

NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

2004-2015



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**NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS
OF THE CHILD**

2004 - 2015

PART I

MAIN DIRECTIONS OF THE STATE POLICY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN (2004-2015)

INTRODUCTION

On June 1, 1992 the Republic of Armenia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, thereby proving its willingness to make the issues of child protection a state priority and to include these issues in the implementation of national programs. 2002 is the tenth anniversary of the ratification of the Convention and it is therefore a symbolic moment for the development of the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Armenia.

The National Plan of Action is a mechanism through which Armenia's obligations to children are realized. It is a tool by which tasks are defined and child programs are developed for further implementation by state bodies, non-governmental organizations and other entities. The National Plan of Action is a comprehensive document which contains policies related to children to be implemented in all relevant areas.

In accordance with the June 21, 2001 decision No. 558 of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, a National Commission was founded to develop a National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights of the Child. Based on the decision of this Commission, a working group was established and is coordinated by the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Representatives of five line ministries (the Ministries of Social Security, Justice, Health, Education & Science, Internal Affairs, and Culture, Youth & Sport), the National Assembly as well as non-governmental organizations ("My Right," "Orran," Bridge of

Hope," the "Association of Children's Health Promotion," "First to the Children") were involved in the working group.

The National Plan of Action of the Republic of Armenia was prepared in accordance with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, proposals made by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as obligations assumed within the scope of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action, and the Outcome Document of the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, "A World Fit for Children."

Included in the National Plan of Action is information provided in the 2002 Second Periodic Report of the Republic of Armenia submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and data contained in the Summary Report presented to the UN for review of the progress made for children in the decade since the 1990 World Summit for Children, the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. The National Plan of Action is linked with the main provisions of the Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Republic of Armenia.

MAIN DIRECTIONS AND COMPONENTS OF THE NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

The following are the main directions of the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights of the Child, which have been approved by the National Commission:

- Legislation
- Health
- Social Security (including elimination of child labor)
- Education
- Leisure, entertainment and cultural life
- Juvenile justice (protection of children from inhumane treatment and all forms of exploitation)

In the areas mentioned, particular focus is placed on the needs of children in especially difficult situations and in need of special attention: disabled children, beggars and vagrants, orphans, victims of abuse and poverty, and those in conflict with the law.

All of the above main directions of the National Plan are comprised of the following components:

- Relevant articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Main problems in the field
- Goals and national strategy
- Control methods and further actions
- Annex 1 (Suggested Projects)



PART II LEGISLATION

Brief Description of the Current Situation

Article 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia guarantees that the “international treaties ratified are a constituent part of the legal system of the Republic.” Therefore, if the Republic of Armenia is already a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the principles of the Convention could serve as a guide to Armenia’s National Plan of Action.

At the same time it should be mentioned that the principles of the Convention only give definitions of the basic rights of the child and are declarative in nature; therefore it is necessary to stress the importance of the Armenian law “On the Rights of the Child.”

Unfortunately, the law mainly repeated the principles of the Convention and did not create mechanisms for their implementation.

During the last few years, activities directed at the development of a legal framework, including components ensuring the protection of the rights of the child, have been in progress. The Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Labor Code, and the Law on Charity are in the process of being elaborated.

Main Problems

Some elements of Armenian legislation, stemming from the impact of difficult social and economic conditions, create obstacles to the complete implementation of the rights of the child.

Among the serious drawbacks in the legal framework, with regard to children, is the inadequacy of the infrastructure ensuring the implementation of the legislative acts, as well as the existence of various administrative directives and bylaws which, at times, conflict in nature and in meaning.

Legislative acts should define the responsibilities of adults for cruel and inhumane treatment of children.

Children from families who have suffered as a result of military action, earthquakes, other natural disasters, as well as refugees and children from displaced families, need special legal protection.

The shortcomings in legislation, particularly the absence of a Law on Culture, have been serious obstacles to the effective organization of leisure and entertainment for children, as well as to children’s full participation in the cultural and creative life of the society.

The existing legislative system needs reforms to ensure the realization of the rights of such vulnerable groups of children such as beggars and vagrants.

Presently there is no legislation clearly protecting children from illegal displacement, including to other countries. For this reason, it is necessary to become party to and to ratify appropriate international documents.

The necessity to protect the rights of children of Armenian citizens living abroad should be stressed, taking into consideration the large volume of migration during the past few years. It is common knowledge that most of these migrants can not protect their rights and legal interests, including the rights of their children; in many cases, children can not enjoy their basic rights, particularly their right to development and education.

In recent years a number of cases of adolescent illness or death have occurred as a result of these adolescents joining various religious groups and sects. In many cases the activities of sects pose a serious risk to the health and mental development of children, causing alienation from family and society.

Alcohol and cigarette advertising by mass media, as well as dissemination of information such as video films which violate human dignity and promote violence, have become widespread in Armenia.



There are a number of laws which, although adopted within a short period of time of each other, limit each other's scope. These are, for example, the "Law on Medical Aid and Services" and the "Law On the Rights of the Child." It is necessary to include within the draft law "On the Provision of State Pensions" a provision which, parallel to the pension given in the case of a lost bread-winner, gives children without parental care or children whose parents are not known, the right to receive a social pension.

It is necessary to:

1. Give adequate guarantees to working adolescents.
2. Strengthen the implementation of property and no property rights of adolescents.
3. Improve legislation to protect the rights of children who grow up in, and eventually leave, orphanages.
4. Improve legislation dealing with adoption procedures.

The elaboration of legislation and legal acts is needed for the appointment of guardian families. This legislation needs to make provisions for guidelines and mechanisms regarding the identification of risk categories, standards for selecting foster homes, and quality of measures needed for organizing temporary care within the family.

Keeping in mind that disabled children are full members of society, and stressing the importance of integrating these children into society, improvements in legislation need to be made at this time in order to create adequate conditions for their education, upbringing, and socio-psychological rehabilitation.

The legal representative of a child using the justice system cannot, in many cases, defend his/her rights and interests because of high court fees. Thus, it is necessary to implement relevant measures to eliminate court fees for children.

Goals

- To become party to international conventions and sign additional protocols dealing with the rights of the child.
- To establish a Juvenile Justice System
- To improve Armenian legislation in the field of child protection



PART III

HEALTH

Brief Description of the Current Situation

Issues related to improving maternal and infant health care and well being are under state protection. The Constitution and laws of the Republic of Armenia “On Medical Aid and Services” and “On the Rights of the Child” confirm these issues. Maternal and infant health care strategies in Armenia are mainly based on the provision of medical services by the government.

Main Problems

Since 1995, reforms in the health care system have been made in accordance with the overall economic changes in Armenia. Transition reforms with the establishment of a free market economy have an impact on public health indicators. It is of concern that per capita health care expenses are 7 to 8 US dollars, figures considerably below the standard. Access to, and quality of, health care decreased significantly because of legal and economic reforms with chronic deficit financing, the establishment of a health care system based on payments by individuals, increasing market prices for prescription drugs, and an overall decline in health care resources.

