



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

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Consideration of reports of States Parties

### Replies of Ethiopia to the list of issues in relation to its combined sixth and seventh periodic reports\*

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## List of Acronyms

ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACSO	Authority for Civil Society Organizations
AI	Artificial Intelligence
API	Annual Parasite Index
AU	African Union
BMM	Better Migration Management
CBCC	Community based Correction Centers
CCC	Community Care Coalitions
CCTV	Closed Circuit TV System
CIVIPOL	Technical Cooperation Operator of the French Ministry of the Interior
CJPD	Child Justice Project Directorate
CoHA	Cessation of Hostilities Agreement
CPIMS+	Child Protection Information Management System Plus
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRGE	Climate Resilient Green Economy
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EHRC	Ethiopian Human Rights Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIO	Ethiopian Institution of Ombudsman
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defence Forces
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
FDRE	Federal Democratic of Ethiopia
FFIC	Federal First Instance Court
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FSC	Federal Supreme Court
GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
HIV/AIDS	Acid Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
IA CPIMS	Inter-agency Child Protection Information Management
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross

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ICT	Information Communication Technology
IERCs	Inclusive Education Resource Centers
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority for Development
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
LT-LEDS	Long-Term Low Emission and Climate Resilient Development Strategy
MCV1	Measles First Dose
MINT	Ministry of Innovation and Technology
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoLS	Ministry of Labour and Skills
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWSA	the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
NCF	Nurturing Care Framework
NCMF	National Case Management Framework
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NDP	National Development Plan
NHRAP	National Human Rights Action Plan
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NIDP	National ID Program
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
NRTD	National Recommendations Tracking Database
OCSEA	Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCs	One-Stop Centers
PwDs	Persons with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TAAT	African Agricultural Transformation
TB	Tuberculosis
TJ	Transitional Justice
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAWC	Violence against Women and Children
WHO	World Health Organization

## I. Introduction

1. This report is the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia's response to the list of issues that will be discussed along with the country's 6th and 7th combined reports on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. It has been prepared by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) in collaboration with other relevant government ministries and stakeholders. The written replies were finalized following a three-day validation workshop involving governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.
2. The replies to the list of issues provide the relevant information and clarifications so as to supplement the information provided in the previous national reports and replies to lists of issues submitted to several treaty bodies.

## II. Replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/ETH/RQ/6-7)

### Reply to paragraph 2 (a)

3. There have been significant initiatives by the Government of Ethiopia to harmonize domestic law with the provisions and principles of the Convention. The Terms of Reference for a Technical Working Group (TWG) on the development of Child Law has been formulated and adopted. The main objective of the TWG is to support the drafting and endorsement of a child law. The specific objectives of the TWG include undertaking different advocacy activities to create consensus on the adoption of child law, providing technical support to the process of adopting a child law and mobilizing resources to support the process of the adoption of child law.
4. Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) also undertook a systematic review of national laws to identify areas for amendment. Stakeholder discussions have been undertaken to build consensus on the need for the adoption of Children's Act.
5. Ethiopia adopted the National Children's Policy in April 2017 with due consideration for the principles and provisions of the CRC and the ACRWC to guide the work of various actors dealing with children and also to promote the rights of children. The policy is predicated on three central strategies, namely development and growth prevention and protection, and rehabilitation, care, and support. In addition, Ethiopia has adopted National Children's Policy Implementation Strategy in 2025. The Implementation Strategy has been adopted with a view to formulate and enforce priorities, goals and specific measures needed to attain the policy objectives set forth in the National Children's Policy. The implementation strategy rests on the central pillars of holistic child development, prevention of child protection challenges and rehabilitation, support and care for children in especially difficult circumstances.
6. The Ministry of Justice has established a team of experts to work on the subsequent third National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP). The Ministry of Justice has also undertaken the gaps in the prevailing Criminal Code with the objective of potential revision in the future.
7. The Child Justice Project Directorate under the Federal Supreme Court conducted an Advocacy Session for the members of Standing Committee of Justice Affairs of the Parliament on the issue of the need to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility in accordance with international standards.

### Reply to paragraph 2 (b)

8. The Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) is mandated to coordinate federal, regional and local entities on the implementation of the Convention by virtue of Proclamation 1263/21. To this effect, MoWSA has been exerting efforts to ensure that the coordination between these levels of government and other stakeholders is effective and

collaborative. In addition, Women and Social Affairs Inclusion Directorates have been established under each of the Federal Ministries to ensure rights of children are mainstreamed in their performance.

9. The National Case Management Framework (NCMF) has been adopted in 2019 with the objective of addressing child protection issues through a coordinated, standardized system of care and services that is integrated across sectors. The framework intends to strengthen an overarching multi-sectoral structure, with an agreed MoU and standard operational procedures among key sectors responsible for coordinating prevention, surveillance and response to child protection issues; provide criteria for the identification of children who are most vulnerable to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect; provide a comprehensive, coordinated, inclusive and standardized response to the protection needs of children with a defined accountability system across sectors that includes child safeguarding.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (c)**

10. Government has been exerting allocation of budget for services rendered for children and child protection is incremental over the years. The Government also gave utmost attention to ensure that budgetary allocation is informed by equity focus by targeting target worst-off children living in difficult circumstances. For example, recent Federal Government budget proclamations such as Proclamation No. 1297/2023 clearly establish the budgetary allocation for the implementation of child-focused services such as education, health and social services has increased significantly. Similarly, recent years also saw substantial increase in the allocation of budget for the implementation of child-focused Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ethiopia has embarked upon school feeding programs including the national School Feeding Program (SFP) with the objective of improving children's health, education, and cognitive development by providing nutritious meals. These initiatives enhance school attendance and performance, support gender equality, reduce household burdens, and boost local economies through home-grown food sourcing. The school feeding programs have served to minimize school dropouts, enhanced students learning abilities, and improved access and equity in schools.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (d)**

11. Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Ethiopian Institution of Ombudsman (EIO) have been re-established by Proclamations No. 1224/2020 and 1142/2019, respectively with the objective of consolidating the capacity of NHRIs. On 7 December 2021, the Commission attained an 'A' status accreditation from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). The Commission also has affiliate status with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). The EHRC has been producing consecutive child rights monitoring and investigation reports with recommendations to the government to address child rights violations. Moreover, the EHRC established the position of Commissioner for Women and Children Affairs. EHRC also facilitated the translation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child into local vernaculars.

12. In November 2021, EHRC launched a five-year Strategic Plan (2021–2026) that creates the framework for realizing the vision and mission of the Commission. Accordingly, five key strategic interventions were outlined specifically for Women and Children: Research/investigate about women's and children's rights and relevant SDGs and promote effective redress; Advocacy and monitoring compliance with women's and children's human rights standards in public and private institutions; Promotion, mobilization, and empowerment of women and children's human rights; Collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders and Building capacity of the leadership and staff.

