



2014-2021 years Report

Prevention for Progress

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Anton (Tato) Kelbakiani

The Board Chairman

I would like to greet you in the name of the organization Prevention for Progress. The organization was established by the team having extensive experience in the field of juvenile justice, penitentiary, probation and child welfare. For 9 years, I had honor to lean the organization and together with our team walk an interesting path towards strengthening and developing the organization. PFP has achieved significant success in studying challenges to the juvenile justice, child welfare, penitentiary and probation and towards advocating for the ways of their solution. In 2022 the organization decided on the rebranding, changing the name and management system, where I will carry out activities in a new role. PFP plans to continue working on human rights with renewed energy and team, particularly in areas where the organization has gained many years of experience.



Natalia Tsagareli

The Director

I am honored to greet you in the name of the organization Prevention for Progress. Together with you, I would like to summarize 9 years of operation of the organization. I think, is not a short time to test values, measure your strengths and evaluate existing challenges; at the same time, this time is not long to attend to everything, to correct all the shortcomings. Thus, I deeply believe that the new name will not only bring external, cosmetic changes, but will also reflect on significant and positive changes to the content. We will try to become even stronger in the coming years, expand our field of activity, expand our loyal and competent team, remain a guardian of democratic values, remain the guardian of democratic values, adhere to the chosen values to the end and use all resources to the maximum for the beneficial changes of our country.

History and New Name

2022 has become the year of importance and significant changes for the non-governmental organization Prevention for Progress. After almost ten years of active operation, to ensure better communication with the society, partners and beneficiaries, the organization decided on the rebranding, changed the name, logo, branding, renewed organizational structure and management team. Prevention for Progress faces modern political, legal and social challenges with the new power, improved expert knowledge and more balanced organizational structure.

Over the past working period, the organization has established a unique niche in terms of research and advocacy among civil society organizations. Prevention for Progress is one of the leader organizations fundamentally studying Georgian penitentiary and probation system. Over the past years, the organization has conducted a large-scale and comprehensive study of the system and provided information to the public about its operation. It was exactly the systemic failure of penitentiary reform that has played a pivotal role in the implementation of socio-political change and is still a field of high sensitivity and interest. Particularly noteworthy is the study of the criminal subculture, which has clearly presented the modern prison management trends and vicious sides. The organization did not only remotely investigate the functioning of the penitentiary and probation system, but with the support on the Public Defender of Georgia, and with the mandate of National Prevention Mechanism, monitored the functioning of the modern prison on the spot. Organization Prevention for Progress spent significant human resources on protecting the rights of prison staff and re-socializing of the prisoners.

We think that activities of Prevention for Progress in the field of juvenile justice were important: Our organization took the first steps towards ensuring proportionate and fair sentence for juveniles in the country, by improving the pre-trial evaluation report preparation system. Also, in cooperation with the Public Defender of Georgia, for the first time in the history of Georgia, the team of the organization was able to carry out comprehensive monitoring of closed criminal trials of the juveniles.

Achievements and Challenges

The non-governmental organization Prevention for Progress has made great progress during its 9 years of operation and has achieved significant success as an accountable force of a civil society. For 9 years, Prevention for Progress, together with the partner organizations, has implemented over 30 projects, conducted around 40 researches and prepared research reports. Based on research result and the work done, the organization has developed a number of important recommendations, carried out important processes for advocating the changes, enhanced several state bodies and ensured rehabilitation and educational processes/programs for various vulnerable groups.

Number of legislative, as well as state policy changes were implemented as a result of the organization's recommendations and advocacy, including:

- Some steps have been taken by the relevant agencies to regulate the preparation procedures for release and to improve the quality of services;
- Commitments to improve the infrastructure of penitentiary institutions and increase access to services were reflected in the state policy documents (action plans);
- Legislative amendments were carried out, resulting in the regulation of the rules for storing and destroying personal data in the penitentiary and probation system;
- A certain group of juvenile witnesses were given the opportunity to obtain legal services at the expense of the state;
- Steps were taken towards service provision and its quality improvement for the juveniles in conflict with the law;
- Guidelines and instruments for monitoring juvenile court hearings have been developed.

Apart from the mentioned, during the operation of the organization, several trainings were conducted for the following target groups: law enforcement personnel; representatives of the psycho-social service of the bailiff service; probation officers and social workers; social workers of the guardianship and custody authority; students; teachers; media representatives and others.

Taking into account the efficiency of the work done and quality of projects implemented, financial situation of the organization was improving and increasing annually, so that by 2019, budget of the organization even exceeded half a million GEL. However, unfortunately, COVID 19 pandemic period was full of financial and material challenges and the organization found it very difficult to cope with the crisis.

The Main Directions of the Organization

For the past nine years, activities of the non-governmental organization Prevention for Progress, were linked to the researches, advocating legal and political changes, strengthening the capacity of various agencies, provision of rehabilitation services and educational activities to the target groups. The main directions of the organization were:

- Penitentiary and probation system;
- Juvenile justice and child welfare;
- Protecting the rights and well-being of women.