Since 1997, health care financing has been carried out through annual health care target programs. These include maternal and infant health care, which cover a broad range of free medical services for infants. It is worth noting that the volume can be changed according to the amount of annual budget contribution to health care. For example, state guaranteed medical and hospital services included infants ages 0 to 3 years in 2001, but 0 to 7 years in 2002.

As mentioned, the decline in demographic trends and in the overall social and economic situation is reflected in the main medical-demographic indicators. Of serious concern is the decrease in the birth rate and the natural population growth. The natural growth per 1,000 people decreased more than seven times, from 16.3 in 1990, to 2.1 in 2001, while the

birth and fertility rate decreased more than two times.

In general, registration of births and deaths needs to be improved, but the more obvious need is the implementation of WHO definitions of infant mortality and prenatal cases.

The problem is the significant difference between the number of real and registered births, which can be explained by births at home. When infant birth is registered properly, life and citizenship rights are guaranteed.

Health Care for Infants

There is some progress in this sphere because of the implementation of improvements in infant health care programs over the last ten years. The situation is particularly positive in the management of infectious diseases. There have been no cases of polio in the last six years; moreover, there is a significant decline in mortality from diphtheria, rubella, and whooping cough. The breast-feeding rate has increased nearly three times; intestinal and respiratory diseases have been cut in half, as compared to 1994. There are, however, negative trends in the last few years. Although the infant mortality rate continued to decrease to a low rate until 1998, it has been increasing in the last few years. Within the area of infant mortality there has been an increase in birth and abnormal birth mortality rates. The number of cases of diseases among the newborn and the number of infants below average weight at birth have increased by 14% and 25%, respectively. The infant mortality rate is increasing from diseases such as cancer, TB, measles and vascular system disorders.

Immunization Program

Although there is some success in immunization and preventive programs, with as much as a 90% mortality decrease from some diseases, and the elimination of polio (Armenia is recognized among European countries as a “polio-free zone”), many problems still need to be solved, especially in rural regions. Among these are policies for secure injection preparation and environmentally safe disposal of ion residue. What is most vital, however, is for Armenia to be able to meet her obligations in obtaining vaccines.

Disabled Children

Problems of disabled children in a declining socio-economic environment become more urgent. The number of disabled children increased by approximately 60% since 1995, an increase which can be explained by the expanded list of criteria for disability and by the socio-economic situation. However, available data do not show the real situation of infant disability and more investigation and research are needed. Rehabilitative treatment of disabled children and the integration of these children into society are the main problems in this area.

Rehabilitative Treatment

Although infant rehabilitation had shown great progress with the establishment of rehabilitation centers after the 1988 earthquake in Armenia, the availability of children's treatment centers will decrease, even though the number of these centers is currently insufficient to provide adequate rehabilitation treatment. The state is unable to support these centers because of a lack of financial resources.

Children's Mental Health

Mental health care for children is another area of concern. The absence of statistical data and sector analysis does not allow for an estimate of the scope of the problem. The problem is undoubtedly serious because in the last fifteen years, Armenia has been subject to a number of factors known to have a negative influence on mental health, e.g., war, earthquake, and energy crises. The prolonged influence and consequences of these factors, especially in the earthquake zone and border areas, often become evident after a number of years.

Maternal Health Care

The negative trends in the issues of maternal health are more obvious, as it is well known that healthy motherhood is a precondition for healthy childhood. The rate of maternal mortality (per 100,000 births) is obviously a growing trend. Thus, a comparison of a three-year average shows a growth in the maternal mortality in recent years, despite the 20% decrease until 1998 (42/100,000 from 1989 to 1991, 32.1/100,000 from 1995 to 1997, and 41/100,000 from 1998 to 2000). According to the WHO, three-year

average indicators are more significant when the population is less than five million. The Armenian maternal mortality rate indicator exceeds that of European countries by an average of four to five times.

Prenatal Examination

The rate of prenatal examinations in pregnant women has declined sharply - a decrease of around two times in the registration of early pregnancy (up to twelve weeks) by women's consultation units. Cases of pathology during pregnancy and delivery complications are increasing significantly. According to official statistics, anemia during pregnancy increased more than ten times in the period from 1990 to 2001.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS

Sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS are of serious concern. It is interesting to note that in 1997, nearly 25% of pregnant women were examined for HIV, but currently that number does not exceed 3%. In 2000 there were already registered cases of pregnancies with HIV, and the first infant AIDS case was diagnosed in 2001. Increases in sexually transmitted diseases in younger members of the population are an especially serious problem for teenagers.

Nutrition of Women and Children

Direct consequences of the decline in the social and economic conditions are diets deficient in protein and vitamins, as well as a lack of variety in food. This has an immediate impact on pregnant women, mothers who are breast-feeding, and children. Results are chronic malnutrition, vitamin imbalance allergies, and intestinal infections.

Chronic malnutrition of children (height-age indicator deficit) is a growing trend, and among children aged zero to five it is at 13%, the highest in the region. Anemia occurs at a high rate as well, 26% in children and 16% in women.

Iodine deficit is endemic in Armenia. Although there has been some success in using salt with iodine (83%), the iodine deficit in children is 30%, and in women, 33%. Nutrition problems are more serious in rural regions. There is a clear need to continue the



implementation of information dissemination programs on the improvement of nutrition in women and children, as well as professional consultations on healthy nutrition and breast-feeding. Developing programs that provide nutrition to women and children is a possible and necessary means to improving their health.

Other Factors Influencing the Health Care of Children

Health Care Education and Public Awareness

Even in programs that enjoy some success, there are many unsolved problems. The solution to these problems has great potential for further improvements. It is important that the problems mentioned in this report become part of the development of teaching curricula in medical schools, particularly in the areas of infant breast-feeding, rational use of antibiotics, and treatment of respiratory and intestinal diseases. It is even more important to raise health care awareness and health-related responsibilities in communities, families and parents, thus increasing the active dissemination of knowledge to the population. Dissemination of information about healthy lifestyles and safe pregnancies, immunization, and infants' right to nutrition and care is necessary for the effective solution to health care problems.

Health of Teenagers

The health care of teenagers is particularly important in the framework of children's health. It is a fact that teenagers are not sufficiently educated in elementary medical and hygienic issues, sexual culture, and STD prevention. Lack of information on a healthy lifestyle, damaging habits like smoking and drinking, are not only evident in their behavior, but are also reflected in their health. There is an obvious need for the creation of health care and medical information programs for teenagers.

Environmental Pollution

Water and air pollution is a serious problem in Armenia. Pollution increases the occurrence of diseases, particularly infectious intestinal illnesses. Access to

clean water is not available in all areas of Armenia. There are no appropriate security measures in place for infant food and water. As a result of the uncontrolled use of chemicals, greater availability and use of unsafe food has become a problem for the health care of the entire population.

