camps” where mental illness was often considered a “demonic affliction.” Residents are typically chained for weeks against their will in these environments with little challenge to their confinement, denied food and water often for seven consecutive days, and physically assaulted. While the country passed a Mental Health Act in 2012, few steps were taken to implement the legislation.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law prohibits discrimination in employment or occupation on grounds of gender, race, color, ethnic origin, religion, political opinion, social or economic status, or disability. The law does not prohibit discrimination on the grounds of age, language, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, HIV-positive status, or having other communicable diseases.

The government did not effectively enforce prohibitions on discrimination, and penalties were not adequate to deter violations. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to women, the disabled, HIV-positive persons, and LGBTI persons (see section 6). Women in urban centers and those with skills and training encountered little overt bias, but resistance persisted to women entering nontraditional fields.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Ghana signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 30 03 2007. The government ratified the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 3 Jul 2012.

Guinea

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights problems included use of excessive force by police that resulted in deaths and injuries; rape by police; prolonged pretrial detention; assault and harassment of journalists; corruption in all branches of government; violence against women and children, including female genital mutilation/cutting; societal discrimination against women, persons with disabilities, and persons with HIV/AIDS; societal discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals; ethnic discrimination and politically motivated violence; and ethnic killings and vigilante violence.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life
There were several reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings. For example, in February security personnel killed an amputee in the Ashanti region for allegedly running a police checkpoint (reportedly because he feared arrest under a law prohibiting persons with disabilities from driving). The security personnel followed the victim to his house, entered the premises, dragged him out from under his bed and, unable to restrain him with handcuffs because of his amputation, beat him until one of the security personnel shot him. At year’s end the Attorney General's Department was determining whether to prosecute the case.

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
Physical Conditions: Ghana Prisons Service statistics available in October indicated 14,061 prisoners (13,870 men and 191 women) were held in prisons designed to hold approximately one-third that number. Authorities neither housed juvenile detainees separately from adults nor pretrial detainees separately from convicted prisoners, but women were held separately. No staff specifically focused on mental health, and prisoners with mental disabilities were not routinely identified or offered treatment or other appropriate supports.
Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Persons with Disabilities
The law explicitly prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or the provision of other state services, but the government did not effectively enforce the law. The law provides that persons with disabilities have access to public spaces with “appropriate facilities that make the place accessible to and available for use by a person with disability,” but inaccessibility to schools and public buildings continued to be a problem. Children with disabilities attended specialized schools that focused on their needs, but few adults with disabilities had employment opportunities (see section 7.d.).

Persons with both mental and physical disabilities, including children, were frequently subjected to abuse and intolerance. Psychiatric hospitals were overcrowded and unsanitary, and the country had a severe shortage of mental health professionals. Children with disabilities who lived at home were sometimes tied to trees or under market stalls and caned regularly; some reportedly were killed by their families. The Ghana Education Service, through its Special Education Unit, provided assistive technology devices such as Braille readers to blind and visually impaired students.

Thousands of persons with mental disabilities, including children as young as seven, were sent to spiritual healing centers known as “prayer camps” where mental illness was often considered a “demonic affliction.” Residents are typically chained for weeks against their will in these environments with little challenge to their confinement, denied food and water often for seven consecutive days, and physically assaulted. While the country passed a Mental Health Act in 2012, few steps were taken to implement the legislation.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The labor code adopted in February prohibits discrimination with respect to employment and occupation based on sex, religion, political opinion, disability, or ethnicity. The law does not address discrimination based on race, color, national origin or citizenship, social origin, sexual orientation or gender identity, age, language, or HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases. The government did not effectively enforce the law. Penalties were not sufficient to deter violations.

Although the law requires equal pay for equal work, women received lower pay for similar work (see section 7.d.). Few persons with disabilities worked in the formal sector, although some worked in small family businesses; many survived by begging in the streets.
**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**  

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**Guinea-Bissau**

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

**Persons with Disabilities**

The law does not specifically prohibit discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or other provisions of state services. There were no government efforts to mitigate discrimination against persons with disabilities or to provide access to buildings, information, and communications. Some children with disabilities may have attended primary and perhaps secondary schools. The government made some efforts to assist military veterans with disabilities through pension programs, but these programs did not adequately address health care, housing, or food needs. Provisions existed to allow blind and illiterate voters to participate in the electoral process, but voters with intellectual disabilities could be restricted from voting.

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**Section 7. Worker Rights**

**d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation**

The law and regulations do not prohibit discrimination regarding race, sex, gender, disability, language, sexual orientation or gender identity, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases, or social status.

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**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Guinea-Bissau signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 24 Sep 2013. The government ratified the CRPD on 24 Sep 2014.

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**Kenya**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Other human rights problems included: harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; prolonged pretrial detention; arbitrary interference with the home and
infringement on citizens' privacy; restrictions on press freedom and freedom of assembly; abuse and forced resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs); abuse of refugees; violence and discrimination against women; violence against children, including female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); early and forced marriage; child prostitution; trafficking in persons; discrimination against persons with disabilities and albinism; discrimination based on ethnicity, sexual orientation, and HIV/AIDS status; violence against persons with HIV/AIDS; mob violence; lack of enforcement of workers' rights; forced and bonded labor, including of children; and child labor.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
Prison and detention center conditions were harsh and life threatening due to overcrowding, food and water shortages, and inadequate sanitary conditions and medical care. Pretrial detention in police stations similarly continued to be harsh and life threatening. According to a December 2014 media report, prisons did not have facilities to accommodate persons with disabilities. Approximately 50 prisoners with disabilities resided at Nairobi's Naivasha G.K. Prison, the country's largest prison.

Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process
The constitution provides for parliamentary representation by women, youth, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and marginalized communities. Implementation of constitutional reforms continued during the year but was uneven at times. On August 26, the National Assembly passed a bill extending by one year the five-year deadline for the adoption of 28 pending constitutionally mandated laws, including laws to implement the constitutional principle that no gender should encumber more than two-thirds of elective and appointed offices, as well as land and other laws.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, religion, ethnic or social origin, disability, and marital or health status. Government authorities did not effectively enforce many of these provisions, and discrimination against women; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons; individuals with HIV/AIDS; persons with disabilities; persons suspected of witchcraft; and certain ethnic groups was a problem. There was also evidence that some national and local government officials tolerated, and in some instances instigated, ethnic violence. The law criminalizes homosexual activity.

Discrimination: The constitution provides equal rights for men and women and specifically prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, pregnancy, marital status, health status, ethnic or social origin, color, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, dress, language, or birth. Women held only 6 percent of land titles, of which the majority were joint titles, and
accessed only 7 percent of formal credit awarded in the country. The justice system and widely applied customary laws often discriminated against women, limiting their political and economic rights. The National Gender and Equality Commission signed an agreement with UN Women in July to support initiatives that were aimed at reducing gender inequalities and discrimination.

**Persons with Disabilities**

The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical or mental disabilities in employment, education, access to health care, or the provision of other state services. The government did not effectively enforce these provisions. The constitution provides legal safeguards for the representation of persons with disabilities in legislative and appointive bodies. The law provides that persons with disabilities should have access to public buildings, and some buildings in major cities had wheelchair ramps and modified elevators and restrooms. The government did not enforce the law, however, and new construction often did not include accommodations for persons with disabilities. Government buildings in rural areas generally were not accessible for persons with disabilities. According to NGOs, police stations remained largely inaccessible to those with mobility disabilities.

In a 2014 report to the UN Human Rights Council, the KNCHR estimated there were seven million persons with some form of disability in the country. There was limited societal awareness of persons with disabilities and significant stigma attached to disability. Learning and other disabilities not readily apparent were not widely recognized. NGOs reported that persons with disabilities had limited opportunities to obtain education and job training at all levels due to lack of accessibility of facilities and resistance on the part of school officials and parents to devoting resources to students with disabilities. The KNCHR estimated that 67 percent of persons with disabilities had a primary education, 19 percent attained secondary education, and 2 percent reached university level, while 7 percent of persons with disabilities reported that authorities denied them all access to education because of their disability.

According to a 2014 survey by the NGO Handicap International on the rights of persons with disabilities in the country, 85 percent of persons with disabilities experienced verbal abuse related to their disability and 17 percent experienced gender-based violence. Of those who reported abuse, 47 percent neither reported the incident to police or other authorities nor sought medical help or counseling. They cited fear of reprisal or of being misunderstood as their reasons. Of those who reported abuse to some authority, the majority reported the incident to community elders rather than police.

Authorities received reports of killings of persons with disabilities as well as torture and abuse, and the government took action in some cases. According to a 2014 report by *The Standard* newspaper, parents of children with disabilities living in pastoralist communities often tied them up during the day or abandoned them.

Persons with disabilities faced significant barriers to accessing health care. They had difficulty obtaining HIV testing and contraceptive services due to the perception they should not engage in sexual activity. According to Handicap International, 36 percent of persons with disabilities reported facing difficulties in accessing health services; cost, distance to a health facility, and physical barriers were the main reasons cited.

Few facilities provided interpreters or other accommodations to persons with hearing disabilities. The government assigned each region a sign language interpreter for court proceedings.
Nevertheless, authorities often delayed or adjourned cases involving persons who had hearing disabilities due to a lack of standby interpreters, according to an official with the NGO Deaf Outreach Program. According to the KNCHR, 10 secondary schools in the country could accommodate the needs of persons with hearing limitations.

Under the new government structure, the former Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Development was subsumed into other ministries, and the Ministry for Devolution and Planning became the lead ministry for implementation of the law to protect persons with disabilities. The quasi-independent but government-funded parastatal National Council for Persons with Disabilities assisted the ministry. Neither entity received sufficient resources to address effectively problems related to persons with disabilities. The Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya carried out advocacy campaigns on behalf of persons with disabilities, distributed wheelchairs, and worked with public institutions to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. The KNCHR noted that awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities increased as a result in some counties, but it faulted the government for not ensuring equal protection of the rights of persons with disabilities throughout the country.