Penitentiary and Probation System

For 9 years of its operation, one of the leading directions the organization is the research and strengthening of the penitentiary and probation system. The long-term experience and professionalism of the people employed by the organization played significant role in this direction, including many years of working in the system, as well as clear expert knowledge of the issue, and creating a special niche of organizational expertise.

The target audience to support within their work in the field of penitentiary and probation were inmates and probationers, as well as direct staff of the penitentiary and probation system. In order to improve conditions for the target group, the organization, for the whole 9 years, actively studied the situation in penitentiary and probation system, reforms in process and need for future changes. It is particularly noteworthy that with the financial support of the EU, Prevention for Progress implemented full-scale analysis of the penitentiary system, covering desk and policy documents, in particular, research on the implementation of state strategy and action plan on the following topics:

- The process of education and rehabilitation-re-socialization of convicts;
- Living conditions of inmates;
- Contact of the accused/convicts with the outside world;
- Disciplinary proceedings;
- Appeal procedures;
- Healthcare and services of penitentiary system;
- Prisoner risk assessment and classification system;
- Research of the budget-related topics;
- Penitentiary system staff.

In addition to these topics, Prevention for Progress devoted big organizational resource to the study of penitentiary and probation system issues such as: access to educational/rehabilitation programs for accused/convicts and the process of preparing them for release from the penitentiary system. Moreover, the organization actively provided not only the analysis of the topic, but also offered various rehabilitation-resocialization services to the prison population, ex-prisoners and probationers, including art therapy and music therapy courses.

It is noteworthy, that in a situation where the main focus of civil society organizations is directly on the study and improvement of the legal status of prisoners and probationers, Prevention for Progress to focus on analyzing the conditions of penitentiary and probation system staff and taking care of their development. Improving the working and professional conditions of prison staff directly and indirectly affects prison population and non-custodial convicts. Therefore, together with the research, the organization developed Training Center Quality Development Plan, as well as Guide to Managing a High-risk Penitentiary Institution, and conducted numerous trainings on various topics to ensure professional development of the staff.

Two projects implemented by Prevention for Torture were unique. In one case, the organization, in cooperation with the Public Defender of Georgia and with their mandate, studied the impact of COVID-19 on the functioning of the Georgian penitentiary system. In the second case, the organization studied the influence of the inmates' subculture on the penitentiary system operation. The study, which was conducted for the first time in Georgia on this scale, showed that in current penitentiary system, due to the criminal subculture, the inmates face significant challenges, including protection of life and ensuring physical safety.

Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare

In addition to working on penitentiary and probation system, one of the main directions of Prevention for Progress is juvenile justice and child welfare. Often, activities of the organization identified the topics which covered both juvenile justice and penitentiary and probation system related topics simultaneously. For example, the organization was one of the first to conduct research and prepare report on the important topic such as protection of personal data of juveniles in the penitentiary and probation system.

Members of the Prevention for Progress played an important role in the juvenile justice reform process even before the organization was founded. With their efforts and work renovated infrastructural arrangement of a juvenile special institution was carried out, effective implementation of the sentence individualization system in practice was ensured, juvenile facility based on resocialization-rehabilitation was organized, etc.

After working in civil society, members of the organization continued to apply their expertise knowledge on juvenile justice in the non-governmental sector. The organization played important role in child rights protection, as well improving situation for the juveniles in conflict with the law and under the risk. Prevention for Progress represented one of the leading organizations and a civil society entity, which started to work on establishing, strengthening and introducing pre-trial report preparation institution for children in conflict with the law in Georgian judiciary. Back in 2014, in cooperation with Penal Reform International (PRI), the organization created concept for the preparation of pre-trial/social research report, report preparation guidelines for the social workers and psychologists and other important documents. In 2017 the organization was still a leader, when in cooperation with Penal Reform International (PRI), after the Juvenile Justice Code came into force, studied the tendencies of preparing a pre-trial report in practice and prepared the research on Producing individual assessment reports when sentencing juveniles.

With the financial support of the European Union and in cooperation with the Georgian Center for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims, the organization Prevention for Progress has conducted important and large-scale studies in the field of juvenile justice. More specifically, for the future improvement of the crime prevention of juveniles with antisocial behavior and in conflict with the law, the organization prepared the research on diversion-mediation of juveniles in Georgia. Also, in 2020 conducted full-scale desk and qualitative research on the topics, such as specialization of the professionals in juvenile justice system, juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation and resocialization process for the juvenile accused/convicts in Georgian probation and penitentiary systems. Analysis of policy documents, juvenile justice system reform, and action plans for crime prevention was also prepared for the first time.

In addition to above mentioned, activities of Prevention for Progress covered important topics, such as:

- Investigation of the rights of the accused juveniles;
- The role of psychologists in interviewing / questioning minors;
- Prevention of juvenile delinquency at the school level;
- Study of access to educational and rehabilitation programs;
- Ensuring rehabilitation programs for juveniles in conflict with the law and with antisocial behavior;
- Promoting unified system of data collection in juvenile justice system ;
- Mapping services in the field of child welfare.