Advertising

A key challenge is the need to protect the population from damaging habits and aggressive advertising of products such as tobacco and alcoholic beverages. There is an urgent need to prevent the participation of children in these damaging products.

Goals

In conclusion, the Health Care Ministry of the Republic of Armenia has set 2015 as the target date to achieve the following objectives for the improvement of maternal and infant health, as well as the health of children and teenagers:

- 1 Decrease mortality rate in infants (0 to 1 years of age) and children (1 to 5 years of age) by at least 1/3; it must not exceed 10% by 2015, including deaths caused by respiratory and intestinal diseases, 30% and 50%, respectively.
- 2 Decrease maternal mortality rates by at least 1/3; the 3-year average indicator must not exceed 20/100,000 births by 2015.
- 3 Decrease by 1/3 the number of infants born prematurely, or at below average weight; it must not exceed 7%.
- 4 Provide breast-feeding exclusively to 65% of infants until the age of 4 months and continue breast-feeding until the age of two.
- 5 Provide vaccination to more than 95% of infants, with the following results:
 - Eliminate polio by 2002
 - Eliminate local cases of diphtheria by 2007
 - Eliminate complications caused by rubella by 2010
- 6 Include 65% of disabled infants in individual rehabilitation programs.
- 7 Eliminate iodine deficiency by 2008 through cooperation by public and private sectors; decrease by 50% anemia complications before 2015.



- 8 Decrease chronic malnutrition in infants/children by at least 1/3; the height-age deficit indicator of infants 0 to 5 years old must not exceed 8 %.
- 9 Prevent the spread of AIDS in infants and teenagers:
 - include 80% of infants and teenagers in AIDS prevention programs by 2007
 - provide access to AIDS information to 90% of youths (ages 15 to 24) by 2010
- 10 Prepare and deliver programs for active physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual early development for children.
- 11 Prepare and deliver programs on physical, intellectual, spiritual development, and reproductive health care for teenagers.
- 12 Provide access to information on reproductive health.



PART IV

SOCIAL SECURITY

Brief Description of the Current Situation

Countries in transition have suffered from a number of common social, cultural, economic and civil changes and developments, which have had a considerable impact on their most vulnerable population - children. At this time it is very important to ensure the social rights of children.

Main Problems

As the basic unit of society, the family feels the impact of all developments within the society. The elaboration and implementation of a state policy on family is an important function of the state; it is important to recognize the need to support young families at the state level including support for housing, education, medical care, etc. The implementation of target programs directed at young families will help them succeed, promote the national gene fund, as well as foster the spiritual and physical development of the new generation. Social and economic difficulties have had a negative impact on families with many children. This means that the threat of poverty is related to the composition of the family, large families being more prone to lasting poverty. A considerable portion of these families do not have a real and stable source of income, survive with the help of family benefits and benevolent aid, and have inadequate living conditions. As a result, large families are often unable to provide an environment promoting the physical and intellectual development of the child.

The feminization of poverty has become evident in Armenia. There is an increase in the number of women and children among the poor. This is particularly true of single-parent families headed by women. The situation is aggravated by the large number of emigrants. To find employment, many men go abroad, leaving home-related problems to women. The women who are left behind cannot meet the family obligations with respect to children's health care, upbringing, and education.

One of the central social issues for Armenia is the provision of support to families facing great difficulties, especially those with children. The Poverty Reduction Strategy elaborated by the Republic of Armenia stresses primarily social assistance to children. In the present social and economic conditions, many families do not have sufficient financial means to buy textbooks, school supplies, shoes and clothes for their children. As a result, many children in Armenia do not have the opportunity to go to school. Unfortunately, this trend is increasing.

One of the serious concerns is the development of the "social orphanage" in Armenia. During recent years, the number of children who have parents, but who find themselves without parental care, is increasing.

Of 599 children living in children's homes, which operate in the system of the Ministry of Social Security, 215 are children who have parents or whose parents are divorced.

Prevention and reduction of the phenomenon of street children (beggars and vagrants) is of utmost importance. Joint comprehensive approaches and efforts of state bodies, and local and international organizations, are required to solve the problem.

One of the important issues facing society and the state is the issue of the protection of the rights and interests of children who have no parents or who are deprived of parental care.

Preferable solutions to the problem are the organization of family education, the care and upbringing of the child in his/her own family, in the family of the people who adopted him/her, or in the family of the guardian.

According to the 2000 statistics, there are about 8,000 disabled children. Improvement in the activities of properly functioning specialized children's trusteeship organizations in Armenia is a must. This includes: the creation of favorable conditions for development, care, treatment and education; the acquisition of technical devices for children (wheel chairs, hearing aids); social and psychological rehabilitation; and the guarantee of protection of individual rights and development.

One of the priority issues which requires an important and optimal solution is the issue of organizing alternative medical and social services for disabled children, whose care takes place in families or at home.

The need to involve disabled children in the life of the society is of utmost importance. This can be achieved through improving the following aspects of urban development: free and unimpeded access to buildings and areas which have functional importance, application of norms of design for sidewalks and pedestrian zones, length of slopes, height of sidewalks borders, availability of ramps, and other necessary conditions.

Although a positive trend can be noted, the absence of a friendly and appropriate attitude toward disabled children by members of society is still a matter of concern.

It is important to revive the value and prestige of the title of mother with many children (Mother-heroine is one possible image). This will foster greater appreciation of mothers.

Urgent action is required in reforming and restructuring children's trusteeship organizations.

Although the problem exists, there are no statistics on the use of child labor or on the economic exploitation of children. In the new economic environment, defining guarantees for children involved in labor activities will protect them from exploitation.

Provisions for the future of children who reach majority and are discharged from orphanages at age 18, as well as the social protection of former pupils of children's houses, is a matter of serious concern for the state.

Goals

- Stabilization of conditions for children and further improvement
- Creation of real preconditions for normal living standards for children
- Overcoming the transition period's negative trends in the social behavior of children; protection of children who live in very difficult and poverty-stricken conditions
- Implementation of comprehensive legal, physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual and social development rights of the child according to the norms of the Armenian Constitution and international commitments
- Strengthening the legal protection of children and compliance of Armenian legislation with the revised European Social Charter and other international instruments



PART V

EDUCATION

Brief Description of the Current Situation

Currently, the Armenian education system is undergoing reforms. There is a transformation process from a centralized educational system to a decentralized one. Legislation for education has been elaborated and continues to improve. The process of optimizing the system is under way. The problem of providing students with textbooks has basically been solved, numerous new subjects and textbooks have been elaborated and introduced in the curricula, new information technologies have been gradually introduced in the educational system, and education facilities and financial systems are being modernized. There is an attempt to organize studies for disabled children in secondary schools. In 2001, the National Program for the Development of Education, which defines priority directions of the education system for the next five years, was adopted.

Main Problems

At the same time there are problems which are mainly consequences of the unstable socio-economic situation.