Nominated and elected parliamentarians with disabilities formed the Kenya Disability Parliamentary Caucus in 2013 and issued a strategy statement focusing on improving economic empowerment and physical access for persons with disabilities as well as integrating disability rights into county government policies.

Other Societal Violence or Discrimination
Societal discrimination continued against persons with albinism, many of whom left their home villages due to fear of abuse and moved to urban areas where they believed they were safer. According to disability rights advocates, there were 12 attacks on persons with albinism documented during the year, although advocates stated many attacks and killings were unreported. Individuals attacked persons with albinism for their body parts that some believed would confer magical powers and that could be sold for significant sums. On June 13, albinos marched in Nairobi to mark International Albinism Awareness Day. On September 14, according to newspaper The Daily Nation, attackers tried to cut body parts off a man with albinism to sell for witchcraft.

The National Council of Persons with Disabilities and the Kenya Albino Child Support Program, in partnership with the government, continued an awareness campaign to combat discrimination. In 2013 Isaac Mwaura became the first person with albinism to serve in Parliament when his party nominated him for a seat in the National Assembly designated for marginalized persons. Employment discrimination against persons with albinism also occurred (see section 7.d.).

Section 7. Worker Rights
d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on grounds of race, color, sex, age, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, disability,
The law did not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The government did not effectively enforce the law.

Due to societal discrimination, there were limited employment opportunities for persons with albinism.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work
The law intends required labor inspections to prevent labor disputes, accidents, and conflicts and to protect workers from occupational hazards and disease by ensuring compliance with labor laws. Low salaries and the lack of vehicles, fuel, and other resources made it very difficult for labor inspectors to do their work effectively and left them vulnerable to bribes and other forms of corruption. Inspection forms do not include persons with disabilities, and during the year the ministry addressed how to capture data affecting such workers.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Kenya signed the CRPD on 30 Mar 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 19 May 2008.

Lesotho

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights problems included lengthy pretrial detention, long trial delays, and official corruption. Societal abuses included stigmatization of persons with disabilities, human trafficking, discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS, and child labor.

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
The LCS did not provide special assistance to prisoners with disabilities, who relied on voluntary assistance from other prisoners. As with many public buildings in the country, prison buildings lacked ramps, railings, and other measures facilitating physical access for prisoners with disabilities. The LCS did not have any personnel trained in sign language.

Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press
Freedom of Speech and Expression: No official restrictions limit the ability of individuals to criticize the government publicly or privately or discuss matters of general public interest without reprisal. The law prohibits expressions of hatred or contempt for any person because of the person’s race, ethnic affiliation, gender, disability, or color. The government did not arrest or convict anyone under these laws. The NSS reportedly monitored political meetings.
Participation of Women and Minorities: No laws prevent women or minorities from voting, serving as electoral monitors or otherwise participating in political life on the same basis as men or ethnic Basotho citizens. The law provides for the allocation of one-third of the seats in the municipal, urban, and community councils to women. The law also states a political party registered with the Independent Electoral Commission must facilitate the full participation of women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Party lists for the 40 proportional representation seats in the National Assembly must include equal numbers of women and men.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, color, gender, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion, HIV positive status, or social status. The law does not reference sexual orientation or gender identity, but other laws prohibit same-sex sexual activity between men, although there is no law concerning same-sex sexual activity between women. Authorities did not regularly enforce antidiscrimination laws, in part because public awareness of these protections was low, so victims rarely brought claims. Under customary law, constitutionally recognized as a parallel legal system, women were disadvantaged with regard to property rights, inheritance, and succession rights.

Persons with Disabilities
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, education, access to health care, or the provision of other state services. The constitution does not refer to specific disabilities or to access to air travel and other transportation. The labor code and Public Service Act do not specifically provide for meaningful access to employment in both the private and public sectors by persons with disabilities. The national disability policy establishes a framework for inclusion of persons with disabilities in poverty reduction and social development programs, but by year’s end, the government had not incorporated objectives or guidelines for the implementation of these programs. The Association of the Disabled promoted the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities were disadvantaged regarding access to public buildings, employment (see section 7.d.), education, air travel and other transportation, information and communications, and health care. Laws and regulations stipulate that persons with disabilities should have access to public buildings. Public buildings completed after 1995 generally complied with the law, but many older buildings remained inaccessible. There was no accommodation for persons with disabilities in air or other transportation. Braille and JAWS (computer software used by persons with vision disabilities) were not widely available. Service providers in the government or private sector did not provide sign language interpreters (except Lesotho Television—see below), so signing individuals could not access state services. There were limited facilities for training persons with disabilities. Children with physical disabilities attended school; however, facilities to accommodate them in primary, secondary, and higher education were limited. Two schools accommodated children with vision disabilities, two schools accommodated children with hearing and speech disabilities, and one school accommodated children with intellectual disabilities. Although the government did not effectively implement laws that provide for persons with disabilities to have access to information and communications, in
December 2013 Lesotho Television introduced sign language interpretation during its daily news broadcast.

Media reports indicated persons with disabilities experienced societal abuse. During an interview with the Lesotho News Agency on March 23, the officer in charge of the Mabote CGPU, Inspector Mamakafane Matlali, said the police were alarmed by a high rate of sexual abuse of people with disabilities, particularly children and women. The interview followed reports of two cases wherein neighbors sexually abused women with disabilities. In the first, Inspector Matlali indicated that two boys raped a 25-year-old woman from Sekamaneng with a disability. In the second, Matlali said a neighbor raped a 17-year-old girl from Koalabata with a disability. There was only one report of a person with a disability being abused in a prison, educational facility, or mental health facility, that of a visually impaired brigadier in the LDF, who, according to press reports, was mistreated while under detention in connection with an alleged mutiny. According to the Lesotho National Federation of Organizations of the Disabled, such abuse likely occurred more regularly than was reported.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The labor code prohibits discrimination regarding race, color, sex, marital status, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, and HIV/AIDS status, but it does not explicitly prohibit discrimination based on disability. There is no provision for equal pay for equal work.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Lesotho ratified the CRPD on 2 Dec 2008.

Liberia

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

Prison and Detention Center Conditions

There were reports of inadequate treatment for ailing inmates and inmates with disabilities. While the law provides for compassionate release of prisoners who are ill, such release was uncommon, since the law requires a written policy that does not exist.
Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The constitution prohibits discrimination based on sex, creed, place of origin, disability, or political opinion; however, the government did not enforce these provisions effectively. The constitution allows only persons who are “Negroes” or of “Negro descent” to become citizens and own land. Lebanese born in the country over several generations, for example, remained noncitizens in accordance with this provision.

Persons with Disabilities

Although it is illegal to discriminate against persons with physical and mental disabilities, such persons did not enjoy equal access to government services and found very limited employment prospects (see section 7.d.). The constitution prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities in employment and provides for access to health care, but these provisions were not always enforced. There is a legal prohibition against discrimination on such grounds in accessing air travel or other transportation.

Public educational institutions discriminated against students with disabilities, arguing resources and equipment were insufficient to accommodate them.

Many citizens had permanent disabilities resulting from the civil war. Persons with disabilities faced societal exclusion, particularly in rural areas. Few children with disabilities had access to education. The government included persons with disabilities in its 2012 Vision 2030 national development strategy meeting and related panel discussions that continued during the year.

Students with more significant disabilities are exempt from compulsory education, but may attend school subject to constraints on accommodating them.

The right of persons with disabilities to vote and otherwise participate in civic affairs is legally protected and was generally respected, although inaccessibility of buildings posed problems for persons wishing to exercise these rights. The Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection is the government agency responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and implementing measures designed to improve respect for their rights.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to gender, disability, and HIV-positive status (see section 6). Apart from facing economic discrimination based on cultural traditions, women also experienced discrimination in employment.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Liberia signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 30 Mar 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 26 Jul 2012.
Madagascar

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights problems included intimidation of journalists and restrictions on freedoms of speech, press, and assembly; official corruption and impunity; societal discrimination and violence against women; child abuse and child marriage; discrimination against persons with disabilities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community; trafficking in persons; and child labor, including forced child labor.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, disability, language, and social status. No government institutions had designated authority to enforce these provisions.

Children
Infanticide or Infanticide of Children with Disabilities: Media reports documented several deaths of newborns abandoned in gutters and dumpsters. A traditional taboo in the southeast against giving birth to twins also contributed to the problem.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical and mental disabilities, although there is no specific mention of sensory and intellectual disabilities. Legislation broadly defines the rights of persons with disabilities and provides for a national commission and regional subcommissions to promote their rights. By law persons with disabilities are entitled to receive health care and education and have the right to training and employment; the law does not address air travel. Educational institutions are “encouraged” to make necessary infrastructure adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. The law also specifies the state “must facilitate, to the extent possible, access to its facilities, public spaces, and public transportation to accommodate persons with disabilities.”

Authorities rarely enforced the rights of persons with disabilities, and the legal framework for promoting accessibility remained perfunctory. According to a comprehensive study commissioned by a local NGO, key themes such as accessibility, autonomy, personal mobility, equality, access to justice, the ability to participate in public life and politics—in addition to the specific rights of women and children with disabilities—are all excluded from the current legal framework covering disability rights.

On January 3, gendarmes from the territorial brigade Farafangana arrested a man with mental disabilities for having insulted a colonel in the gendarmerie. On January 4, the gendarmes battered the man to death after he reportedly tried to strangle one of the gendarmes in the station.