13. Similarly, the mandate of EIO has been broadened to investigate administrative abuses committed by private entities by virtue of Proclamation No. 1307/2023. Proclamation

No. 1307/2024 has provided for the establishment of a special division for women, children, and PWDs led by a Deputy Ombudsman.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (e)**

14. MoWSA has been making efforts to establish a Child Wellbeing Management Information System with the support of international partners with the objective of improving the database on children. MoWSA adopted the Child Protection Information Management System Plus (CPIMS+) Guideline in 2021. CPIMS+ refers to the module of the Primero software platform that supports child protection case management programs. By so doing, CPIMS+ enhances the previous Inter-agency Child Protection Information Management (IA CPIMS) database. It is believed that the adoption of CPIMS+ is highly instrumental for effective planning, budgeting for children and proper assessment of progress towards the implementation of children's rights.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (f)**

15. The Ministry of Justice has undertaken baseline assessment and stakeholder consultation with the objective of developing a draft national plan of action on Business and Human Rights. The draft national plan is in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights pursuant to Respect, Protect and Remedy Framework. The national plan is aimed at clarifying the human rights responsibilities of business enterprises operating in Ethiopia.

16. Mining operations and investment projects are subjected to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which is purposive, rigorous, practical, relevant, cost-effective, efficient, focused, adaptive, participative, interdisciplinary, credible, integrated, transparent and systematic in accordance with Environmental Impact Assessment Proclamation, Proclamation 299/2000. The Proclamation to Promote Sustainable Development of Mineral Resources, Proclamation No. 678 requires private sector actors to act with due diligence and refrain from infringing the human rights and legitimate tenure rights of others. Holders of license are required to obtain social licensing from the community in addition to the license they obtain from the Ministry of Mines. In regard to LegaDemb gold mine, the negative impact of the mining operation on the communities has been a subject of thorough investigation and appropriate mitigation measures have been taken to make good the damage. Moreover, the developer of the LegaDemb gold mine has effected compensation for affected members of the community regardless of the fact that the exact cause for the damage has not been clearly established and attributed to the company.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (g)**

17. The MoE and EHRC signed a memorandum of understanding to further integrate human right education into the education curriculum to enhance the accessibility of human rights education including children's rights.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (h)**

18. The decision on the part of the government in January 2018 to embark upon a reform agenda heralded momentous opportunity to revise and abrogate items of legislation which run counter to human rights and democratization in the country including the Charities and Societies Proclamation. The promulgation in 2019 of Organizations of Civil Societies Proclamation, Proclamation No. 1113/2019 brought about significant change and marked improvement on the formation and operations of CSOs in Ethiopia. This legislative reform has resulted in the rejuvenation and revival of CSOs in the country, many of which are working on child rights. The law has provided a transparent and predictable registration process, removed the funding ceilings as well as restrictions previously imposed on working on rights-based activities.

### **Reply to paragraph 3 (a)**

19. The FDRE Constitution outlaws discrimination on prohibited grounds. The Government is also making efforts to ensure equitable access to resources and services, improve the quality of services rendered to children.

### **Reply to paragraph 3 (b)**

20. There is significant progress on including the application of the best interest of the child both in legislation and court decisions. This can be ascertained by the increased number of decisions which have been rendered by the invocation of the doctrine of the best interest of the child. The Child Justice Project Directorate under the Federal Supreme Court conducted two-days training for federal judges at the different tiers of the Federal courts in June 2023.

21. Social workers have been deployed at different divisions of the FFIC to assist judges in the course of best interest determination in cases involving, among others, custody and children in conflict with the law.

### **Reply to paragraph 3 (c)**

22. The National Children's Parliament was established in 2022 with the objective of empowering children to voice their concerns, exercise their rights, and ensure policies and laws regarding children's rights are implemented effectively, contributing to a more democratic and child-friendly Ethiopia. The National Children's Parliament is believed to be instrumental to strengthen their participation on matters which affect them.

23. The first National Children Parliament consultation took place in Addis Ababa. Addis Ababa also hosted the first ever children's consultation workshop on IGAD Child Policy Framework on May 5, 2024. EHRC has been engaging with child-led structures including child parliamentarians and school based human rights clubs to enhance their capacity on child rights and create awareness on the current situation of children in Ethiopia.

24. CJPD has participated more than 30 children in the process of drafting the CRC General Comment 27 on access to justice with the view to incorporate the interests and views of children. Children form child parliament and schools took part in the input gathering phase and have forwarded critical inputs and concerns. The report has been shared with the CRC Committee.

### **Reply to paragraph 4 (a)**

25. In 2023, the Government of Ethiopia adopted Ethiopian Digital ID Proclamation, Proclamation No. 1284/2023. This Proclamation establishes a legal framework for an interoperable, biometric-linked digital ID system stored in a centralized database. Ethiopia established a national digital identity system called "Fayda," which is a 12-digit unique identification number issued by the National ID Program (NIDP), aiming to provide a digital proof of identity for residents and streamline access to services. The 2023 Proclamation more comprehensively addresses critical issues such as consent, data protection, privacy, security and remedies that are essential for rights-based digital ID models.

26. According to recent assessment, national birth registration levels in Ethiopia have increased substantially. This demonstrates that substantial progress has been registered as compared to the extremely low initial coverage. Nevertheless, the Government of Ethiopia is cognizant of the fact that more needs to be done to improve the current birth registration.

27. The Government of Ethiopia has been taking various measures aimed at reducing statelessness. Citizenship law is governed by provisions of the FDRE Constitution and the Ethiopian Nationality Proclamation No. 378/2003. Article 36 (1)(b) of the FDRE Constitution affirms the right of children to a name and nationality. Article 6(1) of the FDRE Constitution states that any person of either sex shall be an Ethiopian national where both or

either parent is Ethiopian. Article 6(1) of the FDRE Constitution asserts that foreign nationals may acquire Ethiopian nationality.

28. In 2004, the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a *Directive Issued to Determine the Residence Status of Eritrean Nationals Residing in Ethiopia with a view to* address the status of persons of Eritrean origin who continued to live in Ethiopia following the independence of Eritrea. This Directive proved to be instrumental for reduction of statelessness.

29. Proclamation No. 378/2003 also includes provisions whereby foreigners may acquire Ethiopian citizenship if they meet the criteria outlined in the law. This right is also indicated in the Refugee Proclamation which states that ‘a recognized refugee or asylum seeker may apply to acquire Ethiopian Nationality after fulfilling the necessary requirements provided in the Law.’