The increase in the number of children not attending school is of great concern. The lack of statistics on demographics and the education system, as well as precise mechanisms for the collection of data, does not allow for a comprehensive evaluation of the extent of the problem. Independent surveys demonstrate that a certain percentage of children are out of the education system for different reasons. Most of them do not have school uniforms and school supplies, some are forced to share with their parents the financial burden of supporting the family.

Poverty in families results in the increase in absenteeism from school and in the number of students who repeat the academic year.

It is inevitable that in a number of years Armenia will have uneducated citizens and, consequently, the

problem of creating educational opportunities for them will arise.

Both the efficiency and the quality of education suffer the negative impact of financial problems. Most schools do not have the possibility to function normally in winter. They do not have the necessary equipment and laboratories for appropriate instruction. Qualified teachers leave schools because of low salaries.

Updated school programs have not yet produced the desired results. There is a need to expand the training and skills component in educational curricula through the development of specialization-oriented and pre-specialization programs.

General education does not lead to higher education and social/economic integration of graduates. Those who wish to continue their education prefer to seek the services of tutors outside the school system.

There is an increase in the imbalance between city and village schools, due mainly to the unavailability of teaching staff in the villages. In some schools, because of the lack of teachers, certain subjects are not taught.

The aggravation of the socio-economic situation has resulted in more problems in boarding schools. The most vulnerable groups of children are enrolled in these institutions but state resources are not sufficient for their full care and education. While there is an increase in the number of children in boarding institutions, special education, social, and psychological services are limited.

Similar problems exist in pre-school institutions. Communities are unable to ensure regular activities for kindergartens. Not only have the capacities of pre-primary institutions been reduced, but their involvement and accessibility have been, as well. A comprehensive and accessible alternative system which could assist parents in educating their children, and which would function in parallel with kindergartens, has not been yet established.

One of the important components of the education system is a network of institutions which provide extracurricular activities aimed at ensuring productive recreational, leisure and educational choices.

Restrictions of state allocations result in the inaccessibility of these services to many children. These institutions can play a significant role in preventing violations of the law, vagrancy, and other anti-social behaviors.

Little progress is registered in the inclusion of disabled children in compulsory educational institutions. Instead, special boarding schools were established for these children. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not encourage a separate education system for disabled children and strictly prescribes that education should be guaranteed in the framework of full social equality.

Although considerable effort has been made to disseminate information about existing legislation on children, and obvious progress has been noted, the level of the public's knowledge is not yet sufficient. Mass media - radio, television and educational institutions - are not involved in this campaign.

Goals

- Creation of necessary conditions for efficient educational institutions
- Reform of educational content to meet the requirements of civil society and the market economy
- Transfer of children from boarding schools to regular schools
- Improvement of quality pre-school care and education
- Development of a system which meets the full educational needs of children



PART VI

LEISURE, ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURAL LIFE

Brief Description of the Current Situation

At present there are ongoing activities in Armenia aimed at preserving and further developing the existing network of educational, as well as extracurricular institutions, which organize leisure, entertainment, and cultural life for children.

There is also an effort to create an information data bank for the entire system. The Ministry of Culture, Youth Affairs and Sports is concerned about the negative impact of the present social and economic reality on children's access to cultural and aesthetic education, as well as to equal opportunities. It has submitted for consideration by the Government a proposal providing state assistance to children's musical and art schools for which state oversight is planned. This will help make education more accessible to skillful and talented children from families in need of social assistance.

Programs are being developed in conjunction with special artistic centers for disabled children, with the understanding that in the future children who are beggars and vagrants, as well as children who are in conflict with the law, will be involved in these centers.

Main Problems

Problems are emerging partially due to the absence of a main law on culture, as well as the imperfect sub-legislative acts. To date, the main directions of state policy in the field of culture have not been identified.

Problems have emerged not only because of the lack of financial resources, but also because of incorrect policies on cultural institutions.

When most cultural institutions were placed under community management, many institutions dealing with children's rest, recreation and cultural life were closed and subjected to unreasonable changes in personnel. Delays in transfer of funds provided by the state budget created tensions and difficulties.

Due to the absence of state policy, the professional teaching of many subjects in musical, artistic and art schools is endangered. This includes subjects such as the study of folk music, wind, and string instruments. Replacement or additional teaching staff in the field of culture is becoming very problematic. The schools in question are important not only because they organize rest and recreation for children, but also because they provide serious specialized pre-school education.

Due to the lack of financial resources, many skillful and talented children cannot get appropriate pre-school specialized education.

The equipment available in these schools is unsatisfactory, existing tools are worn out and obsolete. There is a big demand for professional literature.

Appropriate supplies are not accessible to students in art schools, just as musical instruments are unavailable to children in music schools.

Aesthetic centers for children face serious difficulties in educational methodology; they are in need of new education plans and programs for specific subjects.

Only in recent years have various events such as exhibitions, concerts, and competitions been organized in Armenia.

Unfortunately, current financial resources are not sufficient for the identification and support of talented children.

Libraries for children face a decline; the number of libraries has been reduced. According to statistics, there were 99 libraries in Yerevan in 1990 and only 53 in the year 2000. In rural communities, there were 955 libraries in 1990 and only 833 in the year 2000. In 2000, 270,806 children used libraries. The number of books has been reduced by 2 million. Libraries do not have the financial means to obtain new literature. Some funds for library acquisitions were allocated in the state budget, but they have never been provided for this purpose.

There are examples of literature allocations. In 1990 the children's library of Khnko-Aper received 25,000 books, in 2000, 3,380, 60% of which were children's books. The majority of books were donated.

Today, libraries are in need of modern technical equipment: computers, audio-visual materials, etc.

Children's literature sold in bookstores is not accessible to readers. State-funded children's press is represented by only one weekly newspaper, "Kanch," and two magazines not regularly published.

It is necessary to protect children today from information that can have a negative psychological impact, including information available on the Internet.

A small number of children's TV programs are available and existing programs are of low quality. There is a need to properly manage the broadcast of commercials and advertisements not designed for children, but shown during afternoon and evening hours.

In the field of cinematography there are no films produced for children. Many movie theatres, including the only one for children, have been closed. In 1990 there were 71 functioning movie theatres, today there are only 28. There are only two private theatres and they are not accessible to children. Most of the films shown are commercial in nature. There are two functioning studios in Armenia, "Hayk" and "Hayfilm," which, due to the lack of financial resources, do not produce films for children. In the last few years, only one or two cartoon films were produced and there were no films of scientific and educational nature.

There have been mass closures of cultural facilities and houses which served as the most accessible means for needy children to get an aesthetic education. Today, thanks to enormous efforts, only a few of them are functioning. They have problems similar to other cultural institutions and need assistance from the state. In rural areas these institutions are preserved to a certain extent, but due to financial problems, they are closed and do not fulfill their intended purpose, i.e. to organize rest, education, and leisure for children.