Access to education and health care for persons with disabilities also was limited, due to lack of adequate infrastructure, specialized institutions, and personnel. Nevertheless, disability advocates reported there were more than 60 integrated classrooms across the country that included children with mental disabilities. Local officials also accommodated students with disabilities during official high school exams.
Persons with disabilities were at increased risk of discrimination in the workforce (see section 7.d.). They were also more likely to become victims of abuse, sometimes perpetrated by their own relatives. For example, the leader of an association of women with disabilities reported that two of their members had forcible tubal ligations ordered by their parents to prevent them from having more children since the parents considered them burdens for their families.

Some persons with disabilities chose not to vote in recent elections due to the inaccessibility of voting stations. The presence of stairs, uneven pavement, potholes, and the fear of standing in line for long periods were significant deterrents. The electoral code provides that individuals with disabilities be assisted in casting their ballots, but it contains no other provisions to accommodate voters with disabilities. Despite the law's ambiguity, disability association leaders reported that during the July municipal elections, voters with disabilities of all types received accommodation at polling stations.

The Ministry of Population and Social Affairs is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. In partnership with Handicap International, local governments also actively participated in an inclusive communal development program. The communes of Toamasina and Tulear significantly improved the accessibility of markets and other public places for persons with disabilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

Labor laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, political opinion, origin, and disability in the workplace. A special decree related to HIV in the workplace addresses prohibition of discrimination based on serology status. The law does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or language. Discrimination remained a problem. Employers subjected persons with disabilities and LGBTI individuals to hiring discrimination.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Madagascar signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 25 Sep 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 12 Jun 2015.

Malawi

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Other human rights problems included arbitrary arrest and detention; lengthy pretrial detention; occasional mob violence; societal violence against women; harmful traditional practices;
trafficking in persons; discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons; discrimination against persons with disabilities; and child labor.

Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association
The constitution and law provide for the freedom of association, and the government generally respected this right. Nevertheless, the government required registration of all NGOs and political parties. NGOs must register with three different government entities and pay significant yearly registration fees. The minister of gender, children, disability, and social welfare threatened to close NGOs that did not comply with registration requirements for “lack of transparency.” The chairperson of the NGO Board made similar threats targeted specifically at NGOs advocating for LGBTI rights.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The law forbids discrimination based on race; color; sex; language; religion; political or other opinion; national, ethnic, or social origin; disability; property; birth; or other status. The law does not specifically mention sexual orientation. The capacity of government institutions to enforce the law was limited.

Persons with Disabilities
The Disability Act prohibits discrimination in education, health care, social services, the workplace, housing, political life, and cultural and sporting activities for persons with disabilities, defined as a long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment. The law prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in political and public life and calls for the government to take measures to provide access for them to transportation, information, and communication services. The law provides for the establishment of a disability trust fund to support persons with disabilities, including with regard to access to public facilities, both governmental and private.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities were not among the government’s priorities. Although the Disability Act took effect in 2013, the government had yet to adopt standards and plans for its enforcement and implementation. The Ministry of Gender, Children, Social Welfare, and Disability is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, but inadequate resources precluded it from doing so.

There were public and privately supported schools and training centers that assisted persons with disabilities. A prominent disability advocacy group noted that unlawful discrimination against women and children with disabilities was more prevalent in rural areas and that it received several reports of children with disabilities dropping out of school because of inadequate accommodations.

As of September the MHRC reported receiving and initiated investigations into four complaints related to disability rights but did not provide details on the complaints.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The employment law prohibits discrimination against any employee or prospective employee on the grounds of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, disability, property, birth, marital or other status, family responsibilities or HIV/AIDS and other communicable disease status, but the government in general did not effectively enforce the law.

Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to gender and disability (see section 6). Despite the law against discrimination based on gender or marital status, discrimination against women was pervasive, and women did not have opportunities equal to those available to men. Women had significantly lower levels of literacy, education, and formal and nontraditional employment opportunities. Few women participated in the limited formal labor market, and those that did represented only a very small portion of managerial and administrative staff. Households headed by women were represented disproportionately in the lowest quarter of income distribution.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Malawi signed the CRPD on 27 Sep 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 27 Aug 2009.

Mali

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Children
Infanticide or Infanticide of Children with Disabilities: Some prostitutes and domestic workers practiced infanticide, mainly due to lack of access to and knowledge about contraception. Authorities prosecuted at least two infanticide cases during the year.

Persons with Disabilities
The constitution and law do not specifically protect the rights of persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or in the provision of other state services. There is no law mandating accessibility to public buildings. While persons with disabilities have access to basic health care, the government did not place a priority on protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, and few resources were available. Many such individuals relied on begging. Persons with mental disabilities faced social stigmatization in public institutions. When an investigative judge believed a criminal suspect had mental disabilities, the judge referred the individual to a doctor for mental evaluation. Based on the recommendation of the doctor, who sometimes lacked
training in psychology, the court then either sent the suspect to a mental institution in Bamako or proceeded with a trial.

The Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action, and the Reconstruction of the North is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. The ministry sponsored activities to promote income-earning opportunities for persons with disabilities and worked with NGOs, such as the Malian Federation of Associations for Handicapped Persons, which provided basic services. Although the government was responsible for eight schools countrywide for the deaf, it provided almost no support or resources.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The labor law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, sex, religion, political opinion, nationality, or ethnicity, but not that based on age, disability, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, social status, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases. The government’s Labor Inspection Agency is responsible for investigating and preventing discrimination based on race, gender, religion, political opinion, nationality, or ethnicity, but the laws were not effectively enforced. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to gender, sexual orientation, disability, and ethnicity (see section 6). The government was the major formal-sector employer and ostensibly paid women the same as men for similar work, but differences in job descriptions permitted pay inequality. There were cases where employers from southern ethnic groups discriminated against individuals from northern ethnic groups.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Mauritania

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or the provision of other state services, and there were no reports of governmental discrimination against persons with disabilities. The law provides for access to information and communication, and to existing public buildings through retrofitting and future buildings through amendments to the building code. Authorities did not enforce the law, and persons with
disabilities generally did not have access to buildings, information, and communications. The law provides for access to air transport and other transportation at reduced rates for persons with disabilities, although such access was often not available.

During the year the government decreased its annual disability assistance outlay by 9 percent, allocating 85 million ouguiyas ($258,000), compared with 94 million ouguiyas ($285,000) allocated in 2014, to 60 national associations and NGOs working on disabilities issues. As in the past, it also contributed 30 million ouguiyas ($91,000) in technical assistance. The government did not mandate preference in employment, education, or public accessibility for persons with disabilities, although it provided some rehabilitation and other assistance through small income-generating projects for such persons. One inspector from the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children, and Family was responsible for monitoring the projects implementation and oversaw social reintegration programs for persons with disabilities. It developed training programs and validated the certificates issued by the institutions created by professional associations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities may file complaints with the ministry and seek additional recourse through the Court of Justice. During the year the ministry received only one complaint, compared with two complaints the previous year.

Section 7. Worker Rights
d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
Women faced legal discrimination in other areas (see section 6). The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, disability, religion, political opinion, national origin, citizenship, social origin, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, age, or language, but the government often did not enforce the law. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to race and language. For example, in conformity with long-standing practice, the advancement of black Mauritanians--both Haratines and sub-Saharan--in the armed services remained limited.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Mauritania ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 3 Apr 2012.

Mauritius

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law specifically prohibit discrimination based race, caste, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social and civil status, disability, sexual orientation, HIV-positive status, or having other communicable diseases. Despite laws in place, discrimination occurred, particularly against women; persons with disabilities; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals, but victims filed few cases for cultural
or societal reasons. Non-Hindus claimed they faced discrimination in hiring and promotion for government jobs. The government imposes a maximum age limit of 40 years for the recruitment of new civil servants. The law prohibits all forms of trafficking of adults and children and prescribes penalties of up to 15 years’ imprisonment for offenders. There have been no prosecutions under the human trafficking law.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination in employment (see section 7.d.), education, access to health care, or the provision of other state services against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities. Such prohibited discrimination includes access to transportation, including by air. Authorities did not effectively enforce the law with respect to public conveyances where, for example, heavily used public buses presented particular problems to persons with mobility disabilities due to their high steps and narrow doors. Many older buildings also remained inaccessible to persons with disabilities despite a legal requirement for all buildings to be accessible for persons with disabilities. The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board is an advocacy agency promoting participation in the workplace for persons with disabilities and discouraging discrimination against them in either job recruitment or advancement.

The government implemented programs to provide that persons with disabilities had access to information and communications, such as subtitles and sign language interpretation of news broadcasts. The state-run television station broadcast a weekly news program for persons with disabilities. The government did not restrict the right of persons with disabilities to vote or participate in civic activities, although lack of accessible transportation posed a barrier to some voters with disabilities. In 2012, for the first time, the government made provisions to render polling stations more accessible to persons with disabilities and elderly persons by providing wheelchairs. Children with physical disabilities have the right to attend mainstream schools, but, according to students with disabilities and their parents, schools turned them away on the ground they cannot be accommodated. Children with mental disabilities attended specialized schools that received minimal government funding.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
Labor laws and regulations prohibit discrimination regarding race, sex, gender, disability, sexual orientation, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases, social status, religion, political opinion, and national origin. The law affords women broadly defined wage protections and requires equal pay for equal work for both men and women; it also states that employers should not force women to carry loads above certain weight limits. The government did not effectively enforce these laws and regulations.

Discrimination in employment and occupation with respect to gender, race, disability, and HIV/AIDS status occurred.
The law requires organizations employing more than 35 persons to set aside at least 3 percent of their positions for persons with disabilities, but the government was not always effective in enforcing this law.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
Mauritius signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 25 Sep 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 8 Jan 2010.

**Mozambique**

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**
The constitution and laws prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, language, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases, or social status, but societal discrimination remained an issue for some of these groups. Discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity is only prohibited in labor law, which specifically prohibits discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation. The government failed to enforce some prohibitions against discriminatory acts.

