**Information for the Report to the 52nd session of the Human Rights Council in 2023 on Reparation for child victims and survivors of sale and sexual exploitation**

**Question:** What are the current needs of the child victims and survivors to redress and reparation both in conflict and non-conflict settings?

**Answer:**

The child victims and survivors need integration and trauma approached services in communities, based on long term support and patronage services for them and for their families. The support includes professional services, including psycho-social medical support, as well socio economic empowerment of families and entry into the secondary education with no stigma.

**Question:** What are the gaps and challenges within the ambit of the international human rights and humanitarian law, in terms of both the existing framework and the implementation status to address to the needs of the child victims and survivors? What measures can be taken to overcome these gaps?

**Answer:**

There is no mandatory reporting scheme in education system, as well as no specialized referral mechanism for cases of abuse and violence against children. The specialists need more capacities to assess and screen the preliminary needs of the child victims and survivors.

Taking into account that there is no a separate mechanism for reporting child abuse and child referral in the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter referred to as Armenia), and there is a need to clarify the work between the actors involved in the field of child protection, necessary amendments were made in the package of the draft laws "On Amendments and Additions to the Family Code of Armenia", "On Child Rights and Child Protection System". Also, it was established that the forms of assistance would be determined by the decision of the government. Therefore, sub-legislative legal acts will be adopted after the adoption of the package of the mentioned draft laws. In particular, the draft law "On Child Rights and Child Protection System" defines the child protection system, which is a system of legal norms, functions and policies aimed at early detection of risks of violence against children, reduction and prevention of violence, effective response to cases of violence, as well as protection of child's rights.

**Question:** Who are the duty bearers to define, implement and provide the reparation to child victims and survivors? In what forms should the reparation be provided, how should they be assessed?

**Answer:**

The main duty barriers are the guardianship authorities in communities, as well community social workers and unified social services. In law enforcement the duty bearers and the police officers in specialized division, who should first response after the discloser of the case. The act within their legislation but they need standard operational procedures to do a case management and referral, especially if there is a need of comprehensive assessment and long term planning of child accommodation.

Performing its operational duties, in the cases of finding children who are victims of violence or survivors the Police of Armenia cooperates with guardianship and trusteeship bodies operating in local self-government bodies, as well as with regional agencies/departments of social support, family, women's and children's rights protection departments operating in Yerevan Municipality and regional administrations, other interested state bodies and non-governmental organizations, representatives of international organisations, who within their functions provide appropriate support to children who are victims or survivors of violence.

*Regarding the referral of the special category child victims within the framework of the fight against trafficking by the Police of Armenia.*

Chapter 4 of the Law "On Identification and Support of Persons Exposed to Human Trafficking and Exploitation" refers to the support of trafficked or exploited persons. In particular, according to Article 20, every victim and special category victim has the right to receive support and protection in accordance with the law. Assistance is provided by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia, and protection is provided by the Police of Armenia. The purpose of referral of special category child victims is the prevention and detection of possible cases of child exploitation, as well as the protection. Those responsible for the coordination of the referral process are:

1. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia, as the competent authority for the identification and support to victims;
2. The Police of Armenia, as the competent body conducting the investigation and ensuring the protection of the child;
3. Partner public organizations as competent bodies providing support and care and socio-psychological rehabilitation of the child in a temporary accommodation or outside the accommodation.

The participants of the referral are state bodies (including independent state bodies), territorial administration bodies and local self-government bodies, as well as other natural and legal persons defined by Article 13, Paragraph 1 of the Law "On Identification and Support of Persons Exposed to Human Trafficking and Exploitation".

**Question:** How do we identify and delineate the roles of state, non-state and individual actors to ensure that reparation reach the child victims and survivors?

**Answer:**

The general framework is the legislation, which is under reforming in both sectors, child protection and social protection, as well in the criminal legislation. Now the draft packages of the whole legislation of child rights are ready. The NGO’s and civil society organizations also have participatory role in advocacy and improvement of legislation and policies.

**Question:** What measures are put in place to hear and understand how child victims and survivors would perceive reparation?

**Answer:**

There are surveys conducted to assess and analyze children's needs. In 2018, there was a study on victims needs within the justice system. In addition, there are child participatory activities so children also can voice their needs. The Council of Justice of Children Issues under the auspice of the Ministry of Justice is the key inter-agency, an inter-sectorial platform that raises issues of child victims and all other child issues in contact with law. The Council meets at least 3 times a year, with the agenda covering the most important needs in the field.

Currently, child victims and survivors of violence can receive services in the day care centers for children by a multidisciplinary team according to an individual social plan. Highlighting that the states and other interested parties must jointly develop principles and mechanisms for the protection of the rights of the child victims and survivors and for the support, as well as, a unified information system to assess the needs of child victims and survivors, the enforcement measures will also be taken, followed by the legislative changes. Currently, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia collects information (within SDG-16 indicators) on children who have been subjected to violence in the family environment, which also provides an opportunity to conduct statistics and provide a need-based service in the day care centers.

Taking into account the importance of conducting awareness campaigns on the protection of children from violence, especially among children who are in a difficult life situation or are at risk of being exposed to it, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia organized awareness campaigns in day care and round-the-clock care centers for children. Besides, at the initiative of the Ministry, children's rights awareness weeks were held in all regions of Armenia.

**Question:** What role do civil society organisations and victims’ groups play in devising, consulting and developing various reparation measures and programs?

**Answer:**

Civil society organizations have key role in Armenia in advocacy and service provision for children. They are a part of the discussions, they are also in close partnership with the state authorities on policy making and get funding from the state to provide services at a community level.

**Question:** What are the good practices initiated by the stakeholders, and what remaining areas of intervention need to be introduced and/or improved?

**Answer:**

The good practice is that the Barnahus model is already advocated and there is a legislative base for the establishment of the services. The main need is in a coordinated response mechanism that still has to be developed, as well as the availability of services in all communities.

 In 2020, within the framework of the cooperation between the Police of Armenia, "Arevamanuk" charity society and "Child's Voice" charity organization of the French Republic and with the support of the latter, a room equipped with technical tools for video recording, with a Gazelle type mirror was opened in the Central Police Department of Armenia. The room was opened for conducting interviews of minors who have been sexually abused and exploited.

The prohibition of violence against children is established by the Law of Armenia "On Children's Rights", according to which every child has the right to protection from all kinds (physical, mental, other) of violence. Any person, including parents or other legal representatives, is prohibited from subjecting a child to violence or degrading punishment or other similar treatment. The "Family Code of Armenia" states that the methods of raising/educating children must exclude the use of physical or psychological violence as a method of education, as well as abusive, cruel, rude, degrading treatment, insult or exploitation.

**Question:** How can States and other stakeholders deliver more effectively with respect to amplifying the effective implementation of meaningful reparation to child victims and survivors? Within the purview of international cooperation, what specific measures should be taken based on the existing structures. What is needed for a more coordinated response by the States/other international actors to provide reparation to child victims and survivors?

**Answer:**

The main need is the joint approach and referral mechanism that need to be developed and practiced. There is a need of unified approach with SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures for the management of Child Survivors of Sexual Violence) in place.

 There are no rehabilitation centers or services that provide appropriate services to both criminal adults and abused minors. In order to strengthen the effective mechanism of work with children- victims of violence or survivors, it is necessary to have long-term rehabilitation services or rehabilitation centers for minors.