The situation of sports schools is also deplorable. The majority of those under community control are closed. In practice there are no activities aimed at the education of a healthy generation. In schools, physical education classes are not well organized.

Today families in need of social assistance, the disabled, orphans, and juveniles kept in the penitentiary system, are deprived of the possibilities to be involved in cultural life.

It is necessary to pay serious attention to the aesthetic education of children in boarding schools and orphan-

ages, where one can find many skillful and talented children. Such an education will help children to become integrated into society and build their future.

Goals

- Allocation of state slots for children in professionally-oriented musical, artistic, and art institutions
- Preservation of available networks of educational institutions; improvement of the financial situation
- Organization of events to make rest and leisure for children more productive and interesting
- Initiation of educational radio and TV programs
- Protection of the available network of libraries, increase in library funds, installation of modern information technology (Internet)
- Development of science fiction literature and children's press
- Development of cinematography for children
- Adoption of the concept of physical education for children and youth
- Creation of information data base of skillful and talented children
- Assistance to skillful and talented children for continuous and sustainable education
- Organization of musical, artistic and art competitions and festivals, as well as exhibitions on local and international levels
- Participation of disabled children in sports events
- Involvement of street children (orphans and vagrant children) in cultural, sports, and educational programs
- Organization of training courses in special institutions on cultural education for juveniles who are in conflict with the law
- Creation of favorable conditions for children's summer holidays, including reparation and use of playgrounds.



PART VII

VIOLATION OF LAW AND JUSTICE

Brief Description of the Current Situation

At the present stage of the socio-economic development of Armenia, strengthening the legal order and combating criminality are considered priorities, along with the implementation of a comprehensive program on the identification and the prevention of juvenile offenses. Reforms being carried out include issues of juvenile offenders who are both part of society or isolated from society, as well as the protection of rights and legal interests of juveniles who are victims of offenses.

While making reforms, distinct national factors, as well as international and local experience, should be taken into account together.

According to statistics, there are few cases of juvenile involvement in the illegal production and sale of drugs. However, the Armenian Ministry of the Interior organizes and conducts discussions and meetings on different topics such as Drug Abuse and Teenagers. Drug abuse prevention programs are taught in all general education schools and institutions.

In order to prevent the illegal adoption of children by foreigners, the Government and relevant ministries first thoroughly consider and discuss all details related to the adoption documentation package, and only then make a decision for each specific case.

Main Problems

Socio-economic crises, the absence of comprehensive programs, and society's indifference have resulted in the increase of street children - vagrants and beggars.

Street Children (Vagrant and Beggar Juveniles)

Surveys have demonstrated that almost all vagrant and beggar street children are under the control of the relevant services of the Ministry of the Interior

dealing with juvenile issues, yet, repeat offenders are commonplace. For example, since the opening of the Fund for Armenian Relief Children's Reception and Re-orientation Center on September 2, 2000, the Ministry of the Interior has referred to the Center 450 juveniles — 49 of them for the second time, and 28 – more than twice. After individual pedagogical work with all juveniles, the Multi-profile Council decides if juveniles are to be accommodated in relevant educational-pedagogical institutions or handed over to their parents. No juvenile is ignored and left in the street.

If, after discharge from the Center, a juvenile does not receive proper supervision by his/her parents, or is away from the teachers, he/she reappears on the street and often commits further offenses or becomes a beggar or a vagrant once again. This cycle is repeated periodically.

Although not yet a serious problem, there is a growing manifestation of illegal and anti-social behavior by girls. It is necessary to undertake appropriate measures to stop further development of this trend.

It is vital for Armenia to continue the implementation of scientifically supported projects, as some positive steps need to continue to be taken in order to offset the negative factors contributing to the current state of the country.

Goals

- Identification and control of juvenile offenders who are not in caring environments and are growing up in difficult circumstances
- Prevention of legal violations by juveniles; identification of offenses committed
- Protection of the legal rights of juveniles who appear to be in a difficult situation

At present, in Armenia, the problem of sexual exploitation of children and their trafficking is not a major problem. Keeping in mind the increase in trafficking of women and children in CIS countries, it is necessary to collect comprehensive data, to study the issue, and to undertake relevant steps which will help combat the sexual exploitation of children. It is important to estab-



lish information exchange channels and to train law enforcement agencies and border guards.

In the next ten years it will be necessary to undertake relevant steps in Armenia to protect children from cruelty, exploitation and violence. This can be accomplished through the implementation of preventive measures, the establishment and functioning of trusteeship services and the prioritization of children's interests. To reach the goals outlined, well-prepared and responsible personnel should take action to integrate children in the society.

Persons dealing with juveniles who committed offenses and who are brought up under difficult conditions must be appropriately trained.

It is necessary to continue and expand the process of reforms in the criminal and penitentiary systems. The problem of the employment of juveniles who are kept in detention and those who are sentenced, but not isolated from society, has not yet been fully solved.

The situation is aggravated by the lack of information about the penitentiary system.

Favorable conditions, i.e. conditions discouraging illegal acts by juveniles, whether they are first-time offenders or repeat offenders, do not exist.

Program Objectives;

To protect the rights of childrens who have been victims of crimes

To prevent offenses in juvenile circles by identifying predictable patterns

To consider wider application of alternative penalties which do not isolate offenders from society

To reduce the number of juveniles in penitentiary institutions

To strenghten cooperation among the main bodies of the state, the statistical and the penitentiary services

To make issues related to the protection of juvenile offenders public

Proposals Made by NGOs

Brief Description of the Current Situation

More than 300 NGOs dealing with children's issues are registered in the Ministry of Justice. But not all organizations succeed in carrying out intensive activities, since financial resources are very limited. Foreign organizations are the main source for the expansion of these activities.

Goals

To improve the state of children and the protection of their rights requires the mobilization of local resources and social dialogue, i.e. close co-operation of the government with civil society, including NGOs and the private sector.

To ensure the right of participation for the child:

One of the problems in Armenia is the lack of active participation of children in the protection of their rights and in decision-making. The opinion of the child is not taken into account in the process of elaborating and implementing social, cultural, and educational projects aimed at improving the status and the education of children. There are no children's and youth organizations dealing with children's rights and issues.

Monitoring Methods and Future Activities

To solve the raised issues, representatives form governmental structures and NGOs who developed documents and propose implementing concrete projects aimed at ensuring protection of the rights of the child in Armenia. The process and results of implementation of projects will be monitored by the annual reports of ministries involved in the implementation of projects. Further, it is necessary to establish a Resource Center to promote implementation and monitoring of the National Plan of Action for Children.

On November 28, 2002 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, United Nations Children's Fund, and the International Bureau for Children's Rights/Canada on the establishment of the Armenian National Resource Center on Children's Rights.



Relevant articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Article 2

States parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's, or his or her parent's or legal guardian's, race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth, or other status.

Article 3

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Article 4

States parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 8

States parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations, as recognized by law without unlawful interference.