#### **Reply to paragraph 4 (b)**

30. A national referral mechanism for children in need of care and support has been started by the EHRC with the purpose of providing multi-dimensional services. More than 40 CSO’s and governmental bodies have created a platform to refer children to fulfill needs like shelter, health, education, legal aid and other services.

#### **Reply to paragraph 4 (c)**

31. Although there is a lack of disaggregated national data on children’s internet access in Ethiopia, the household survey conducted by UNICEF, ECPAT International and INTERPOL in 2022 established that one out of every four children between the ages of 12 and 17 are internet users. The report in 2022 also stated there is a clear urban-rural digital divide. 45% of 12-17 year-olds in urban areas have access to the internet while only 21% in the same age bracket in rural areas have access. The expansion of internet and Information Communication Technology (ICT) has facilitated ways for children to gain self-learning and social development opportunities, among others.

32. Article 61(4) of the Media Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1238/2021) compels media organizations to ensure that the contents they broadcast are appropriate for minors and to comply with the obligation to ask users for their date of birth and prevent those who are below the age of 16 from consuming content which is not age-appropriate. Similarly, Article 61(5) of the Media Proclamation obliges media organizations to refrain from publishing and disseminating content that is used to promote the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and banned recreational substances. Similarly, Article 61(6) of the Media Proclamation bans media organizations from activities involving the production, publication, and dissemination of content which is pornographic, soliciting sexual acts, child grooming, and encouraging cyberbullying. Article 20(1) of Proclamation 590/2008 obligates public relations officer to decline a request for access to information if disclosure of the requested information is likely to endanger the life or physical safety of an individual including a child.

33. The Hate Speech and Disinformation Prevention and Suppression Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1185/2020) protects children from receiving hateful, false and misleading information.

34. The Government of Ethiopia adopted the Personal Data Protection Proclamation, Proclamation No. 1321/2024 with the objective of, among others, the protection of the piracy rights of individuals including children. The Personal Data Protection Proclamation also vested the Ethiopian Telecommunications Authority, established by virtue of Proclamation 1148/2019, to ensure compliance with its provisions.

35. The Government of Ethiopia considers digital literacy as a key driver for economic growth and citizen engagement. Consequently, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MINT) adopted “Digital Ethiopia 2025” strategy aiming to improve digital skills and access. The Ministry launched “5 Million Ethiopian Coders” program with the objective of improving digital skills and access. Currently, the Ministry is working towards the adoption

of even more ambitious vision, Digital Ethiopia 2030 strategy. MInT is actively developing and supporting the country's startup ecosystem, focusing on fostering innovation and economic growth including for early-stage startups. Notably, MInT also established Burayu Talent School.

### Reply to paragraph 5 (a)

36. Ethiopia adopted a national five-year strategy (2021/22-2026) on prevention and response to violence against women and children (VAWC), developed under the leadership of the National Coordinating Body on Prevention and Response to VAWC, co-chaired by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, with support from UN Women and UNICEF.

37. The MoWSA and UNFPA Launch National Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to Combat Gender-Based Violence with the objective of standardizing protocols across sectors and institutions, ensuring timely and effective support for survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. The SOPs is believed to improve coordination, service delivery, and the overall response to GBV by outlining systematic procedures for identifying and addressing GBV risks.

38. Article 89(4)(g) of the newly adopted General Education Proclamation states that students are obliged to abstain from physical assaults, insults, threats, coercion, harassment, including bullying, and other forms of sexual violence against teachers and other school colleagues to ensure violence-free learning.

39. The newly adopted General Education Proclamation also bans individuals convicted of sexual abuse and other crimes from serving as teachers. Similarly, the Proclamation also declares that individuals who are implicated in related crimes are not eligible to found schools.

40. The 2020–2024 National Costed Roadmap to End Child Marriage and FGM/C also aims, among others, at enhancing systems including justice to protect children at risk or victims of child marriage and FGM/C. The adoption of the Roadmap is instrumental for improving access to justice for victims of harmful practices in Ethiopia.

41. GoE's legal, policy, and programmatic efforts contributed to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, as well as harmful practices like child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). Consequently, these efforts earned the National Alliance to End Child Marriage and FGM global recognition and Ethiopia received United Nations Population Award 2024 for the great effort it made against Child Marriage and FGM. The National Alliance to End Child Marriage and FGM established in 2012 and is led by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. The National Alliance is mandated to oversee, coordinate, manage, and provide policy guidance on mechanisms and national strategies to prevent and eliminate child marriage and FGM.

42. The Criminal Code of the FDRE criminalizes different forms of OCSEA. Article 627 of the Code criminalizes other indecent acts on minors of the opposite sex. The provision prohibits performing acts corresponding to the sexual act or any other indecent act upon a minor of the opposite sex, or induces him to perform such an act, or deliberately perform such an act in his presence. Articles 640 and 641 of the Criminal Code also proscribe offences to make, import or export, transport, receive, possess, display in public, offer for sale or hire, distribute or circulate writings, images, posters, films or other objects which are obscene or grossly indecent.

43. In the same vein, Article 12 of the Computer Crime Proclamation of Ethiopia (Proclamation 958/2016) criminalizes offences constituting obscene or indecent crimes committed against minors. Article 13 of the same Proclamation prohibits crimes against liberty and reputation of persons.

44. Moreover, the Ministry of Justice developed guidelines to support frontline workers (social welfare officers, teachers, and other community workers) and criminal justice professionals on how to create awareness on the issue of OCSEA, on how to identify cases and on how to safeguard the rights of child victims on online and offline sexual abuse and

exploitation within the criminal justice system. The objective of OCSEA Guidelines is to assist frontline workers and criminal justice professionals in preventing and addressing online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA) in Ethiopia.

### **Reply to paragraph 5 (b)**

45. Article 88(3) of the newly adopted General Education Proclamation No. 1368/2025 stipulates that every student will be protected from physical punishment, other harmful actions on the development of humanity, violence and isolation. In 2024, the Education Bureau of Addis Ababa City Government adopted Addis Ababa City Student Disciplinary Directive (Directive No. 150/2024). The Directive outlines the rights and obligations of students and establishes mechanisms to deal with breaches of disciplinary duties.

### **Reply to paragraph 5 (c)**

46. The Government has been undertaking various activities aimed at improving access to preventative services such as promotion of positive parenting, open dialogue, public awareness, and dissemination of information, family preservation, and community strengthening. The Ministry of Women and Social Affairs has been undertaking awareness raising activity entitled “Better Parenting.”

