

# Caring for Armenia's Vulnerable Children

## Institutionalizing a Platform for Cross-Sector Collaboration

In Armenia, the MEASURE Evaluation project—funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund—facilitated development of a governance structure for the reform of national policies and systems for the care of vulnerable children: “national care reform.” Zulfiya Charyeva and Hasmik Ghukasyan, of MEASURE Evaluation, Palladium, supported the USAID mission and Armenia's Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in June 2017 to establish a country core team (CCT). Team members represent government partners and other stakeholders. Their task is to develop and strengthen the country's leadership in assessing and ultimately accelerating national care reform.

The CCT has the following roles, as defined by its terms of reference (TOR):

- Planning and preparing a presentation on Armenia's care system at a multicountry workshop in London in September 2017<sup>1</sup>
- Revising a tool to assess Armenia's care system<sup>2</sup>
- Developing an assessment implementation method
- Implementing the in-country assessment and disseminating its results<sup>3</sup>
- Conducting action planning and monitoring progress in child care reform
- Contributing to the development of routine monitoring indicators
- Establishing a baseline
- Institutionalizing indicators for assessment and monitoring

The team continues to meet. In March 2019, Arman Udumyan, deputy minister of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and

the CCT coordinator, initiated steps to formalize the CCT. He asked staff of the Division of Children Related Issues to develop an updated TOR for the CCT and draft an order for the minister, approving the CCT as the intersectoral platform for discussing child protection-related issues, including alternative care. (“Alternative care” is any arrangement, formal or informal, temporary or permanent, for a child who is living away from his or her parents.<sup>4</sup>) Mr. Udumyan said: “It is time for the CCT to grow beyond the scope of one project. It proves to be a very productive format and we will keep it after the end of the MEASURE Evaluation project. The CCT will become a sustainable interministerial platform where representatives from five ministries involved in care reform will have constant meetings to discuss challenges and issues that require solutions, in partnership with NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] and donor organizations.”



CCT meeting, Yerevan, Armenia, November 2, 2018.  
Photo: Hasmik Ghukasyan, MEASURE Evaluation, Palladium



CCT meeting, Yerevan, Armenia, March 21, 2019.  
Photo: Hasmik Ghukasyan, MEASURE Evaluation, Palladium

<sup>1</sup> A report on that workshop is available here: <https://www.measure-evaluation.org/resources/publications/ws-17-39?searchterm=national+care+reform+>

<sup>2</sup> The tool for assessing and monitoring national alternative care systems is available here: <https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/il-19-25>

<sup>3</sup> A report on the assessment workshop is available here: <https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/tr-18-268>

<sup>4</sup> “Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children,” available at <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20for%20the%20Alternative%20Care%20of%20Children%20-%20A%20Tool%20for%20Reviewing.pdf>