Strategy

Initiate the necessary measures to accelerate the process of signing and ratifying international conventions and additional protocols ensuring the protection of the rights of the child.

Continue improvement of legislation with the aim of establishing the Juvenile Justice System.

Study the international experience in the field.

To revise:

The whole text of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On the Rights of the Child"

The relevant articles of "The Civil Code of the Republic of Armenia" dealing with the rights of the child
The relevant articles of the "Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia"

The relevant articles of the "Criminal Procedure Code"

Law "On Non-Governmental Organizations"

Law "On Taxes"

Law "On Civil Servants"

Law "On Language"

Law "On Television and Radio"

Law "On Provision of State pensions"

Law "On Medical Aid and Services"

Law "On Social Protection of the Disabled"

Law "On Advertising"

Law "On Employment of the Population"

Law "On State Dues"

Law "On Local Governing"

Law "On Administrative relations"

Law "On Education"

Law "On Examination of Environment"

Law "On Press and Mass Media"

Law "On Refugees"

To elaborate and adopt:

Law "On Children's Psychological Service"

Law "On Protection of Families with Children"

Law "On Culture"

Law "On Children's Food"

New Charter "For the Improvement of the Role of the Guardianship and Trusteeship of Autonomous Bodies"

Relevant articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 6

States parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life. States parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Article 17

States parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being, and physical and mental health.



Article 23

States parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance, and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

Article 24

States parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

Article 27

States parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development.

Article 39

States parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect, and dignity of the child.

Strategy

Conduct periodic evaluations and needs reassessments of maternal and infant health care through improvement of systems for information-analysis and continuous monitoring.

Reestablish priorities in maternal and childhood issues and, in that framework, prepare and deliver targeted programs of action.

Increase efficiency of interdepartmental and international cooperation in the process of achieving children's health care programs.

Increase public's role and their accessibility to the Primary Health Care System as a state-guaranteed medical service, in conjunction with continued development of target programs for the improvement of children's health.

Establish mechanisms for control of, and continuous

improvement in, the quality of medical services; provide quality medical care to children.

Improve the infant birth and mortality registration process by renewing legislation; implement WHO definitions on prenatal death and live birth.

Provide adequate and sufficient free medical care through state-guaranteed target programs.

Develop care for the newborn and quality emergency medical services.

Integrate treatment of infant diseases by establishing appropriate community and hospital units.

Expand strategies for early childhood and infant growth and development.

Provide new quality vaccines by expanding vaccination calendars and implementing secure injections.

Prevent mother-to-infant transmission of the AIDS virus; provide improved health care for infected pregnant women and infants.

Improve complex medical care for disabled infants and their families: medical education for parents, community involvement in solving disability problems, and establishment of community centers.

Establish targeted and efficient research programs for children's mental health.

Establish prenatal care and safe motherhood programs.

Improve long-term nutrition management for pregnant women, mothers and children under the age of five; implement guaranteed nutrition programs.

Foster breast-feeding exclusively during the first six months; expand further the "Child Friend Maternity Hospital" initiative.

Promote healthy lifestyles for adolescents, including campaigns aimed at protection of teenagers from the ill effects of tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, etc.

Create the "Teenager's Friend Health Service" and sex education programs.

Raise public awareness of the health needs of children, particularly in adults responsible for their care.

Clean and neutralize environmental contaminants: water, infections, smoke, and food pollutants.

Implement long-term programs aimed at reducing infections and parasitic diseases: tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, epidemic parotitis, malaria, etc.



Relevant articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 3

States parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being.

Article 5

States parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 6

States parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Article 18

States parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

Article 20

A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

Article 21

States parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

Article 23

States parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life.

Article 25

States parties recognize the right of the child who has been placed by the competent authorities for the purposes of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health, to a periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement.

Article 26

States parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security including social insurance.

Article 27

States parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development.

Article 32

States parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous.

Article 36

States parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Strategy

Reform legislation (See legislative part).

Improve the financial state of families with children.

Improve the universal state system of family allowances.

Coordinate family allowances, fulfill amendments in social support programs for the benefit of children via the expansion of identification of vulnerable groups.

Render comprehensive assistance, ensuring implementation of action-oriented programs and access to community services for newly established families, and for families with many children and orphans.

Reform trusteeship organizations.



Relevant provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 2

To ensure protection of the child against all forms of discrimination.

Article 5

State parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child.

Article 12

State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views, to express those views freely in the matters affecting the child.

Article 13

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds.

Article 14

State parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.

Article 17

State parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media, and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources.

Article 18

States parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child.

Article 23

State parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life.

Article 28

State parties recognize the right of the child to education.

Article 29

State parties agree that the education of the child will be directed to:

The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

Strategy

Implement registration and accountability systems for children in general educational institutions.

Develop social, psychological and special pedagogical services in general educational institutions.

Organize social assistance for families with children and special needs.

Provide effective use of state funds.

Build and repair educational institutions.

Repair heating systems of education institutions.

Restore laboratories and workshops of educational institutions and provide modern equipment, instructional materials, technical information, computer equipment, and communication technology.

Improve social protection for teachers.

Introduce new subjects and curricula.

Modernize educational programs and methods.

Develop alternative services for children who need special conditions for education.

Provide adequate special and general education programs.

Introduce inexpensive pre-school services and promote activities of pre-school institutions.

Organize education for parents.

Promote activities of institutions providing extracurricular programs.

Involve children with difficulties in supplementary education programs.

Relevant provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 13

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds.

Article 14

State parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.



Article 15

State parties recognize the right of the child to freedom of association and the freedom of peaceful assembly.

Article 28

State parties recognize the right of the child to education.

Article 29

State parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

Article 30

In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Article 32

States parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development.

Article 31

States parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

Article 36

States parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Strategy

Provide state assistance to schools.

Implement action-oriented programs.

Expand activities of the special creative center for disabled children.

Elaborate programs aimed at integration of children with special needs.

Provide state assistance to socially needy children in the field of specialized cultural study and aesthetic education.

Cooperate with NGOs.

Cooperate with partner countries.

Establish a special arts and crafts study center for children with past offenses.

Protect the available network of summer camps.

Relevant articles of the UN Convention on the Right of the Child

Article 9

State parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will.

Article 11

States parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.

Article 16

No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to unlawful attacks on his or her honor and reputation.

Article 19

States parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has the care of the child.

Article 33

States parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.



Article 37

States parties shall ensure that:

No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Strategy

Improve the moral, psychological and social situation of juveniles who committed offenses and are in conflict with the law (beggar and vagrant children), as well as juveniles who returned to society after imprisonment.

Establish physical and psychological rehabilitation centers with the involvement of officials from the Ministries of Interior, Social Security, Education and Science to help solve the issue of employment.

Introduce new methods and programs.

Establish education centers with special curriculum for 14-18 year old male juveniles who need a special educational and pedagogical approach, and for juvenile offenders.