### **Reply to paragraph 5 (d)**

47. The Government has been undertaking various activities aimed at enhancing the capacity of security forces in relation to use of force, crowd control and peaceful protests. The Government has also attached more importance in investing on non-lethal approaches to respond to peaceful protests. The Government has extended olive branch to non-state actors to lay down arms and resolve differences amicably.

### **Reply to paragraph 5 (e)**

48. A variety of interventions have been implemented to ensure the rights of child victims to human dignity, protection and privacy. Some of the specific activities include establishment of victim-friendly waiting rooms in courthouses, introduction of Closed Circuit TV System (CCTV) for child witnesses, assignment of intermediaries to assist courts to better communicate with child witnesses. Standards for child friendly justice systems including Manual on Investigative Interview and Child Justice Guideline for dealing with witness and surviving children in the Justice System have been developed and disseminated. The social workers department in the FFIC has been supporting the judicial process in cases involving children. Efforts have been made to ensure that the setup of the court room for benches dealing with case of child offenders and the legal representation is child friendly.

49. A new state of the art one way mirror child friendly court has also been constructed in Kirkos division of the FFIC with features of artificial intelligence (AI). Besides protecting the child from confrontation with the accused, the system included audio to text transcription that converts the hearing and testimony to text. It not only reduces the adjournment date thereby expedite cases of VAC, but also gives the judge more control over the process and concentrate on the protection of the child during trial. This system will be implemented in the next phase to other benches.

50. One notable task undertaken by the Federal Supreme Court in terms of strengthening access to justice for children is the preparation of justice for children training module for judges. This training module, prepared for federal and regional judges equips judges of the basics and advanced rights of children in the justice system, child development, child friendly justice, Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA). Training of trainers has been conducted to judges from all over the country. Work is underway to create an e-learning platform where all judges of the country would gain access to the training manual.

51. The Child Maintenance Guideline has been formulated and adopted in 2023 in line with Article 27(4) of the CRC. The Guideline is the first-ever legal instrument in the country to give effect to the right of the child to get maintenance from parents or other persons. It has significantly transformed for good the way child maintenance is claimed. Regional states have already started emulating the good practice. In addition to laying the legal foundation for securing means for the life of children through claiming maintenance and standardizing litigation, the guideline cleared many ambiguities in the legal community by addressing legal and practical lacunas.

52. Children are getting DNA testing to ascertain their paternity by the Federal Supreme Court. This is a fundamental aspect of the right to identity and also creates the platform to claim maintenance.

53. Another critical work relates to the introduction of Child Friendly Benches Directive. Crafted with the ambition of creating a child friendly justice system that affirm and protect the rights of children in contact with the law, the new directive takes note of national and international best practice. Key issues that are incorporated in the directive include prohibition of direct contact of children with accused and court staffs, child testimony, role of social workers and other critical aspects of child justice.

54. CJPD created a discussion and training sessions with members of the HPR on how to increase MACR in Ethiopia. The members were briefed in the international standards and the current state of affairs in the country with the view to create awareness and start legal reform in the criminal justice system.

55. CJPD created forum for judges working on cases involving VAC and children in conflict with the law with the view to pool and share new knowledge and experience. This has created experience sharing among judges which in turn helped in improving the protection for the rights of children.

56. Social workers working at benches are implementing CPIMS to collect, analyze and report data related to children in the justice system. This activity will help the judiciary, and the state at large to systematically gather and analyze data and take actions.

57. Compilation of fundamental child rights related decisions of the Federal Supreme Court Cassation bench and House of Federations decisions are being conducted with the purpose of creating access to decisions on important aspects of child rights for judges, lawyers and the public.

58. GoE has been making efforts to establish one-stop centers based in health institutions and justice bodies dedicated to addressing violence against women and children. One-stop centers provide integrated, multi-disciplinary services in a single physical location or through a referral system. The number of one-stop centers have now reached more than 120. In March 2022, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) has been adopted for the operation of the OSCs in Ethiopia. The SOP aims at facilitating joint action by the actors to respond to the needs of survivors of sexual violence and provide the services at the OSCs. The SOP further establishes clear procedures, roles and responsibilities for each actor involved in the response to GBV survivor.

59. The number of safe homes has reached 12 shelters engaged in the provision of rehabilitation and reintegration services for women and girls survivors of violence.

60. The Ministry of Justice adopted National Legal Aid Strategy on October 24, 2023. The adoption of the strategy proved to be quite instrumental for the provision of legal aid in a coordinated and collaborative manner. The Child Justice Project Directorate under the Federal Supreme Court conducted a research and developed a guideline on the provision of Child-Friendly Legal Aid to legal professionals.

### **Reply to paragraph 6 (a)**

61. Article 34(3) of the FDRE Constitution provides that the family is the fundamental unit of the society and is entitled to protection by society and the state. Accordingly, efforts have been made to ensure the social protection of family structure by devising different

programs and services. The strategies and interventions are aimed at creating a supportive and inclusive environment where families grow well socially, emotionally, and economically. The strategic pillars aimed at strengthening families include strengthening family support services, health and wellbeing, economic empowerment and stability, family protection and development, community and social inclusion. In 2022/2023 academic year, 6,771,094 students in 13,462 schools benefited from the program. The School Feeding Program has been expanded to various regional states including South West Ethiopia and Tigray Regional States.

### **Reply to paragraph 6 (b)**

62. MoWSA adopted the Directive on Alternative Childcare and Support (Directive Number 976/2023). The adoption of the Guidelines marks a significant step towards strengthening the care of children in Ethiopia as the Directive informed by the Guidelines in line with UN Guidelines on Alternative Care of Children. Significant measures were taken to advance on adoption and alternative care of children, advocating the guidelines to regions, and establishing different coordination platforms to expedite the provision of services. The Directive is informed by the guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Efforts have been made by promoting family-setting child care options which are available in the country including domestic adoption.

### **Reply to paragraph 6 (c)**

63. At the federal level, Article 53(4) of Federal Prison Proclamation, Proclamation No. 1174/2019 imposes age limit on co-habitation or co-residence. At the federal level, co-residence is allowed with a view to promote child-to-mother bonding in prison until the child attains the age of twenty-four months. In addition, co-residence is allowed only if it is ascertained that the child requires close attention. The Government has prioritized measures aimed at the use of non-custodial approaches to prevent the incarceration of children with imprisoned mothers. The Government also ordered the release of many women who were in the prison with children during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government also made efforts to establish day-care facilities whereby women prisoners with children were allowed to stay separately from other inmates in selected prison facilities such as Kality Prison.

### **Reply to paragraph 7**

64. The protection of children with disabilities requires the involvement of different sector ministries and government departments at the regional and local levels of the government. Accordingly, the MoWSA and MoJ have developed a draft Disability Policy to ensure, among others, the comprehensive protection of children with disabilities.