**Persons with Disabilities**
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against citizens with disabilities; however, the law does not differentiate between physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities. The government did not effectively implement laws and programs to provide access to buildings, information, and communications.

Discrimination in employment, education, access to health care, and the provision of other state services was common. Observers often cited unequal access to employment as one of the biggest concerns (see section 7.d.).

The law requires access to public buildings for persons with disabilities; however, compliance remained low. The government did not effectively implement programs to provide access to information and communication for persons with disabilities. Educational opportunities for children with disabilities were generally poor, especially for those with developmental disabilities. The government sometimes referred parents of children with disabilities to private schools with more resources to provide for their children. There were two schools for people with disabilities: one in Maputo Province and one in Sofala. The Mozambican Association for the Disabled (ADEMO) reported teacher-training programs did not include techniques on how to address the needs of students with disabilities. ADEMO also observed school buildings fell short of international standards for accessibility, and public tenders were not designed to support the participation of persons with disabilities.

Electoral law provides for access and assistance to voters with disabilities in the polling booths, including the right for them to vote first.
The only psychiatric hospital was overwhelmed with patients and did not provide adequate basic nutrition, medicine, or shelter. Doctors also reported many families abandoned members with disabilities at the hospital. ADEMO reported access to donated equipment, like wheelchairs, continued to be a challenge due to required lengthy and complicated bureaucratic procedures.

The Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. The 2012-19 National Action Plan in the Area of Disabilities provides funding, monitoring, and assessment of implementation by various organizations that support persons with disabilities.

The city of Maputo offered free bus passes to persons with disabilities. Buses in Maputo did not have special accessibility features. Because public transportation was limited, many citizens rode in private minibuses and in the backs of pickup trucks, hazardous for persons with or without disabilities. Access ramps were rare, and sidewalks were hazardous for pedestrians to traverse.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law prohibits discrimination with respect to employment and occupation based on the following: race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin, citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, language, and HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Mozambique signed the CRPD on 30 Mar 2007. The government ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 30 Jan 2012.

Namibia

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on disability, sex, race, color, ethnic origin, religion, creed, or social or economic status. It also specifically prohibits “the practice and ideology of apartheid.” The government did not effectively enforce all prohibitions.

Children
Infanticide or Infanticide of Children with Disabilities: The media continued to report cases in which parents, usually young mothers, abandoned newborns, sometimes leading to the newborns’ death. The government enforced prohibitions against this practice by investigating and prosecuting violators.
Persons with Disabilities
The constitution protects the rights of “all members of the human family,” which domestic legal experts understand to prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities. The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical and mental disabilities in employment, health care, education, or the provision of other state services. The law prohibits discrimination in any employment decision based on a number of factors, including any “degree of physical or mental disability” (see section 7.d.). It makes an exception in the case of a person with a disability if that person is, because of disability, unable to perform the duties or functions of the job in question. Enforcement in this area was ineffective, and societal discrimination persisted.

The government requires all newly constructed government buildings be accessible and include ramps and other features facilitating access. The government, however, neither mandates access to already constructed public buildings generally nor requires retrofitting of government buildings.

Children with disabilities attended mainstream schools. The rights of persons with disabilities to vote and otherwise participate in civic affairs are not restricted by law, but infrastructure challenges at public venues hindered the ability of persons with disabilities to participate in civic life.

In March the president named a deputy minister of disability affairs for matters related to persons with disabilities, including operation of the National Disability Council of Namibia, which previously operated under the Ministry of Health and Social Services. The council is responsible for overseeing concerns of persons with disabilities and coordinating implementation of policies on persons with disabilities with government ministries and agencies.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The labor law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, pregnancy, family responsibility, disability, age, language, social status, and HIV-positive status, and the government in general effectively enforced the law. The law requires equal pay for equal work.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Niger

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, age, language, HIV-positive status or other communicable disease, or social status. The government generally did not enforce these provisions, however, because victims in large part did not report discrimination or were pressured into handling complaints through traditional dispute mechanisms. There are no laws against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Persons with Disabilities

The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with physical and mental disabilities in employment, education, and access to health care and other government services (see section 7.b.). The government generally enforced these provisions. The law does not specifically mention air travel and other transportation, but authorities generally enforced similar antidiscriminatory provisions. The labor code calls for promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. The law mandates that the government accommodate such individuals, but there were no specific regulations in place mandating accessibility to buildings, transportation, and education for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities suffered from social stigma, low levels of education, and fewer job opportunities than the average citizen. The government requires companies to hire a minimum of 5 percent of individuals with disabilities or pay a penalty, which goes to fund persons with disabilities; nevertheless, implementation was lacking. The law mandates new buildings be accessible to persons with disabilities, but often architects and construction firms ignored this requirement; the law was not enforced.

Societal discrimination also existed against persons with disabilities, particularly mental disabilities and physical disabilities caused by leprosy. The government provided free health care to disabled persons. Children with disabilities attended school but faced several difficulties, including a lack of adapted instruction and materials as well as the evaluation system. There were three schools for the hearing-impaired, one school for the blind, and five inclusive classes for the blind in mainstream public schools. The Ministry of Population, Women’s Promotion, and Children’s Protection is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, including those with sensory or intellectual disabilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The labor code prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, age, language, HIV-positive status, sickle cells disease, or other communicable disease. The code prescribes increased penalties for persons engaging in discrimination and explicitly prohibits certain forms of sexual harassment. The code requires equal pay for equal work and provides benefits for persons with disabilities and the adaptation
of jobs and conditions of employment. The government, in general, did not effectively enforce the law. The government neither adopted any regulations to implement the labor code nor took any actions to prevent employment discrimination.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**Nigeria**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**
There were reports during the year of official corruption; violence against women and children, including female genital mutilation/cutting; infanticide; sexual exploitation of children; trafficking in persons; early and forced marriages; discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; discrimination based on ethnicity, regional origin, religion, and disability; forced and bonded labor; and child labor.

**Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:**

**Prison and Detention Center Conditions**
**Physical Conditions:** Prisoners with mental disabilities remained incarcerated with the general prison population. Generally, prisons made few efforts to provide mental health services.

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

**Persons with Disabilities**
No federal laws prohibit discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or the provision of other state services; the law does, however, prohibit discrimination based on the “circumstances of one’s birth.” Plateau and Lagos States have laws that protect the rights of persons with disabilities, while Akwa-Ibom, Jigawa, Osun, and Oyo States took steps to develop such laws. The Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development has responsibility for persons with disabilities. Some government agencies, such as the NHRC and Ministry of Labor, designated an employee to work on issues related to disabilities.
Mental health-care services were almost nonexistent. Officials at a small number of prisons used private donations to provide separate mental health facilities for prisoners with mental disabilities. All prisoners with disabilities stayed with the general inmate population without regard to disability and received no specialized services.

Persons with disabilities faced social stigma, exploitation, and discrimination, and relatives often regarded them as a source of shame. Many families viewed children with disabilities who could not contribute to family income as liabilities and sometimes severely abused or neglected them. Many indigent persons with disabilities begged on the streets. Persons with intellectual disabilities were stigmatized, sometimes even within the community of persons with disabilities.

The government operated vocational training centers in Abuja and Lagos to train indigent persons with disabilities. Individual states also provided facilities to help persons with physical disabilities become self-supporting. Persons with disabilities established self-help NGOs such as the Hope for the Blind Foundation in Zaria, Kano Polio Victims Trust Association, the Albino Foundation, and Comprehensive Empowerment of Nigerians with Disabilities. The Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities served as the umbrella organization for a range of disability groups. In 2008 the Ministry of Education estimated that of 3.25 million school-age children with disabilities, only 90,000 were enrolled in primary school and 65,000 in secondary school.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law does not prohibit discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, sex, gender, disability, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, HIV-positive status, or social status. The government, in general, did not effectively address discrimination in employment or occupation.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Rwanda

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution provides that all citizens are equal before the law, without discrimination based on ethnic origin, tribe, clan, color, sex, region, social origin, religion or faith, political opinion, economic status, culture, language, social status, or physical or mental disability. The constitution and law are silent on discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity,
Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, and the provision of other state services, and the government generally enforced these provisions (see section 7.d.). The law also mandates access to public facilities, accommodations for taking national examinations, provision of medical care by the government, and monitoring of implementation by the NHRC. The government generally implemented all of the foregoing provisions. Despite a continuing campaign to create a barrier-free environment for persons with disabilities, accessibility remained a problem throughout the country. For example, civil society groups reported a need for interpreters fluent in sign language in police stations and courts.

The National Council of Persons with Disabilities estimated in 2014 there were 3,500 primary school students in special centers established to serve children with disabilities. Few students with disabilities reached the university level because many primary and secondary schools were unable to accommodate their disabilities. Many children with disabilities did not attend primary or secondary school. Although resources were inadequate to train all teachers, the Ministry of Education and UNICEF collaborated to train teachers to be more sensitive in responding to the needs of children with disabilities. For example, in 2012 Murama Primary School in Bugesera District appointed a UNICEF-supported special needs education coordinator for students with hearing and speech disabilities and waived lunch and school supply expenses for children with disabilities as incentives to keep them in school. Institutes of higher education admitted students with disabilities, but only the National University of Rwanda and the Kigali Institute of Education were able to accommodate students with visual disabilities.

There was one government psychiatric referral hospital in Kigali, with district hospitals providing limited psychiatric services. All other mental health facilities were nongovernmental. Facilities were often underequipped and understaffed, although the government worked to improve staffing and equipment in health facilities throughout the country.

Some citizens viewed disability as a curse or punishment that could result in social exclusion and sometimes abandonment or the hiding of children from the community.