Establish service points within the Ministry of the Interior's regional departments dealing with juveniles issues, targeting implementation of daily individual work with beggars, vagrant juveniles, offenders, and their parents.

Establish rehabilitation centers for 12-18 year old children with inadequate behavior, who are difficult to educate, who need special education and who have experienced sexual or other types of exploitation.

Identify children who have experienced sexual or other types of exploitation and integrate them into society through special patriotic education, e.g. studying folk art, national crafts, and supporting the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Design special programs for the protection of children were victims of violence and sexual exploitation.

Implement training programs for personnel dealing with juvenile offenders and other relevant areas in children's issues.

Strategy

Confront and resolve the issues mentioned while drafting penitentiary and criminal legislation.

Use positive international experience.

Implement socio-psychological programs with utmost involvement of juveniles in cultural and educational activities.

Strengthen cooperation with commissions within the local governance bodies which deal with juvenile issues.

Increase protection of child offenders' legal rights and interests with the help of the mass media.

Establish the relevant legislative field to promote the development of civil society in Armenia.

Enlist NGO participation for elaborating state policy, strategic planning, decision-making, program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Establish and strengthen child and youth organizations using State promotion and financial support.

Sponsor broadcasts on radio, television and mass media through State mechanisms.

Create various clubs at schools which encourage children's initiative and contribute to the education of responsible citizens.



Approving the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights of Children in the Republic of Armenia, 2004-2015 (Part 2)

N/N	Name of the program or event	Period	Implementing agency	Possible source of financing	Rough estimate of necessary financing (thousand AMD)
1	State target program of mother and child health; free medical care and services for children guaranteed by the state	2004-2015	Ministry of Health	State budget	5,000 yearly
2	Program for improvement of primary health care for children (growth and development of children below 5)	2004-2010	Ministry of Health	WHO, UNICEF, Association of Pediatricians of Armenia, NGOs	2004 – 69,000 2004-2010 – 57,000 yearly
3	Program for introducing the strategy of integrated management of childhood illnesses	2040-2010	Ministry of Health	WHO, UNICEF, WB	60,000 yearly
4	National program of immunization	2004-2015	Ministry of Health	UNICEF, WHO	185,400 yearly
5	Program for improving the nutrition of young children and introducing the initiative of child-friendly polyclinics	2004-2010	Ministry of Health	UNICEF	6,000 yearly
6	Safe motherhood program	2004-2015	Ministry of Health	UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF,	23,200 yearly
7	Improvement of coordinated health care and services for children with disabilities	2004-2005	Ministry of Health	UNICEF and other organizations	53,400 yearly
7.1	Establishment of a center for assessment of the development of children	2004	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science	UNICEF and other organizations	80,520 yearly
7.2	Program for development and early intervention for children with special needs	2004-2005	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science	UNICEF, other organizations, Arabkir United Benevolent Fund	3,720 yearly
8	Improvement of the process of infant death and mortality registration (improvement of legislative framework and regulation)	2004-2005	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, National Statistical Service		
8.1	Program for improving the reporting of still births and deaths of children below 5	2004-2005	Ministry of Health	WHO, UNICEF, USAID	4,200 in one year
8.2	Program for adopting WHO definitions of live births, still births and perinatal period	2004-2005	Ministry of Health, National Statistical Service	WHO, UNICEF, USAID and other organizations	246,000 yearly

9	Program for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS	2004-2008	Ministry of Health	UNICEF, Global Fund for Prevention of HIV, TB and Malaria, WHO	4,200 yearly
10.	Program for promoting breast-feeding and introduction of the initiative of baby-friendly maternity hospitals	2004-2008	Ministry of Health	UNICEF and other organizations	4,200 yearly
11.	Program for improving emergency care for children	2004-2010	Ministry of Health	UNICEF and other organizations	36,000 yearly
12.	Program for improving intensive infant care	2004-2010	Ministry of Health	UNICEF, WHO	3,000 yearly
13.	Program for improving rehabilitation care for children	2004-2010	Ministry of Health	UNICEF, Children's Fund of Armenia, Bridge of Hope and other organizations	5,250 yearly
14.	Establishment of special educational institution for delinquent, difficult-to-educate boys (between 14 and 18 years of age) and adolescents with special developmental needs	2005-2007	National police, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health	Council of Europe	350,000 yearly
15.	Establishment of physical and psychological rehabilitation centers in communities for addressing issues of employment for delinquent adolescents, those who have committed crimes, beggars and vagrants, as well as those who are back from detention or have been subject to sanctions not related to isolation from society	2005-2007	National police, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, OSCE, Council of Europe, UNICEF	50,000 yearly
16.	Establishment of a re-integration center for girls (between 12-18 years of age) who are difficult to educate, have deviant behavior and special developmental needs	2005-2007	National police, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	OSCE, Council of Europe	350,000 yearly
17.	Establishment of regional centers of juvenile police (department of National Police) for individual work with delinquent adolescents, beggars, vagrants and their parents or caregivers	2005-2010	National police	State budget	200,000 yearly
18.	Development of the concept of state policy for families	2005-2006	Ministry of Social Security	No financing needed from state budget	
18.1	Development of programs for support of young families	2005-2007	Ministry of Social Security	No financing needed from state budget	
18.2	Development of programs for support of families with many children	2005-2007	Ministry of Social Security	No financing needed from state budget	



Approved
Robert Kocharyan
President of the Republic of Armenia
29 December, 2003

Decree N 1745-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia
18 December, 2003

**On approving the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the
Rights of Children in the Republic of Armenia, 2004-2015**
PART 3

19.	Program for state support to graduates of Armenian care institutions	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007-2015	Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget	2004 – 335,358 2005 – 64,908 2006 – 54,090 2007-2015 – 40,000 yearly
20.	Provision of care for graduates of Nor Kharberd's specialized orphanage	2007, 2008-2015	Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget	2007 – 167,453 2008 – 2015 – 77,453 yearly
21.	«When September Comes» program	2004-2007, 2007-2015	Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, international organizations	2004-2007 – 50,000 2008 – 2015 – 100,000 yearly
22.	Provision of care for children in residential care institutions	2004-2015	Ministry of Social Security	State budget	593,403.50 yearly
23.	Development of minimum standards of care in residential care institutions	2004-2005	Ministry of Social Security	No financing needed from state budget	
24.	Program for de-institutionalizing residential care institutions	2004-2015	Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, UNICEF, international organizations	26,235 yearly
25.	Introduction of foster care institute, creation of a database of candidates for foster families	2005-2009	Ministry of Social Security	State budget, international organizations	9,000 yearly
26.	Program to ensure labor rights for children, prevention and elimination of child labor and exploitation	2007-2015	Ministry of Social Security, National Police	No financing needed from state budget, international organizations	
27.	Creation of three cares centers for beggar and vagrant children and the provision of care	2007, 2008-2009	Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, UNICEF, WB, other organizations	2007 – 330,000 2008 - 2009 – 150,000 yearly
28.	Provision of social support to families with disabled children	2007-2009	Ministry of Social Security, Ministry of Education and Science	State budget, international organizations	20,000 yearly