65. The Education and Training Policy which was adopted on February 27, 2023 took note of the fact that children with disabilities have not been adequately enrolled in schools. Consequently, the newly adopted policy outlines measures aimed at increasing the enrolment of children with disabilities to schools. The Ethiopian government is implementing the Comprehensive Education Sector Development Program (ESDP VI) for 2020/21–2024/25, which includes a focus on inclusive education for children with disabilities. Special needs/inclusive education strategy (2015–2022) and a manual for identifying and supporting students with special educational needs at the pre-primary and primary levels have been implemented to promote inclusive education and implement the new education policy.

66. The MoE has launched initiatives, including a 10-year Master Plan for Special Needs/Inclusive Education(2016–2025), Ethiopia Education Sector Development Roadmap(2020–2025), the 2023 National Education and Training Policy and the National Early Childhood Development and Education Policy, which are aimed at improving educational inclusivity, accessibility, equity and quality for PWDs. The number of Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERCs) increased from 113 in 2017 to 1017 by 2023 and the enrollment of PwDs in these centers has reached to 91,000.

### **Reply to paragraph 8 (a)**

67. The Government has been making efforts to ensure that essential vaccines reach all communities, particularly those in conflict-affected areas. The national immunization program has vaccinated more than 3.5 million infants with three doses of pentavalent vaccine. The coverages of measles first dose (MCV1) and full immunization was 99% and 95% respectively. Even though the immunization coverage is close to 100% for most immunization indicators mainly due to population denominator issues; there are still some under-vaccinated children. To address this, catch up vaccination programs were conducted, especially in low performing, conflict/emergency affected areas, resulting in the vaccination of more than 584,000 zero dose children in the fiscal year. About 85% of children with pneumonia and 25% of children with diarrhea were treated.

### **Reply to paragraph 8 (b)**

68. Ethiopia adopted HIV/AIDS National Strategic Plan for Ethiopia (2021–2025) with the objective of achieving maximum public health impact by addressing key drivers of the epidemic, shifting to a people-focused response, focusing on key and priority populations. Ethiopia has made significant progress in its HIV response in recent years and is on track to reach the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets with 90% of people living with HIV in the country being aware of their HIV status; 94% of those diagnosed with HIV receiving antiretroviral (ARV) therapy; and 96% of people on ARV therapy achieving viral suppression. The performance of the three 95-95-95 HIV targets in the 2023/2024 fiscal year was 90%, 94% and 97% respectively.

69. The National Strategic Plan for Tuberculosis (TB) control in Ethiopia (2020–2025) is serving as a key document for managing the TB program, focusing on TB prevention, care, and control, and is a tool for implementing policies and strategies. Tuberculosis prevention and control program implementation results in the detection and enrollment to treatment of more than 144,457 all forms of new tuberculosis cases. The result of tuberculosis treatment outcome was high, with a treatment success rate of 94.5% and cure rate of 85.6% among new bacteriologically confirmed pulmonary tuberculosis cases.

70. Ethiopia's National Malaria Elimination Strategic Plan (2021–2025) aims to eliminate malaria in districts with an annual parasite index (API) less than 10 by 2025 and achieve nationwide malaria elimination by 2030, focusing on sub-national areas with low transmission. Malaria elimination activities have been implemented in 565 *woreda* administrative units. Nevertheless, the Government is cognizant of the fact that more strengthened activities are required to change the increasing malaria trend.

71. Efforts are underway to close the geographic equity gap by enhancing equity focus of high impact interventions by addressing challenges such as conflicts in different parts of the country.

### **Reply to paragraph 8 (c)**

72. The National Health Sector Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Development in Ethiopia (2020/21–2024/25) was adopted in October 2020 with the objective of ensuring that all children receive Nurturing Care (NC) to reach their potential. The adoption of the National Health Sector Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Development follows the launching by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) of the Nurturing Care Framework (NCF) for Early Childhood Development (ECD). The five components of the NCF include nutrition, health, responsive care, early learning, and safety and security which are described as the Foundations for Children's Development.

73. In May 2021, the Government adopted National Food and Nutrition Strategy with the objective of promoting growth monitoring, oral rehydration and disease control, breastfeeding, immunization, child spacing, food, and female literacy. The Government also adopted Seqota Declaration Resource Mobilization Plan with the objective of ensuring the provision of adequate nutrition and safe drinking water to every child in the country. The first

1000 day's Plus Public Movement for Social and Behavior Change Guideline was also adopted in January 2023. The year 2023 also saw the adoption of National Micronutrient Deficiency Prevention and Control Guideline. The Adolescent Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition Implementation Guideline was also adopted in September 2022. The operational guide nutrition centric-humanitarian, development and peace triple nexus operationalization in Ethiopia was adopted in July 2024. The implementation roadmap nutrition centric humanitarian, development and peace triple nexus operationalization in Ethiopia has been adopted in July 2024. The Adolescent Nutrition Implementation Guideline for Ethiopia has been adopted in March 2023.

74. Despite increasing funding gap, the Government is fully committed to cover the resource gap and most of the programs remain intact. The national strategic and annual plans are already fully costed and financed to prevent potential disruptions due to funding freeze. Moreover, efforts are underway to enhance self-reliance by generating resources through social mobilization.

### **Reply to paragraph 9 (a)**

75. Ethiopia is implementing the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Medium-Term Development and Investment Plan (2023–2025). This plan places poverty reduction as its central objective and envisions Ethiopia becoming an “African Beacon of Prosperity.”

76. The GoE has been implementing the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) project since 2018. The Ten-Year Comprehensive Agricultural Development Strategy (2019–2029), the Fiscal and Financial Plan for Food and Nutrition, the Urban Agriculture Project, and the ‘Bounty of the Basket’ Program (2022–2025) have been adopted and implemented.

77. The GoE has introduced various packages and programs which significantly reduce the housing problems of citizens. The Government has followed an integrated implementation of water supply, sanitation, and hygiene activities that brings together four sector ministries.

### **Reply to paragraph 9 (b)**

78. Ethiopia has implemented various policies and strategies to address climate change to build a climate-resilient economy as outlined in the updated 2021 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the 2019 National Adaptation Plan (NAP) which constitutes the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) Strategy of 2011.

79. Ethiopia launched the Green Legacy Initiative in 2019, and now it becomes a national flagship program. Through this initiative, over 21 million volunteers throughout the country have been mobilized to plant over 25 billion seedlings. As a result of this initiative, forest coverage has increased to 23.6% by 2023 from 17.2% in 2019.

