



**47th session of the Human Rights Council
Geneva, 21 June – 13 July 2021
Item 6: UPR Adoptions – Georgia**

Madam President,

The International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE) and Public Health Foundation of Georgia appreciate the engagement of Georgia in the UPR process as well as the acceptance of child-related recommendations.

Our organizations would like to draw attention on key mutually interrelated issues in respect of which immediate and multi-dimensional responses must be taken:

- 1. Violence against Children;**
- 2. Poverty in children.**

Georgia still lacks a holistic and child-sensitive social protection and justice systems that could help families cope with shocks and strengthen their resilience. Latest available findings suggest that that “69% of children experienced any violent discipline methods”. Parents/family members and child’s circle of trust are among the abusers. Unfortunately, the exact magnitude of the sexual abuse and exploitation of children in Georgia is unknown.

Identification and reporting of sexual abuse is problematic. There is a persistent difficulty related to timely and effective measures by relevant agencies for providing responses to child victims and their psycho-social rehabilitation. Children do not receive age-appropriate sexual education. In addition, the scarcity of rehabilitation and counseling programs for children and their families, also the insufficient number of social workers, psychologists and child psychiatrists have a negative impact on the protection of children, especially in state care system from violence and sexual abuse.

Poverty constitutes denial of human rights, increases the vulnerability of a child to violence and delinquency and limits opportunities for families to provide safer and secured environment for the child to grow. In Georgia, children live in isolation in their own communities. These children are socially excluded since they are not able to enjoy the opportunity of participating in community life and be free from hunger, disease, illiteracy, discrimination, exploitation, inequality, fear and injustice.

We call on Georgia to take appropriate measures for a sustained child referral mechanism and concrete steps to deal with child poverty in the country.

Thank you Madam President