The National Council of Persons with Disabilities, which assisted government efforts to provide for the rights of persons with disabilities, designated one member with disabilities to the Chamber of Deputies. The National Union of Disability Organizations in Rwanda provided an umbrella civil society platform for advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities. A disabilities coordination forum was organized every trimester.

Persons with mental disabilities were required to submit a medical certificate to be eligible to vote. Some disabilities advocates complained requirements for electoral candidates to hold secondary education diplomas or higher degrees, depending on position, disadvantaged persons with disabilities.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation
The law prohibits discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, marital status, religion, political affiliation, pregnancy, disability, socioeconomic status, age, and “any other type of discrimination.” The law does not specifically protect sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV-positive status. The constitution requires equal pay for equal work.

The government sought to enforce antidiscrimination laws, but there were numerous reports not challenged in court of discrimination based on gender, pregnancy, disability, and political affiliation.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Rwanda ratified the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 15 Dec 2008.

Sao Tome and Principe

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
Physical Conditions: There was one prison and no separate jails or detention centers. Authorities held adult and juvenile as well as pretrial and convicted prisoners together. The needs of prisoners with disabilities suffered, as did those of the general prison population, from lack of resources. Police stations had a small room or space to incarcerate detainees for brief periods.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities generally, without specifically listing physical, sensory, mental, and intellectual disabilities. The law, however, does not mandate access to most buildings, transportation, or other services for persons with disabilities. A law passed in 2014 mandating access to school buildings for persons with disabilities was slowly being implemented, with a few schools undertaking new construction to provide access. Some but not all children with disabilities attended school. There is a special school for blind children, but otherwise children with disabilities attended the same schools as children without disabilities.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation
The labor law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, sex, and religious belief. Additionally, the constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination based on political affiliation, social origin, and philosophical conviction. The law, however, does not prohibit discrimination in employment and occupation based on color, age, disability, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases. The government, in general, effectively enforced the law.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Sao Tome and Principe ratified the CRPD on 5 Nov 2015.

Senegal

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The constitution and laws provide that men and women are equal under the law and prohibit discrimination based on race, religion, citizenship, political opinion, gender, disability, language, HIV-positive status, or social status. Discrimination was widespread, and antidiscrimination laws, in particular laws against violence against women and children, generally were not enforced.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel, and other transportation, access to health care, and the provision of other state services. The government did not enforce these provisions adequately. The law also mandates accessibility for persons with disabilities, but the government did not effectively enforce the law.

The government provided grants, managed vocational training in regional centers, and offered funding for persons with disabilities to establish businesses. Due to a lack of special education training for teachers and facilities accessible to children with disabilities, authorities enrolled only 40 percent of such children in primary school. Anecdotal evidence indicated children with disabilities who did not attend school generally stayed at home and, in some cases, begged on the streets. Support for persons with mental disabilities was not generally available, and incidents of abuse of persons with mental disabilities were common.

Persons with disabilities struggled to access voting sites. The law reserves 15 percent of new civil service positions for persons with disabilities, but the Senegalese National Association of People with Physical Disabilities reported the government failed to issue the executive decree required to make the law operational.
The Ministry for Health and Social Action is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Senegal signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 25 Apr 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 7 Sep 2010.

**Seychelles**

**Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process**

**Elections and Political Participation**

**Recent Elections**: Between December 16 and 18, President Michel was re-elected to a third term by 193 votes in the country’s first-ever runoff election. Neither Michel nor runner-up Wavel Ramkalawan, leader of the opposition SNP, received the required 51 percent of the vote in the first round of elections held between December 3 and 5. International observers from the Southern African Development Community and the African Union, who had not determined whether the elections were free and fair by year’s end, criticized voter intimidation and vote buying. They also called for campaign finance reform, increased voter education, the right of individuals with disabilities to vote in secret, and reducing the voting period from three days to one.

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

**Persons with Disabilities**

Although the constitution and law provide for the right of persons with disabilities to special protection, including reasonable provisions for improving quality of life, no laws provide for access to public buildings, transportation, or government services, and the government did not provide such services. There was discrimination against persons with disabilities. For example, there were reports some employers did not pay their employees with disabilities if the latter were already receiving disability social aid (see section 7.d.). Most children with disabilities were segregated into specialized schools. The National Council for the Disabled, a government agency under the Ministry of Community Development, Social Affairs and Sports, developed work placement programs for persons with disabilities, although few employment opportunities existed.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
Labor laws and regulations prohibit discrimination regarding race, sex, religion, gender, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, language, sexual orientation or gender identity, HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases, or social status. It does not address age or color. The government effectively enforced these laws and regulations.

There were reports some employers did not pay their employees with disabilities if the latter were already receiving disability social aid (see section 6).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Sierra Leone

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other major human rights problems included unlawful killing, torture, and abusive treatment by police; prolonged detention and imprisonment under harsh and life-threatening conditions; discrimination and violence against women and girls, including female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); early and forced marriage; official and societal discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals; and discrimination against persons with disabilities.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
Physical Conditions: Human rights observers reported detention conditions remained below minimum international standards because of overcrowding, unhygienic conditions, and insufficient medical attention. Prison cells often lacked proper lighting, bedding, ventilation, and protection from mosquitoes. Most prisons did not have piped water systems, and some prisoners lacked sufficient access to drinking water. As of November 24, the Pademba Road Male Correctional Center held five prisoners with disabilities. There was no information available regarding problems of persons with disabilities in the prisons.
Section 5. Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

The government, including security forces, was generally responsive to human rights concerns raised by the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL), but was at times slow to support the HRCSL or implement its recommendations. A number of domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restrictions, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Government officials often were cooperative and responsive to the views of local and international NGOs and generally acknowledged the problems presented. They often scheduled forums in conjunction with NGOs to discuss such topics as women’s rights and the rights of persons with disabilities.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

Although the constitution states that it prohibits discrimination based on race, tribe, gender, place of origin, political opinion, color, and religion, the constitution denies citizenship at birth to persons who are not of “Negro-African descent.” Neither the constitution nor law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, national extraction, citizenship, social origin, age, language, disability, HIV-positive status, or having other communicable diseases.

Persons with Disabilities

The Persons With Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment and provision of state services, and calls for free health care and education for persons with disabilities, equal access to government buildings, housing, and public transportation, and provision of rehabilitation services. The law does not specifically prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in relation to air travel. The government did not effectively implement laws and programs to provide access to buildings, information, and communications. The government-funded Commission on Persons with Disabilities is charged with protecting the rights and promoting the welfare of persons with disabilities. Mustapha Bai Attila, a vision-impaired person, appointed by President Koroma in 2013, continued to work as deputy minister of social welfare, gender, and children’s affairs. Given the high rate of general unemployment, work opportunities for persons with disabilities were few, and begging by them was commonplace. Children with disabilities were also less likely to attend school than other children.

There was considerable discrimination against persons with mental disabilities. The Sierra Leone Psychiatric Hospital in Kissy, the only inpatient psychiatric institution, served only 200 patients. The government did not provide adequate funding for the hospital, which relied on donations from private charities. The hospital had one consulting psychiatrist, patients were not provided sufficient food, and restraints were primitive and dehumanizing. The hospital did not have running water and only sporadic electricity. Basic medications were available, but many drugs to treat specific problems were lacking. The vast majority of persons with mental disabilities remained untreated and received no public services.
The Ministry of Health and Sanitation is responsible for providing free primary health-care services to persons with polio and diabetic retinopathy as well as those who are blind or deaf. The ministry did not provide these services consistently, and organizations reported many persons with disabilities had limited access to medical and rehabilitative care. The National Committee for Social Action provided some support through limited programs to vulnerable communities. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, and Children’s Affairs has a mandate to provide policy oversight for issues affecting persons with disabilities but had limited capacity to do so.

Some of the many individuals maimed in the civil war, including those who had their limbs amputated, received special assistance from local and international humanitarian organizations. Such programs involved reconstructive surgery, prostheses, and vocational training to help victims acquire new work skills, although other amputees complained they did not receive sufficient assistance.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The constitution prohibits discrimination based on race, tribe, sex, place of origin, political opinion, color, creed, or disability. The constitution does not prohibit discrimination based on religion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, age, language, HIV-positive status or having other communicable diseases, or sexual orientation or gender identity.

The government generally enforced those provisions. Discrimination occurred based on sex, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity with respect to employment and occupation.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Sierra Leone signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 30 Mar 2007. The government ratified the CRPD on 4 Oct 2010.

Somalia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Other major human rights abuses included disappearance; torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary and politically motivated arrest and detention; denial of fair public trial; use of excessive force and other abuses in internal conflict; restrictions on freedoms of speech and press, assembly and association, religion, and movement; forced eviction and relocation of internally displaced persons (IDPs); diversion of humanitarian assistance; corruption; trafficking in persons; abuse of and discrimination against minority clans and persons with disabilities; social stigmatization of
lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals; restrictions on workers’ rights; forced labor; and child labor.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The provisional federal constitution states that all citizens, regardless of sex, religion, social or economic status, political opinion, clan, disability, occupation, birth, dialect, age, race, color, tribe, ethnicity, culture, or wealth, shall have equal rights and duties before the law. The constitution and law do not prohibit discrimination based on national origin or citizenship, social origin, HIV status, or having other communicable diseases. The provisional constitution does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Authorities did not enforce antidiscrimination provisions effectively in any of the regions.

Persons with Disabilities
The provisional federal constitution provides equal rights before the law for persons with disabilities and prohibits the state from discriminating against them. Authorities did not enforce these provisions. The provisional federal constitution does not specify whether this provision applies to physical, intellectual, mental, or sensory disabilities. It does not discuss discrimination by nongovernmental actors, including with regard to employment, education, air travel and other transportation, or provision of health care. The law does not mandate access to buildings, information, or communications for persons with disabilities.