The research, prepared in cooperation with the Public Defender's Office in Georgia and published in a form of a special report, is of significant importance. Taking into account that criminal proceedings involving minors are conducted in a closed hearing format, it was completely inaccessible to the non-governmental sector and civil society. Cooperation with the Public

Defender of Georgia and granting special powers to experts of the organization by them made it possible for the organization representatives and employees of the Public Defender's Office to attend criminal proceedings involving minors and assess results of the implementation of new Juvenile Justice Code in practice as a result of on-site monitoring. Within the frameworks of this project, immediate monitoring on the closed proceedings of the minors was conducted and Special Report of the Public Defender of Georgia Protection of the Procedural Rights of Juvenile Defendants, Witnesses and Victims in the Field of Criminal Justice was prepared first time in Georgia. It is important that the Public Defender of Georgia and his office directly supervises and monitors the implementation of the recommendations developed on the basis of research and monitoring.

To enhance juvenile justice and support child welfare, Prevention for Progress currently implements two important projects. The first one aims on strengthening the referral mechanism for juveniles under the age of criminal responsibility and with complex behavior. The second project serves studying suicide policy youth and working on its prevention. In the frameworks of the later, to provide suicide-related information to the parents and youth, a special website was created with integrated anonymous online psychological counselling and support chat. Within the same project, a community volunteer activity was developed.

Protecting the Rights and Well-being of Women

Protecting the rights and well-being of women is a specific and special area of the Prevention for Justice activities. In this regard the organization focuses on the women and girls in penitentiary establishments, victims of violence, subjects to discrimination, victims of gender stereotypes and women and girls with various needs. Among them, it is noteworthy that in the field of women's rights, the organization has experience in conducting research, as well as delivering trainings and art therapy services to:

- Women living in Pankisi Valley;
- Women victims of violence in penitentiary establishments.

In terms of research, it is noteworthy that the experts of the organization, in cooperation with Penal Reform International (PRI) studied gender-specific needs of women in criminal justice system in Georgia and prepared relevant report. The organization also conducted a small-scale study on a social role change for the mothers of elementary school pupils under the Covid-19 pandemic.

Project and Donor Organizations

During its 9-year existence, Prevention for Progress has implemented numerous projects, funded by the EU, Open Society Fund, Embassy of the Netherlands to Georgia, UNICEF, Women's Fund in Georgia, Swiss Development Agency, Europe Fund, Global Initiative in Psychiatry – Tbilisi Office, Swedish Institute and World Vision Georgia office.

It is especially noteworthy that the organization has implemented 4 projects with EU funding. In particular, in cooperation with the non-governmental organization The Georgian Center for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (GCRT) and Civil Development Agency (CIDA), the organization implemented the project Improving Crime Prevention Process for Juveniles with Anti-Social behavior and in Conflict with the Law. Together with these organizations and with Global Initiative in Psychiatry, Prevention for Progress was involved in the project Promoting Juvenile Justice Reform in Georgia. Apart from this, the organization, together with the Center for Information and Counselling – Tanadgoma and Dutch organization Mainline Foundation, implemented the project Improved Opportunities for Psycho-Social Rehabilitation and Resocialization of Prisoners, Ex-Prisoners and Probationers. Prevention for Progress, together with the Penal Reform International (PRI) and NGO Human Rights Center was involved in the project Monitoring Government Responsibilities and Promoting Reforms in Penitentiary and Probation through the Civil Society Involvement.

The Embassy of the Netherlands in Georgia made a significant contribution to funding the projects implemented by the organization. With their financial support following projects were implemented:

- Institutional strengthening of the Penitentiary and Probation Training Center;
- Strengthening the institution of pre-trial reporting of children in conflict with the law and facilitating informed decision-making in the Georgian criminal justice system (in cooperation with Penal Reform International (PRI));
- Establishing higher standards of juvenile justice and the rule of law through the establishment of a juvenile justice monitoring system;
- Assessing the impact of the pandemic on the health and legal status of prisoners and staff.

Prevention for Progress most often receives funding from the Open Society Foundations, the following projects are most significant among those supported by them:

- Impact of criminal subculture on the management of a penitentiary institution;
- Protection of children's personal data in the penitentiary and probation system through advocacy;

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- Overcoming gaps in the rights of juvenile defendants in criminal proceedings through advocacy;
- Strengthening the role of psychologists in interviewing/questioning juvenile victims and witnesses during the investigation phase;
- Influence of criminal authorities/informal groups on the election process.

The following projects were implemented/are being implemented with the financial support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF):

- Promoting a unified system of data collection in juvenile justice;
- Pre-trial investigation report on juvenile defendants through an individual approach;
- Strengthening the referral mechanism for juveniles under the age of criminal responsibility and those with difficult behavior.