80. The GoE has recognized climate change as one of the critical challenges and the NDP recognizes building a climate-resilient green economy as a strategic pillar. Furthermore, the Long-Term Low Emission and Climate Resilient Development Strategy (LT-LEDS) has been adopted to be implemented to underscore its environmental commitment from 2021 to 2050.

81. Ethiopia's 2021 updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) acknowledges that climate change disproportionately affects the most vulnerable segments of society (including children, youth, women, and people with disabilities) exacerbating existing inequalities. Heavy rains, flooding, and soil erosion endanger both urban and rural infrastructure, with marginalized groups bearing the brunt of these impacts. Meanwhile, prolonged droughts and erratic rainfall patterns threaten agricultural livelihoods, food security, and public health, further destabilizing the lives of those least equipped to adapt. The NDC highlights these disparities. The forthcoming NDC 3.0, which was just launched in April 2025, presents a critical opportunity to elevate ambition by explicitly integrating

child-focused adaptation measures. Given that children are uniquely susceptible to malnutrition, disease, and displacement triggered by climate extremes, safeguarding their well-being can be a demonstration of enhancing ambition as is expected at every cycle of the NDC update, and hence has a potential of becoming a cornerstone of Ethiopia's climate resilience strategy. That is to say, prioritizing children's protection within NDC 3.0 can demonstrate a commitment to inclusive climate action that extends beyond traditional sectors. Adaptive measures (such as climate-resilient schools, child-sensitive social protection programs, and early warning systems tailored to pediatric health risks) will shield the youngest generation while also amplifying the NDC's broader equity goals. The discussion of looking for areas of enhancing ambition is happening now, and is hence an immense opportunity for children's rights to occupy its rightful place in the current NDC update.

82. The NDRM Policy, revised to align with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, has been in effect since February 2024 and integrated into the NDP. The climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives underlined in the Policy include investing in green energy, sustainable production, climate-smart agriculture, soil and water conservation, afforestation, sustainable land management, access to potable water, and biodiversity conservation.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 (a)**

83. The GoE adopted a new Education and Training Policy which entered into force on February 27, 2023. The newly adopted policy states that the government will ensure that education is free and compulsory and ascertain the enrollment of school age children. The policy also pledges that children aged and above will be enrolled in education and education for first up to 6th graders will be free and compulsory. The General Education Proclamation sets four years as the age when students must enroll in pre-kindergarten (pre-KG) and seven years as the cutoff for enrollment in first grade while leaving room for flexibility for enrollment in rural areas. The policy also provides that middle level education will also be free and compulsory. The guiding principles of the revised policy include quality and relevance, decentralization, transparency and responsiveness, freedom from political religious interference, competency-based and competitiveness in modern technology.

84. The Sixth Education Sector Development Program (ESDP VI) (2020/21–2024/25) aims to, among others, advocate for free and compulsory pre-primary education and to establish and upgrade a formal structure to coordinate, oversee, and professionally support pre-primary programs/ECCE at all levels.

85. In 2025, the House of Peoples' Representatives adopted first of its kind General Education Proclamation with the objective of expanding and enhancing the quality of education and adopting implementing directives. It is believed that the adoption of the General Education Proclamation will create a conducive legal framework and autonomy which is legally compliant with the requirements of the state laws and other federal minimum quality standards.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 (b)**

86. Ethiopia has also implemented a range of initiatives to address the critical issue of equity in education, with a particular focus on increasing female participation and bridging the gender gap. These initiatives prioritize the creation of female-friendly school environments to ensure safe and supportive conditions for girls. They also include training teachers in gender-sensitive pedagogies and establishing mechanisms to combat harassment and discrimination in educational settings. To this effect, the Code of Conduct on the Prevention of School Related Gender Based Violence in Schools has been adopted in 2014.

### **Reply to paragraph 11 (a)**

87. A variety of interventions have been implemented to address the problem of children in street situations including prevention, advocacy and support and protection. The GoE has

been making efforts to strengthen the capacity of parents to safeguard children from the problem.

88. The GoE has undertaken several steps to ensure the survival, dignity and well-being of children belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in the country. The GoE accords constitutional and legislative recognition of the rights of children belonging to minorities in Ethiopia. Article 39 of the FDRE Constitution recognizes the rights of children belonging to minorities to, among others, to speak, to write, to develop their language, to express, to develop and to promote, their culture and to preserve their history. The FDRE Constitution also accommodates the special needs of children belonging to minorities and recognizes their right to maintain their individuality and cultural integrity.

89. Article 3(3) of the Immigration Proclamation, Proclamation No. 354/2003 (as amended by Proclamation 1339/2024) states that if the minor is traveling alone, he or she shall have a person who shall assume responsibility for him or her while in Ethiopia. This is indicative of the fact the Immigration Proclamation grants residence rights to children of migrants on humanitarian grounds when such children are unaccompanied.

90. The Government of Ethiopia adopted the Refugee Proclamation, Proclamation 1110/2019 which marks a paradigm shift from the ‘care and maintenance approach towards self-reliance and gradual inclusion of refugees into national systems. The Refugee Proclamation is also in line with the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees at the international arena.

91. The 2019 Refugees Proclamation devotes a specific provision concerning the protection refugee children. Article 38(2) of the Proclamation requires RRS to ensure that “recognized refugee and asylum-seeker children shall enjoy the rights and protections enshrined under relevant laws in particular, specific measures are taken to protect them from abuse, neglect, exploitation and trafficking.” Community Care Coalitions (CCC) aim to protect and support refugee children in all of the refugee-hosting regions in Ethiopia. The program runs awareness campaigns in order to protect children from harmful traditional practices such as early marriage, female genital mutilation etc. Refugee children in these refugee-hosting *woredas* learn in public schools with the local children and they can also participate in extracurricular activities such as student parliament together with the local children.

92. In addition, Ethiopia has drafted a proclamation to govern internally displaced persons, aiming to regulate their protection and support mechanisms in line with the principle of national responsibility. The government, in collaboration with various stakeholders, is working to create comprehensive care and reintegration programs for affected children.

### **Reply to paragraph 11 (b)**

93. Children under 15 years of age are not permitted to be hired in the formal sector, while children between 15 and under 18 years of age are not allowed to work in hazardous environments, as per Directive No. 813/2021 issued by MoLS, entitled Restating of Activities Prohibited for Young Workers. Directive No. 813/2021 adopted on August 24, 2021, restates activities prohibited for young workers in Ethiopia, replacing the former directive with the objective of protecting young workers from hazardous work.

94. The Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178/2020 criminalizes trafficking, including aggravated child trafficking. The government has assigned labor inspectors within the Ministry of Labor and Skills, supported by the “Guidelines for Labor Inspection Services in Addressing Trafficking in Persons.” These guidelines help inspectors identify labor trafficking cases, refer victims for assistance, and coordinate with law enforcement and NGOs.