The needs of most persons with disabilities were not addressed. A report by the World Health Organization and Swedish International Development Aid (SIDA) estimated up to 15 percent of the population was physically disabled. In 2011 SIDA found that 25 percent of public buildings were designed to make them accessible for wheelchair users but that there were no public transportation facilities with wheelchair access.

In a March report, Amnesty International stated that persons with disabilities faced daily human rights abuses, such as unlawful killings, violence including rape and other forms of sexual violence, forced evictions, and lack of access to health care or an adequate standard of living. The report described domestic violence and forced marriage as prevalent practices affecting persons with disabilities. It added that women and girls with disabilities faced an increased risk of rape and other forms of sexual violence, often with impunity, due to perceptions their disabilities were a burden to the family or that such persons were of less value and could therefore be abused.

Several local NGOs in Somaliland provided services for persons with disabilities and reported numerous cases of discrimination and abuse. These NGOs reported that persons with mental and physical disabilities faced widespread discrimination and that it was common and condoned by the community for students without disabilities to beat and harass students with disabilities.

Without a public health infrastructure, few services existed to provide support or education for persons with mental disabilities. It was common for such persons to be chained to a tree or restrained within their homes.

Local organizations advocated for the rights of persons with disabilities with negligible support from local authorities.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law and regulations prohibit discrimination regarding race, sex, disability, political opinion, color, language, or social status, but the government did not effectively enforce those laws and regulations. Penalties were not sufficient to deter violations. The law does not prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, age, or HIV-positive status.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Somalia has not signed or ratified the CRPD or the Optional Protocol.

South Africa

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights problems included arbitrary arrest; prolonged pretrial detention and lengthy delays in trials; forcible dispersal of demonstrators; abuse of refugees and asylum seekers; corruption; pervasive violence against women and children; sexual harassment and societal discrimination against women; abuse of children; societal discrimination against persons with disabilities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community; trafficking in persons; attacks on foreigners; and child labor.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, age, language, HIV-positive status, or infection by other communicable disease. The government did not effectively enforce these prohibitions, and entrenched attitudes and practices often resulted in gender-based violence and employment inequities.

Women
Rape and Domestic Violence: Rape, including spousal rape, is illegal but remained a serious and pervasive problem. The minimum sentence for rape is 10 years in prison for the first offense. Under certain circumstances, such as second or third offenses, multiple rapes, gang rapes, or the rape of a minor or a person with disabilities, conviction results in a minimum sentence of life imprisonment (25 years), unless substantial and compelling circumstances exist to justify a lesser sentence. Perpetrators with previous rape convictions and perpetrators aware of being HIV positive at the time of the rape also face a minimum sentence of life imprisonment, unless substantial and compelling circumstances exist to justify a lesser sentence.
Discrimination: Women, particularly black women, typically had lower incomes and less job security than did men. Many women were engaged in poorly paid domestic labor and microenterprises that did not provide job security or benefits. The Department of Trade and Industry provided incentive grants to promote the development of small and medium-size businesses and microenterprises for women, young persons, and persons with disabilities.

Children
Education: Public education is compulsory until age 15 or grade nine. Public education was fee-based and not fully subsidized by the government. The law provides that schools may not refuse admission to children due to a lack of funds, and disadvantaged children, who were mainly black, were eligible for assistance. Nevertheless, even when children qualified for fee exemptions, low-income parents had difficulty paying for uniforms and supplies. According to the 2012 national census, girls faced more difficulties accessing services than boys; children with disabilities were at an even greater disadvantage.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination in employment, access to health care, and education based on physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disability. Department of Transportation policies on providing services to persons with disabilities were consistent with the constitution’s prohibition on discrimination. Nevertheless, government and private-sector discrimination existed. The law mandates access to buildings for persons with disabilities, but such regulations were rarely enforced, and public awareness of them remained minimal.

In 2012, the most recent year for which data were available, there were more than 111,000 students with disabilities in mainstream schools, and the country had 444 specialized schools for students with disabilities. A report published during the year by the SAHRC and Human Rights Watch estimated, however, that more than 500,000 children with disabilities were not in school. The report found numerous barriers to education for students with disabilities, primarily a policy of channeling students into specialized schools at the expense of inclusive education. Specialized schools frequently charged additional fees, making them financially inaccessible, were located long distances from students’ homes, and lacked the capacity to accommodate demand. Children often were housed in dormitories overseen by an insufficient number of adults, many of whom had little or no training in caring for children with disabilities. When parents attempted to force mainstream schools to accept their children with disabilities, an option under the law, schools sometimes rejected students with disabilities outright because of disability or stated there was no space in the school.

The Department of Basic Education allocated part of its budget for assistive devices, material resources, and assistive technology, but it noted resources were inadequate, and teachers reported insufficient skills in special needs education. Many blind and deaf children in mainstream schools received only basic care rather than education.

The law prohibits harassment of persons with disabilities and, in conjunction with the Employment Equity Act, provides guidelines on the recruitment and selection of persons with disabilities, reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, and guidelines on proper handling of employees’ medical information. Enforcement of this law was limited. The law also requires employers with more than 50 workers to create an affirmative action plan with provisions to achieve employment equity for persons with disabilities (see section 7.d.).
Nevertheless, persons with disabilities constituted only an estimated 1.2 percent of the workforce. The government did not meet its goal of filling 2 percent of government positions with persons with disabilities by year’s end.

Persons with disabilities were sometimes subject to abuse and attacks, and prisoners with mental disabilities often received no psychiatric care.

In August, four men—including a traditional healer—abducted and killed Thandazile Mpunza, a 20-year-old with a learning disability. They dismembered Mpunza, allegedly used her body parts in a traditional ceremony, and buried her remains in a shallow grave. Police arrested the men and charged them with murder. The two primary suspects were convicted and sentenced to life in prison for the murder; one suspect was acquitted, and one was convicted and awaiting sentencing at year’s end.

There were 15 persons with disabilities in the upper and lower houses of parliament and 218 elected officials with disabilities at the provincial and municipal levels, according to the umbrella advocacy group Disabled People South Africa. The law does not allow persons identified by the courts as mentally disabled to vote.

The Department of Social Development has primary responsibility for disability policy. All provincial and local governments also have offices charged with protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, and there are representatives advocating for persons with disabilities at the Commission for Gender Equality and the SAHRC. NGOs also advocated for the rights of persons with disabilities.

A 2014 study by the South African Federation for Mental Health found that of the 20 percent of citizens with mental disabilities, 75 percent did not receive needed care. There were approximately 80 mental health treatment facilities in the country, and more than half were run by NGOs, well short of the facilities needed.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The Employment Equity Act protects all workers against unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, age, gender, religion, marital status, pregnancy, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, color, sexual orientation, disability, conscience, belief, political, opinion, culture, language, HIV status, birth, or any other arbitrary ground. According to a 2014 amendment to the act, a contractor or part-time employee must be treated as a full-time employee unless he/she meets a defined list of exceptions.

Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, HIV status, and country of origin (see section 6).

The SAHRC and Commission for Employment Equity Discrimination found discrimination by ethnicity, gender, age, country of origin or disability in all sectors of the economy.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

South Sudan

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The transitional constitution prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, disability, language, and social status. The government did not effectively enforce the prohibitions. In October the Council of Ministers recommended that the NLA ratify a pan-African youth convention but with specific reservations one government official described as “encouraging” lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals or activities.

Persons with Disabilities
The law does not specifically prohibit discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or the provision of other government services. NGOs reported that community and family routinely subjected persons with disabilities to discrimination. The government did not enact or implement programs to provide access to buildings, information, or communications public services. The Transitional Constitution and the 2012 Education Act stipulate that primary education be provided to children with disabilities without discrimination. Very few teachers, however, were trained to address the needs of children with disabilities, and very few schools were able to provide a safe, accessible learning environment for children with disabilities. There were no legal restrictions on the right of persons with disabilities to vote and otherwise participate in civic affairs, although lack of physical accessibility constituted a barrier to effective participation. There were no mental health hospitals or institutions, and persons with mental disabilities were often held in prisons. Limited mental health services were available at Juba Teaching Hospital.

Section 7. Worker Rights
d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law does not prohibit discrimination with respect to employment or occupation on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, age, language, HIV-positive status, or on any other basis.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
South Sudan has not signed or ratified the CRPD or Optional Protocol

Sudan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Societal abuses included discrimination against women; sexual violence; female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); use of child soldiers; child abuse; sexual exploitation of children; trafficking in persons; discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with HIV/AIDS; denial of workers’ rights; and child labor.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The Interim National Constitution states, “All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without discrimination as to race, color, sex, language, religious creed, political opinion, or ethnic origin to the equal protection under the law.” Other articles of the constitution encourage tolerance between different tribes and provides for protection of women and persons with disabilities. The law provides for safeguards for children. The government worked to promote the rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities. It did not always provide protections to persons of different religious groups.

Persons with Disabilities
Although the law, including the Interim National Constitution, provides protection for persons with disabilities, social stigma and a lack of resources hindered the government’s enforcement of disability laws. The law does not specifically prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities, but it stipulates, “The State shall guarantee to persons with special needs the enjoyment of all the rights and freedoms set out in the Constitution, access to suitable education [and] employment, and participation in society.”

In 2013 the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women, and Child Affairs and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities launched an initiative to improve access to public sector jobs and encourage respect for the constitutional rights of persons with disabilities. The Ministry of Education also established a special education department. Children with disabilities attended public schools, and there were some other educational institutions for persons with disabilities, including two schools for the blind. In 2013 the Ministry of Education initiated a national education strategy for 2013-16, which included special provisions for children with disabilities.