29.	Establishment of 25 community day care centers for children	2005, 2007-2015	Ministry of Social Security	State budget, international organizations	2005 – 60,225 2007 – 2015 – 240,225 yearly
30.	Development and implementation of programs against child trafficking and sexual exploitation	2007-2015	Ministry of Social Security	State budget, international organizations	10,000 yearly
31.	Organization of summer holidays for socially vulnerable children	2007-2015	Ministry of Social Security, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Ministry of Health, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, community budgets, international organizations, NGOs	50,000 yearly
32.	Development of a program for basic compulsory mainstream education	2004	Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	UNICEF	287 yearly
33.	Training of teachers in remote and rural areas	2004-2006	Ministry of Education and Science, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	International organizations, Armenian Diaspora, Armenian Apostolic Church	495,000 yearly
34.	Program for reconstruction and improvement of mainstream schools	2004-2006	Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Urban Planning, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, WB, international organizations, Armenian Diaspora	833,694.3 yearly
35.	Establishment of Internet classes	2004-2008	Ministry of Education and Science	WB, Project Harmony	20,000,000 yearly
36.	Expansion of the life skills project (healthy lifestyle, environmental education)	2004-2015	Ministry of Education and Science	UNICEF	14,000 yearly
37.	Development of special education	2005-2015	Ministry of Education and Science	State budget, UNICEF, UNESCO	57,400 yearly
38.	Develop and introduce a program for developing student self-governance	2004-2005	Ministry of Education and Science	UNICEF, UNESCO	57,400 yearly
39.	Inclusive education	2005-2015	Ministry of Education and Science	State budget, UNICEF	57,400 yearly



40.	Development of alternative services for support of special needs children	2004-2015	Ministry of Education and Science Ministry of Social Security	Swiss Agency for International Development	114,000 yearly
41.	Program for the development of pre-school education	2004-2015	Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Social Security, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	UNICEF	17,200 yearly
42.	School Olympics	2004-2015	Ministry of Education and Science, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget	25,000 yearly
43.	Student competitions	2004-2015	Ministry of Education and Science, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget	35,000 yearly
44.	Summer holidays	2004-2015	Ministry of Education and Science, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget	90,000 yearly
45.	Competitions and festivals featuring children's art	2005-2015	Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, international organizations	30,000 yearly
46.	Funding of music and arts schools via state budget; state support to schools	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	274,023.30 yearly
47.	Maintenance of the present network of education institutions; improvement of their material stock	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget	500,000 yearly
48.	Establishment of children's art centers in 10 marzes	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	4,640 yearly
49.	Organization of events for meaningful relaxation and entertainment of children	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	
50.	Summer camps	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget, international organizations	380,000 yearly
51.	Winter camps	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget, international organizations	164,000 yearly

52.	Organization of day summer camps in the communities of Yerevan (10 communities)	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, international organizations	4,000 yearly
53.	«Our Country» - trips to sightseeing destinations throughout Armenia	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	29,000 yearly
54.	Support to children's creative centers	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	3,000 yearly
55.	Organization of competitions, festivals, and exhibitions for creative youth	2004-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	3,000 yearly
56.	Training programs for recognizing children's rights in the Constitutional Court and National Assembly	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	2,900 yearly
57.	Inter-Marz competitions between schools	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Ministry of Education and Science	State budget	55,000 yearly
58.	Development of educational radio and TV programs for children	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Ministry of Education and Science	State budget	4,000 yearly
59.	Target programs for the development of children's literature, libraries and press; publication of books for children, increasing funds for libraries	2004-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Ministry of Education and Science	State budget	6,000 yearly
60.	Target programs for the development of children's movies and theatre	2004-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Ministry of Education and Science	State budget, international organizations	
60.1	«Nran Hatik» national festival for children's theatres (20 theatres)	2004-2012	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, international organizations	4,100 yearly
60.2	Support for the establishment of children's theatres and performances	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	4,387 yearly
60.3	Creation of children's movies and videos	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget, international organizations	100,000 yearly



60.4	Establishment of children's movie theatres in Yerevan and Marz centers	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Marz administration heads, Mayor of Yerevan	State budget, international organizations	60,000 yearly
60.5	Establishment of a children's movie studio in Yerevan	2005-2006	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget, international organizations	100,000 yearly
61.	Organizing joint events for children from Armenia and abroad (concerts, exhibitions, exchange visits)	2005-2015	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget, international organizations	1,500 yearly
62.	Creation of a database of talented children in the Ministry of Culture	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	100 yearly
63.	Organization of national and international festivals and exhibitions	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	3,000 yearly
64.	Support for continuous education for talented children (pensions, acquisitions of special instruments)	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	5,000 yearly
65.	Inclusion of orphans and beggar children in cultural, sports, and educational programs	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, National Police, Ministry of Social Security	State budget	4,000 yearly
66.	State support in the area of cultural, professional, and arts education for socially vulnerable children	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, Ministry of Social Security	State budget	4,500 yearly
67.	Organizing training in culture-related specialties and establishing special creative centers for delinquent adolescents in special institutions	2005-2006	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues, National Police	State budget	4,000 yearly
68.	Support to the creative center for children with disabilities; expansion of activities in marzes	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues		5,000 yearly
68.1	Inclusion of children with disabilities in cultural and sports events	2005-2015	Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget	6,000 yearly
69.	Improvement of legislation in the area of children's rights	2005-2015	Ministry of Social Security, Ministry of Science and Education	No state budget financing needed	

70.	Training and upgrading of skills of specialists working in the area of psycho-social rehabilitation of delinquent adolescents with the aim of reducing repeat offences among adolescents	2004	Ministry of Justice	International and local NGOs	14,500 yearly
71.	Ensuring employment for delinquent adolescents through vocational training and creation of work places in juvenile institutions	2004-2012	Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Science	State budget, international and local NGOs	95,000 yearly
72.	Organization of regular cultural programs, including cultural training and events in juvenile institutions	2004-2012	Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture and Youth Issues	State budget, international and local NGOs	55,000 yearly
73.	Establish a comprehensive statistical database in juvenile institutions with the aim of forecasting criminality trends	2004	Ministry of Justice	OSCE Yerevan office	5,000 yearly
74.	Raising awareness of the population on measures against child abuse and violence through mass media	2004	Ministry of Justice	UNICEF, international and local NGOs	20,000 yearly
75.	Training and upgrading skills of staff of all special institutions and detention places for adolescents	2004-2005	Ministry of Justice	State budget, UNICEF, international and local NGOs	125,000 yearly
76.	Study of the international experience and standards of court mediation for adolescents (intervention between victim and offender for reconciliation) with the aim of future introduction of the system in Armenia	2004	Ministry of Justice	UNICEF, OSCE Yerevan office, Council of Europe	38,000 yearly