95. The National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour (2021–2025) has been under implementation. The Plan outlines a series of measures aiming at prevention of the worst forms of child labor, including awareness-raising, social mobilization, building institutional capacity, strengthening law enforcement, direct

measures and services, technical and vocational training, and social and economic empowerment activities.

96. Training on child labor prevention, gender responsiveness, and induction training on procedures and code of conduct was offered to newly assigned inspectors before they undertake any inspection including child labor in collaboration with Care-Ethiopia and Confederation of Ethiopia Trade Unions various trainings were given to the regional and city administration labor inspectors.

97. The Ministry of Labor and Skills, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and CIVIPOL BMM Program (CIVIPOL) has prepared Guideline for labor inspection services in addressing trafficking in persons for the purpose of labor exploitation in Ethiopia which is being implemented to prevent and reduce child labor, human trafficking and forced labor.

98. The Confederation of Ethiopia Trade Unions in collaboration with Ministry of Labor and Skills and other stakeholders developed a training manual and guideline which is being implemented to reduce child labor, human trafficking and forced labor. In addition, through the project implemented in collaboration with LO-Norway, have supported around 10,000 children who were at risk of child labor, forced labor and human trafficking to resume their schooling and reintegrate with their families. Furthermore, the Confederation has developed a child labor, forced labor and human trafficking policy which serves as roadmap for further intervention to combat child labor, forced labor and human trafficking at trade union perspective.

### **Reply to paragraph 11 (c)**

99. The GoE has adopted various legal and institutional mechanisms to combat human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and slavery. To mention few of them, Ethiopia has adopted Proclamation No. 1178/2020 that explicitly prohibits slavery and servitude, including trafficking in persons. Furthermore, the Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 1246/2021 has been enacted to promote safe migration for Ethiopian workers abroad, reducing their vulnerability to trafficking.

100. A National Partnership Coalition for Migration led by the Deputy Prime Minister coordinates anti-trafficking efforts. In the same vein, coalition partnership has been established in regional states to prevent and combat crime of trafficking in person.

101. In addition, the government established a crime prevention working group, and the Ministry of Justice formed a special directorate to investigate and prosecute crimes against women and children, including child trafficking.

102. Directive No. 969/2023 has formed a task force led by the MoLS that provides psycho-social support, reintegration assistance and employment opportunities for victims of migrant returnees. In 2023 alone, Ethiopia has repatriated 35,097 migrant returnees from Middle-East and African countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Tanzania, and other countries. Furthermore, due to the conflict in Sudan, 35,700 citizens were repatriated.

103. Ethiopia has undertaken several initiatives to combat human trafficking and irregular migration through public awareness campaigns and community engagement. Key activities include developing a national communication strategy, creating a community discussion manual, broadcasting educational content via the MoE and translating key migration terms into local languages, including Amharic and Afan-Oromo languages. These efforts led to community discussions in 20,732 lower-level government sections, providing comprehensive information on migration and related crimes.

104. Ethiopia has actively integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its national development plans since their adoption in 2015. By 2019, the country had prioritized ten key objectives to align with its broader strategy. One significant initiative under this framework is the Five-Year Strategic Plan of the National Partnership Coalition on Migration (2020–2025), which focuses on migration governance while ensuring the protection of children's rights.

105. Ethiopia has been making strides in incorporating child rights into various directives, including Directive No. 562 and 563, which focus on the National Partnership Coalition Working Group and the National Referral Mechanism. Additionally, Reintegration Directive No. 923 aims to enhance child protection and reintegration efforts.

106. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in Ethiopia ensures a consistent and accessible system for referring victims of trafficking, vulnerable migrants, and returnees to necessary services. The NRM prioritizes direct referral to social service providers, victims sometimes engage with law enforcement first, as officers often serve as initial points of contact during identification. Furthermore, Ethiopia has also developed a training manual on the NRM which is going to be cascaded in all regional states to create awareness to the stakeholders working in the areas and standardize the work of referral system across the country. Its draft has been finalized and it is enriched in a consultation held during the reporting period.

### **Reply to paragraph 11 (d)**

107. The Ethiopian government is making utmost efforts to establish a comprehensive child justice system which is child-rights compliant system focused on reintegration and on dignity instead of punitiveness. The Child Justice Project Directorate (CJPD) under the Federal Supreme Court conducted an Advocacy Session for the members of Standing Committee of Justice Affairs of the Parliament on the issue of the need to raise the age criminal responsibility in accordance with international standards.

108. FSC and MoJ are currently developing a draft National Strategy on Children in Conflict with the law in line with international standards. The Child Justice Project Directorate (CJPD) under the Federal Supreme Court (FSC) is making efforts to revise the diversion manual in light of recent jurisprudence, new knowledge about child and adolescent development, evidence of effective practices relating to diversion of children in conflict with the law. The adoption of the revised Organizations of Civil Societies Proclamation, Proclamation No. 1113/2019 in 2019 is believed to lay the foundation to revive Community based Correction Centers (CBCC). It is believed that the adoption of progressive CSO law, renewed leadership commitment within the FSC, and enhanced coordination among justice sector institutions have created a conducive environment for revisiting and reinvigorating the Juvenile Diversion Manual.

109. The Child Justice Project Directorate (CJPD) also inaugurated a newly prepared competency-based Training Manual for Justice Professionals on child justice. The Training manual focuses on international best practices on ensuring justice for children who come into contact with the criminal justice system (as offenders, victims or witnesses of crime). The Training Manual focuses on prevention of the incidence of children coming into contact with the law, giving due consideration for diversion measures, observance of fair trial safeguards of children, alternatives to detention and minimizing deprivation of liberty.

110. Addis Ababa Remand and Rehabilitation Center for children in conflict with the law is which has been catering for the rehabilitation and reintegration of these children has moved to a new state-of the-art building complex. The recently built complex was inaugurated on September 20, 2022 by the Mayor of Addis Ababa City Administration. The construction of this new facility equipped with different facilities will enable the Center to provide better services for children in conflict with the law.

### **Reply to paragraph 12 (a)**

111. The Government gives utmost attention for respect and compliance with rules of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). As a State Party to the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and the two 1977 Additional Protocols, the Ministry of Defence disseminates knowledge of the rules of IHL armed and security forces, other weapon bearers, political leaders and opinion makers in close collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Ethiopian National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also play key roles the dissemination of IHL. Members of armed and security forces are well-versed with the

principles of IHL including humanity, military necessity, distinction, proportionality and precaution and conduct themselves accordingly.