Social stigma and lack of resources often prevented government and private entities from accommodating persons with disabilities in education and employment. Appropriate supports were especially rare in rural areas.
In July 2014 the governor of Khartoum announced the city would allocate 5 percent of the city’s more than four million jobs to persons with disabilities (approximately 211,000 jobs) with special needs and issue persons with special needs health insurance cards. The Ministry of Social Development stated it would provide financial assistance to 3,000 persons with disabilities and supply hearing aids to 50 persons monthly. Social stigma and apathy of officials toward the needs of disabled persons, however, often limited the resources allocated to those facilities, and accommodations for persons with disabilities were rare in most rural areas.

The government has not enacted laws or implemented effective programs to provide for access to buildings for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities reported it was difficult to access or afford necessary equipment, such as wheelchairs.

Several NGOs continued to advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities.

**Section 7. Worker Rights**

**d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation**

Law and regulations prohibit discrimination regarding race, sex, gender, disability, tribe, and language, but they do not protect classes according to sexual orientation and/or gender identity, HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases, political opinion, social or national origin, age, or social status.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Sudan signed the CRPD on 30 Mar 2007. The government ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 24 Apr 2009.

**Swaziland**

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

The constitution prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, disability, age, ethnicity, religion, political opinion, or social status, but the government did not consistently enforce the law.

**Children**

Child Abuse: Child abuse, including rape of children and incest, was a serious problem, but the crime was rarely reported. If reported, perpetrators were seldom prosecuted, and when prosecuted and convicted, sentences seldom matched the maximum penalties allowable. According to UNICEF, approximately one in three young women experienced some form of sexual violence as a child and three in 10 experienced emotional abuse, and nearly one in four experienced physical violence. According to the MICS, 12 percent of children were subjected to
“severe physical punishment.” Children with disabilities, children not in school, and orphans were at particular risk.

**Persons with Disabilities**

The constitution provides for the rights of persons with disabilities but does not differentiate between physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities and requires parliament to enact relevant implementing legislation, which parliament has not done. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for upholding the law and for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. No laws prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment. Persons with disabilities complained of government neglect. No laws mandate access to health care for persons with disabilities or accessibility to buildings, transportation (including air travel), information, communications, or public services. Government buildings under construction included some improvements for persons with disabilities, including access ramps, however. Public transportation was not easily accessible for persons with disabilities, and the government did not provide any means of alternative accessible transport.

There were minimal services provided for persons with disabilities, and there were no programs in place to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. There was one school for deaf students and one special-education school for children with physical or mental disabilities. The hospital for persons with mental disabilities, located in Manzini, was overcrowded and understaffed.

**Section 7. Worker Rights**

**d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation**

The labor law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, gender, language, HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases, or social status, but the law is silent on discrimination in employment and occupation based on disability, age, and sexual orientation or gender identity, and the government, in general, did not effectively enforce the law. One officer allegedly reported that she was not promoted because she had albinism.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Swaziland signed the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 25 Sep 2007. The government ratified the CRPD and the Optional Protocol on 24 Sep 2012.
**Tanzania**

**Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process**

**Elections and Political Participation**

**Participation of Women and Minorities:** The Zanzibar House of Representatives has 50 elected seats, 20 women’s special seats, and eight appointed at-large seats. Women held two of the appointed at-large seats and three elected seats. Persons with disabilities held three seats. Women held three of the 19 minister positions and four of the deputy minister positions.

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

The constitution prohibits discrimination based on nationality, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, color, religion, sex, or station in life. The government did not effectively enforce the prohibitions. No provisions prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or language. The law prohibits certain forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities.

**Persons with Disabilities**

The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, or the provision of other state services, but the government did not effectively enforce these provisions. Persons with physical disabilities were restricted in employment, education, access to health care, and other state services by physical barriers and inadequate financial resources.

Although the government mandates access to public buildings, transportation, and government services for persons with disabilities, few public buildings were accessible. New public buildings were being built in compliance with the law, but funds to retrofit existing structures were unavailable. The law provides for access to information and communication, but not all persons with disabilities had such access.

Through early July when parliament was dissolved there were five members of the mainland parliament with disabilities. The president appointed four of these MPs; Salum Bar’wan was the first elected MP with a disability (albinism). During the election campaign in 2010, his opponents repeatedly claimed persons with albinism did not have the ability to think clearly. Persons with disabilities held three appointed seats in the Zanzibar House of Representatives. Information on MPs with disabilities elected or appointed to the new Parliament following elections on October 25 was not available.

Although the government reportedly took steps to improve election participation by persons with disabilities, a number of shortcomings continued to limit the full participation by persons with disabilities. These included inaccessible polling stations, lack of accessible information, limited involvement of persons with disabilities in political parties, the failure of the National Electoral Commission to implement its directives, and stigma toward persons with disabilities.

An estimated 40 percent of children with disabilities attended school, compared with approximately 80 percent of all children. Persons with disabilities faced difficulties due to
inadequate or unavailable accommodations and stigma, but there were no significant reported patterns of abuse in educational or mental health facilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation
The law prohibits workplace discrimination, directly or indirectly, against an employee based on color, nationality, tribe or place of origin, race, national extraction, social origin, political opinion or religion, sex, gender, pregnancy, marital status or family responsibility, disability, HIV/AIDS, age, or station in life. The law does not specifically prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity, language, citizenship, or other communicable disease status. The law distinguishes between discrimination and an employer hiring or promoting based on affirmative action measures consistent with the promotion of equality, or hiring based on an inherent requirement of the job. The government, in general, did not effectively enforce the law.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Tanzania has not signed or ratified the CRPD or the Optional Protocol.

Togo

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Other human rights abuses included executive influence on the judiciary; government restrictions on freedom of press and assembly; rape, violence, and discrimination against women; child abuse, including female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and sexual exploitation; and trafficking in persons. Official and societal discrimination persisted against persons with disabilities, regional and ethnic groups, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons. Child labor, including forced child labor, was a problem.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, disability, language, or social status, although the government did not enforce these provisions effectively. The constitution and law do not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, mental, intellectual, and sensory disabilities in employment (see section 7.d.), education, access to health care, transportation, or
in the provision of other government services, but the government did not effectively enforce these provisions. The law does not mandate accessibility to public or private facilities for persons with disabilities, although some public buildings had ramps. Children with disabilities attended schools at all levels, with some attending schools specifically for those with disabilities. Information regarding possible abuse in these facilities was unavailable. The law does not restrict the right of persons with disabilities to vote and participate in civic affairs, although lack of accessible buildings and transportation posed barriers.

The Ministry of Social Action and National Solidarity (MSANS), the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education are responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. The MSANS held awareness campaigns to fight discrimination and promote equality; it also distributed food and clothing and provided skills training to persons with disabilities.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination With Respect to Employment or Occupation
The law prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, gender, disability, citizenship, national origin, political opinion, and language but does not specifically prohibit such discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases. Evidence of hiring discrimination ranged from job advertisements that specified gender and age to requiring an applicant’s photograph. Migrant workers enjoy the same legal protections, wages, and working conditions as citizens. Penalties for violations include a fine of up to one million CFA francs ($1,733) and a sentence of up to six months in prison.

There was no overt government discrimination against persons with disabilities, and such persons held government positions, but societal discrimination against persons with disabilities was a problem.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Togo signed the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 23 Sep 2008. The government ratified the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 1 Mar 2011.

Uganda

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The three most serious human rights problems in the country included: lack of respect for the integrity of the person (unlawful killings, torture, and other abuse of suspects and detainees); restrictions on civil liberties (freedoms of assembly, expression, the media, and association); and violence and discrimination against marginalized groups, such as women (sexual and
gender-based violence), children (sexual abuse and ritual killing), persons with disabilities, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community.

**Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:**

**Prison and Detention Center Conditions**
Most prisons across the country were not designed to accommodate persons with disabilities.

**Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process**
 Participation of Women and Minorities: The law requires elections for seats reserved for special interest groups: 112 for women, five for organized labor, five for persons with disabilities, five for youth, and 10 for the UPDF. An opaque “electoral college” process organized by a single government-supported NGO selected the five persons with disabilities. On September 29, the Constitutional Court nullified the special interest MP slots for the UPDF, organized labor, and youth. The ruling stemmed from a series of petitions filed in 2010 challenging the process by which MPs representing special interest groups are elected. On November 26, Parliament amended the Parliamentary Elections Act to reinstate UPDF, organized labor, and youth MP slots.

**Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**
The law prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin or citizenship, social origin, disability, age, language, and HIV/communicable disease status. The government did not enforce laws against discrimination adequately, and locally or culturally prevalent discrimination against women, children, persons with disabilities, or certain ethnic groups were problems. The law does not address discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and the penal code prohibits “unnatural offenses” that authorities often used to arrest members of the LGBTI community.

**Persons with Disabilities**
The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, and the provision of other state services. The law, however, does not establish penalties for those engaging in discrimination. The law provides for access to buildings, information, and communications for persons with disabilities, but the government did not enforce the law effectively. A 2013 study conducted by architects in Kampala indicated 95 percent of buildings in the city were inaccessible to persons with disabilities. Study findings showed most buildings did not have ramps or elevators.

Persons with disabilities faced societal discrimination and limited job and educational opportunities. The UHRC received complaints of discrimination in employment (see section 7.d) and access to transport and other public services.
Most schools did not accommodate persons with disabilities. In December 2014 UNICEF and the MGLSD reported that 9 percent of children with disabilities attended primary school and 6 percent secondary school. The low attendance rate was attributed to inadequate resources and the limited number of schools that accommodated children with learning and physical disabilities.

In June 2014 the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) criticized the government for failure to plan for persons with disabilities in the ongoing national identification card registration process. For example, the NGO noted registration required taking fingerprints, and that no alternate provision for amputees existed.

In 2013 NUDIPU released a report indicating many courts were inaccessible and did not provide sign language interpreters.

