

Information of the Government of Georgia in response to the questionnaire on relationship between climate change and the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of the child

1. Please describe, in your view, the relationship between climate change and the enjoyment of the rights of the child, and any human rights obligations to mitigate and adapt to climate change that can be derived therefrom. Please also share any examples of how the realization of the rights of the child can contribute to more effective climate action.

Children are most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Extreme weather events contribute to leading causes of malnutrition, moreover children are exposed to physical trauma and stress due to floods and other natural disasters caused by climate change. Youth are often left homeless due to heavy snow and floods. Since flooding very often harms residential areas and not only agricultural land in different regions of Georgia, roads to schools are under a high danger, which causes low attendance and in some cases closure of schools. Girls are particularly affected as traditional household chores, such as collecting firewood and water, require more time and energy when supplies are scarce, and less time is left for studying. Not just girls, but usually boys also have to stay with their families and help them with house chores to contribute to family revenue, while their education becomes less and less affordable due to growing natural disasters. Especially children in mountainous regions of Georgia are affected by the above mentioned challenges.

As flooding has become one of the biggest risks in Georgia, and different types of infrastructure is being harmed the project, such as “Climate Resilient Flood and Flash Flood Management” has been developed for prevention of flooding in one river basin of Georgia. It is considered as demonstration project showing the gaps and lessons how to translate climate adverse effects reduction into national legislation.

2. Please share a summary of any relevant data as well as any related mechanisms to measure and monitor the impacts of climate change on the enjoyment of the rights of the child, especially the rights of children in particularly vulnerable situations.

According to the respective international human rights treaties Georgia is a party to, country has an obligation to prevent the violation of human rights, including the duty to take effective action in the fight against climate change. Furthermore, states must take adequate measures to respect and protect human rights when working to mitigate climate change or adapt to its impacts. Due to the lack of adequate indicators for measuring the climate adverse impact on mostly vulnerable segment of society such as children, the holistic picture of influences is limited.

3. The best interests of the child should be taken into consideration in all matters concerning the rights of the child, including environmental decision-making. Please describe existing commitments, legislation and other measures adopted by States and other duty-bearers, such as businesses, in climate change mitigation and adoption which are designed to protect the best interests of the child. In particular, please share information related to implementation of commitments to address climate change while simultaneously contributing to the realization of human rights and the rights of the

child, the promotion of gender equality, and the protection of future generations. Please also note any relevant mechanisms for ensuring accountability for these commitments.

The development of national NDC cycles would be one of the major pillars for addressing climate change impacts as a commitment under the Paris Agreement. The new system would be able to consider vulnerable focus groups in a disaggregated manner by highlighting most vulnerable groups specifically.

4. Please provide guidance on what further actions need to be taken to adequately integrate children's rights within climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, practices and decisions, In particular, please describe actions needed to:

a. Ensure the integration of children's rights, including the rights to family, health, nutrition, education, participation, gender equality, water and sanitation, among others. in climate action;

Since Georgia is in very beginning stage of adaptation strategy development, the overall approach for strengthening children's rights in terms of improvement of climate change resilience would consider the following steps: vulnerability assessment of focus groups (including children) in different areas of the country; identification of adaptation necessities for young generation based on the results received from the vulnerability assessment; translation of prioritized adaptation measures into the legal instruments, such as decree, regulation, etc. in order to be guarantee the protection of the basic children's rights.

The climate education is considered as one of the most important pillars in mitigation field for children. First of all, it contributes to preparation of next generation for new challenges they will face on in nearest future, including energy diversification, near zero energy consumption, social friendly economic solutions, avoidance of food scarcity, etc.

The enhancement of climate education considers following measures:

- Study of results of climate extracurricular activities taken in Georgia either by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia or NGOs;
- Development of recommendations for integration of climate topics in relevant school subjects based on the results received from the preliminary study.

b. Prevent violence or conflict as it affects children and is connected with social, economic and political stressors aggravated by climate change.

Currently, the steps taken into consideration under the climate change adaptation strategy development (abovementioned three steps) involves this issue raised in the question as its broader understanding.

c. Promote intergenerational equity.

The particular mitigation and adaptation projects provide activities enable to reduce negative impacts on our natural environment. In upcoming future, the lessons learnt from the implemented projects will give us opportunity to translate adequate results into our legislation.

5. Please share any commitments and best practices for effectively engaging children or youth in climate-related decision-making processes and climate action. Particularly those most impacted by climate change, and with consideration for young people of different ages, gender and social backgrounds. Please share any examples of how empowering children and youth has contributed to more effective climate action.

LEPL Environmental Information and Education Center under the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resource Protection of Georgia provides informal educational activities for children with different age groups on number of environmental issues, including climate change and effective climate actions.

Additionally within educational programs of Georgian kindergartens, three climate related components were added to national educational programmes: Energy Efficiency, Water Resources Management and Waste Management. These components have direct linkages with climate actions and will contribute children's awareness significantly.

The Eco clubs have been launched as extracurricular activity in many of secondary schools in Georgia.

Out of the Governmental initiatives, number of NGO's and civil society organizations are working with youth on their empowerment for contributing climate actions.

6. Please provide any additional information you believe would be useful to understand efforts made and challenges confronting States and other duty-bearers in their efforts to protect the rights of the child from the impacts of climate change

The protection of the rights of the children in terms of climate change undoubtedly includes concept of giving children adequate education in order to be prepared of future climate threats and challenges. Accordingly, our vision is to strengthen climate education by disseminating relevant information in different curriculums of related subjects in secondary education level.