112. Any member of armed forces who contravene principles of IHL and the Roles of Engagement (RoE) are duly investigated and brought before the Military Court pursuant to the FDRE Defence Forces Proclamation, No. 1286/2023. Articles 269 up to 272 of the 2005 Criminal Code establish crimes in violation of the law armed conflict and specify commensurate penalties. Moreover, a draft Proclamation on international core crimes has been formulated.

113. The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) was concluded on 2 November 2022 to end the Northern Conflict. Ever since, the Government has invigorated its work on transitional justice initiative that resulted in the adoption of the Transitional Justice (TJ) Policy. According to the Policy, all grave human rights violations committed in the Country since 1995 will be dealt with through a TJ mechanism. The mechanism will operate through independent and competent institutions to be established per the precepts of the Policy.

114. Many legislative measures have been undertaken with a view to implement the TJ policy including the preparation of the draft items of legislation focusing on establishment proclamation of Special Prosecutor's Office, Truth Seeking and Social Cohesion Commission, Vetting Commission, Transitional Justice Special Bench as well as International Core Crimes Proclamation.

### **Reply to paragraph 12 (b)**

115. Ethiopian domestic legislation, national military law, current military policies or practices, doctrine, military manual, rules of engagement, operational orders do not allow the use of educational and health care facilities for military purpose. The Government protects schools from attacks and shields them from military use as a crucial measure to ensure the continuation of education during conflict and in post-conflict situations. The Education Sector Development Program (ESDP VI) for 2021–2025 includes explicit references on the need for the continuation of education in emergencies. ESDP VI outlines strategies to develop preparedness strategy and plan to ensure the continuation of education when emergencies occur and envisages the establishment of a national coordinating body to oversee the implementation. Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) has integrated IHL and international standards relating to the protection of healthcare in to its regulations and rules of engagement. GoE is effectively investigating any alleged violations of the rules of IHL or law enforcement and has been working to bring alleged perpetrators before justice.

### **Reply to paragraph 12 (c)**

116. As a State Party to the Optional Protocol on the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (CRC-OP-AC), and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) the Government refrains from acts of forced military training, forced recruitment and the use of children in armed conflict. Article 6(1) of the FDRE Defence Forces Proclamation, No. 1286/2023 clearly stipulates that the Ministry of Defence may recruit persons who are fit and willing for military service. Moreover, Article 17(1) (d) of the Defence Forces Administration Council of Ministers Regulation, No. 460/2019 provides that recruit persons who are fit and willing for military service provided that they are between the age brackets of 18 up to 22. The Ministry of Defence undertakes rigorous inspection of applicants before recruitment and may order further investigation if it is not convinced by the evidential basis for their applications. IHL standards are also integrated into the operational planning and targeting of ENDF. GoE is undertaking thorough investigation of any alleged violations of the applicable and has been working to bring alleged perpetrators before justice.

### **Reply to paragraph 12 (d)**

117. The Rules of Engagement Card or Pamphlet for members of armed forces forbid arbitrary detention, ill-treatment, torture, sexual violence, abduction and sexual slavery of children. The Government has granted amnesty for members of armed groups who laid down their arms and assisted their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. A National Rehabilitation Commission has been established to fully implement the DDR mechanisms inculcated in the CoHA. GoE is undertaking thorough investigation of any alleged violations of the applicable rules and has been working to bring alleged perpetrators before justice.

### **Reply to paragraph 12 (e)**

118. Ethiopian domestic legislation, national military law, current military policies or practices, doctrine, military manual, rules of engagement, operational orders prohibit hunger, starvation and malnutrition as a method of warfare or law enforcement. On the contrary, GoE has been facilitating unimpeded and unhindered passage of humanitarian assistance in conflict situations in coordination with humanitarian organizations in line with humanitarian principles. GoE is undertaking thorough investigation of any alleged violations of the applicable rules and has been working to bring alleged perpetrators before justice.

### **Reply to paragraph 13 (a)**

119. From 2020 onwards, Ethiopia has promulgated, amended and supplemented a number of laws in accordance with CRC. The decision on the part of the government in January 2018 to embark upon a reform agenda heralded momentous opportunity to revise and abrogate items of legislation which run counter to human rights and democratization in the country. The Government of Ethiopia has embarked upon new initiatives aimed at broadening democratic participation, strengthening justice and rule of law, creating accountable systems of governance have been undertaken.

120. Some of the legislative measures which have been adopted in recent years include:

- (a) Civil and family registration proclamation, Proclamation No. 1370/2025;
- (b) The Government also adopted the first-ever General Education Proclamation in 2025;
- (c) Directives on the Restating of Activities Prohibited for Young Workers, Directive No. 813/2021;
- (d) more than twelve directives adopted under the auspices of the Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO) to ensure the implementation of the progressive Civil Society Proclamation adopted in 2019;
- (e) Proclamation No. 1307/2024 has provided for the establishment of a special division for women, children, and PWDs led by a Deputy Ombudsman;
- (f) Regulation of the Council of Ministers Issued to Determine the Organization and Powers and Functions of the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), Regulation No. 546/2024; and
- (g) Defence Forces Proclamation, Proclamation No. 1286/2023.

### **Reply to paragraph 13 (b)**

121. The formerly Ministry of Women, Children and Youth (MoWCY) has been reorganized in to the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) pursuant to Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs Proclamation, Proclamation 1263/21.

122. The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission has been established by virtue of Proclamation 1265/2021. The objectives of the Commission include, among others, to facilitate consultation between the various segments of the society by identifying the root

causes of the difference on fundamental national issues and identifying the topics on which the discussion will take place.

### **Reply to paragraph 13 (c)**

123. The Government has adopted a set of policies, programs and action plans to ensure that children's rights are safeguarded. Examples include:

(a) The Ten-Year Development Plan of Ethiopia (2019/20–2029/2030) which is designed and formulated with the understanding that the development goal of poverty reduction cannot be attained without the empowerment of vulnerable segments of society including children;

(b) The National Children's Policy Implementation Strategy which is the instrument for the implementation of the National Children's Policy is adopted in 2025 with the objective of formulating and enforcing priorities, goals and specific measures needed to attain the policy objectives set forth in the Policy;

(c) National five-year strategy (2021/22–2026) on prevention and response to violence against women and children (VAWC); and

(d) The National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour (2021–2025)

(e) The Transitional Justice Policy has been adopted on May 9, 2024. The policy has been motivated by the AU Policy Framework on TJ and international standards. The objectives of the Policy include ensuring accountability and victims' reparation, fostering reconciliation, and prevent the recurrence of violations.

(f) In 2024, a Comprehensive National Policy and Strategy on Disaster Risk Management has been developed.

### **Reply to paragraph 13 (d)**

124. The Ethiopian government ratified the AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) on March 13, 2020.