A 2012 report released by the National Council on Disability (NCD) indicated 45 percent of persons with disabilities were literate, compared with 71 percent literacy in the general population. The report indicated children with mental disabilities were sometimes denied food and were tied to trees and beds with ropes to control their movements, and the needs of children with autism and other learning disabilities were ignored due to an insufficient number of appropriate classes.

The law reserves five seats in Parliament for representatives of persons with disabilities. The NCD reported participation by persons with disabilities in elections was minimal because they could not access polling centers due to physical barriers, election materials were not modified for persons with vision disabilities, and polling stations lacked support services such as guides, helpers, and sign language interpreters. The NCD also noted civic education offered by the government to citizens was inaccessible to many persons with disabilities, since it was transmitted through electronic and print media.

Government agencies responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities included the Ministry of State for Disabled Persons under the MGLSD and the NCD, but they lacked sufficient funding to undertake any significant initiatives.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**


**Zambia**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Other serious human rights problems included life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrest; prolonged pretrial detention; arbitrary interference with privacy; displacement of landowners; government corruption; child abuse; trafficking in persons; discrimination against persons with
disabilities and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community; and child labor. The government took selective and halting steps to prosecute or punish officials who committed abuses, targeting mostly those who opposed the ruling party. Impunity remained a problem, as ruling party supporters were either not prosecuted for serious crimes or, if prosecuted, released after serving small fractions of prison sentences.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

Prison and Detention Center Conditions
Physical Conditions: Prisons did not adequately address the needs of persons with disabilities. According to a study jointly conducted by the Ministry of Home Affairs with PRISCCA and other NGOs, persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities were often denied medical or psychiatric care.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons
The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, sex, religion, political opinion, place of origin, ethnic group (tribe), gender, marital status, color, disability, language, and social status. The government did not effectively enforce the law. Violence and discrimination against women and children, discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and discrimination against persons with disabilities continued.

Persons with Disabilities
The law prohibits discrimination in general, but no law specifically prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental disabilities in employment, education, air travel and other transportation, access to health care, and the provision of other government services. The Persons with Disabilities Act of 2012 mandates the Ministry of Gender and Child Development to oversee the government’s implementation of policies that address general and specific needs of persons with disabilities in education, health care, access to physical infrastructure, electoral participation, and other areas. The Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities oversaw the act’s implementation.

An umbrella organization, the Zambia Federation of Disability Organizations, whose primary role was advocacy and raising awareness, led the disability rights movement. According to the 2014 Human Rights Watch report Barriers to HIV Services and Treatment for Persons with Disabilities in Zambia, there was a lack of data on persons with disabilities—including how many adults and children were living with disabilities—and information on their specific housing, education, and health-care needs. The lack of consolidated data was a major impediment to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in government programming and policy. According to Human Rights Watch, limited understanding of how many persons in the country lived with disabilities suggested they were more vulnerable to contracting HIV/AIDS and were more likely to lack access to health care. According to the report, persons with disabilities had limited access to education and correspondingly low literacy levels. The government did not restrict
persons with physical or mental disabilities from voting or otherwise participating in civic affairs. The law prohibits those with mental disabilities from holding public office. Persons with disabilities faced significant societal discrimination in employment and education (see section 7. d.).

The Ministry of General Education and the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health have responsibility for ensuring the welfare of persons with disabilities. By law the government must provide reasonable accommodation for all persons with disabilities seeking education and provide that “any physical facility at any public educational institution is accessible.” Public buildings, schools, and hospitals rarely had facilities to accommodate such persons, however. Five schools were designated for children with disabilities. Some children with physical disabilities attended mainstream schools.

Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation
The labor law prohibits discrimination in employment or occupation based on race, sex, disability, political opinion, social origin, and language but did not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Various organizations also had policies that protected individuals with HIV/AIDS. Penalties for conviction of violations included a fine or 25 years’ imprisonment, or both. There was insufficient information on whether these penalties deterred violations. In general the government effectively enforced the law. There were reports, however, of discrimination from minority groups. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. LGBTI persons were at times dismissed from employment or not hired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Persons with disabilities faced significant societal discrimination in employment and education.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Zimbabwe

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
There were many other human rights problems. Prison conditions were harsh. The government’s expropriation of private property continued. Executive political influence and interference in the judiciary continued, and the government infringed on citizens’ privacy rights. The government generally failed to investigate or prosecute state security or ZANU-PF supporters responsible for violence. Authorities restricted freedoms of speech, press, assembly, association, and movement. The government continued to evict citizens; invade farms, private
businesses and properties; and demolish informal marketplaces and settlements. The government arrested, detained, prosecuted, and harassed nongovernmental organization (NGO) members. Government corruption remained widespread, including at the local level. Violence and discrimination against women; child abuse; trafficking of men, women, and children; and discrimination against persons with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and persons with HIV/AIDS were problems. The government interfered with labor-related events.

Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The constitution’s bill of rights provides that no person may be deprived of fundamental rights, such as the right to life, personal liberty, security of person, freedom of assembly and association, equality, and political and socioeconomic rights. It prohibits discrimination based on one’s race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, color, creed, gender, or disability. The bill of rights may not be arbitrarily amended and, in the section on the rights of women, states that all “laws, customs, traditions, and practices that infringe the rights of women conferred by this constitution are void to the extent of the infringement.” Nevertheless, discrimination against women and persons with disabilities persisted. The government and ZANU-PF continued to infringe on the right to due process, citizenship, and property ownership in ways that affected the white minority disproportionately.

Persons with Disabilities

The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, access to public places, and the provision of services, including education and health care. The constitution and law do not specifically address air travel, other transportation, or health care. They do not specify physical, sensory, mental, or intellectual disabilities. NGOs continued to lobby to include persons with albinism in the definition of “disabled” under the law. Government institutions often were uninformed and did not implement the law. The lack of resources devoted to training and education severely hampered the ability of persons with disabilities to compete for scarce jobs. The law stipulates that government buildings be accessible to persons with disabilities, but implementation was slow. Persons with disabilities faced harsh societal discrimination and exclusion, as well as poor service delivery from state bodies. For example, the National Council for the Hard of Hearing reported that access to justice in courts was compromised for persons with hearing disabilities due to a lack of sign language interpreters. Persons with disabilities living in rural settings faced even greater challenges.

Although two senators were elected to represent persons with disabilities, parliament rarely addressed problems affecting persons with disabilities. Parliament does not provide specific line items for persons with disabilities in the various social service ministry budgets.

Most persons holding traditional beliefs viewed persons with disabilities as bewitched, and in extreme cases families hid children with disabilities from visitors. According to the National Association of Societies for the Care of the Handicapped, the public considered persons with disabilities as objects of pity rather than persons with rights; they constituted a forgotten and invisible group.
There were very few government-sponsored education facilities dedicated to persons with disabilities. Educational institutions discriminated against children with disabilities. Essential services, including sign language interpreters, Braille materials, and ramps, were not available, and prevented children with disabilities from attending school. Many schools refused to accept children with certain disabilities. Schools that accepted students with disabilities offered very little in the way of nonacademic facilities for those accepted as compared with their counterparts without disabilities. Many urban children with disabilities obtained informal education through private institutions, but these options were generally unavailable for persons with disabilities in rural areas. Government programs, such as the basic education assistance module, intended to benefit children with disabilities, failed to address adequately the root causes of their systematic exclusion. The National Association of Societies for the Care of the Handicapped reported that 75 percent of children with disabilities had no access to education.

Persons with mental disabilities also suffered from inadequate medical care and a lack of health services. There were eight centralized mental health institutions in the country with a total capacity of more than 1,300 patients, in addition to the three special institutions run by the ZPCS for long-term patients and those considered dangerous to society. Inpatients in the eight centralized institutions received cursory screening, and most waited for at least one year for a full medical review.

A shortage of drugs and adequately trained mental health professionals resulted in patients not being properly diagnosed and not receiving adequate therapy. There were four or fewer certified psychiatrists working in public and private clinics and teaching in the country. There was a 50 percent vacancy rate for psychiatric nurses. The mental institution in Bulawayo provided more than 90 percent of the available psychiatric services. NGOs reported that getting access to these services was slow and frustrating. NGOs reported that patients suffered from extremely poor living conditions due in part to shortages of food, water, clothing, and sanitation. Budgetary constraints and limited capacity at these institutions resulted in families keeping persons with mental disabilities at home, sometimes in chains and without treatment, and cared for by family.

Prison inmates in the three facilities run by the ZPCS were not necessarily convicted prisoners. Two doctors examined inmates with psychiatric conditions. The doctors were required to confirm a mental disability and recommend a patient for release or return to a mental institution. Prisoners with mental disabilities routinely waited as long as three years for evaluation.

A five-year program launched in 2009 by the National Association of Societies for the Care of the Handicapped provided civic education to persons with disabilities with the goal of encouraging greater civic participation. There were minimal legal or administrative safeguards to allow participation in the electoral processes by persons with disabilities. Administrative arrangements for voter registration at relevant government offices were burdensome, involving long queues, several hours or days of waiting, and necessary return visits, which effectively served to disenfranchise some persons with disabilities. The organizations reported that only 20 percent of eligible voters with disabilities had the identity documents required to vote. On election day in 2013, voting stations in many rural areas were in places inaccessible to persons with disabilities. The law permits blind persons to bring an individual to assist in marking their ballots, and therefore compromises ballot secrecy.
Section 7. Worker Rights

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment or Occupation
The law prohibits employment or occupational discrimination based on race, color, gender, tribe, political opinion, creed, place of origin, disability, HIV status, or pregnancy. The law does not expressly prohibit employment discrimination regarding age, language, citizenship, social origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The government did not effectively enforce the law. Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to race, sex, gender, disability, and sexual orientation (see section 6).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Zimbabwe ratified the CRPD and Optional Protocol on 23 Sep 2013.