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The Legal Framework of Child Protection Governance in Algeria An Analysis of Institutional and Civil Society Intervention Mechanisms

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Abstract:

The Algerian legislature has endeavored to align with international agreements for the protection of children's rights through Law 15-12, which focuses on child protection. This law emphasizes both social and judicial protection for children, leading to the establishment of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children. This committee operates in collaboration with civil society to solidify national and regional child protection efforts. It engages in oversight by receiving notifications and complaints regarding violence against children and submitting reports to the President regarding the status of this demographic. Additionally, it conducts awareness campaigns to disseminate a culture of children's rights within society, aiming to prevent violence against children.

Keywords: Child abuse – Children's rights – National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children – Civil society – Child protection.

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Introduction :

Children constitute one of the most vulnerable segments of society worldwide, subjected to various forms of violence and rights violations. Certain children, due to factors such as gender or socio-economic status, are more susceptible to violence. Thus, it becomes imperative to support and protect children through the establishment of frameworks, regulations, and procedures aimed at preventing and addressing child abuse.

Child protection, especially against violence, is a fundamental principle underpinning the international human rights regime, with Algeria being among the countries adhering to this approach. This alignment is in accordance with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and other relevant treaties and protocols.

In alignment with the international legal framework for child protection and in response to evolving needs and aspirations of children, as well as emerging violations against them, Algeria enacted Law 15-12 concerning child protection. This law replaced Order 72-03, which no longer adequately addressed current challenges.

Law 15-12 was introduced to streamline various actions benefiting children, recognizing that child protection is not solely a legal matter but a societal issue. It extends beyond judicial protection to encompass mediation and social protection. The establishment of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children exemplifies this holistic approach. This committee collaborates with diverse sectors, primarily civil society, to advocate for and protect children, particularly those subjected to abuse, through oversight, awareness campaigns, and community engagement.

This research paper aims to address the following problem:

How does the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children, in collaboration with civil society, work towards safeguarding abused children?

This inquiry leads to several **hypotheses**, including:

1. Strengthening the supervisory role of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children, in coordination with civil society, against

violence directed towards children, contributes to reducing assaults against this demographic.

2. Enhancing the awareness-raising role played by civil society under the supervision of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children supports abused children.

Through this research, we focused on a **descriptive methodology** to elucidate fundamental concepts related to the topic and understand them. Additionally, an **analytical approach** was adopted to study and analyze the role played by the committee in collaboration with civil society in protecting abused children.

Objective of the Research:

This research aims to lay a foundational groundwork and practical aspect to achieve protection for the most vulnerable segment of society, namely children, especially in the face of various assaults they encounter.

Based on the above, the research is divided into three main sections:

1. The National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children and Civil Society: A Knowledge-based Approach.

2. The Supervisory Role of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children and Civil Society against Violence towards Children.

3. The Awareness-raising Role on Children's Rights Played by Civil Society under the Supervision of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children.

THE FIRST TOPIC : The National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children and Civil Society: A Knowledge-based Approach.

Before delving into defining the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children and civil society, it is essential to first define the abused child as follows:

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First requirement: Definition of the Abused Child.

Children are the cornerstone of society and a vital resource for future generations, thus requiring special care. Despite their significance in societal development, children are subjected to various forms of violence. Before defining the abused child, let us first define the child:

First section: Linguistic Definition of the Child:

A child is defined linguistically as a young individual until reaching adulthood, signifying youthfulness, innocence, and simplicity[1]

Second section: Legal Definition of the Child:

In this section, we will focus on the legal definition of the child as outlined in both the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and Law 15-12 concerning child protection. This is elucidated as follows:

1. Definition of the Child in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989):

Article 1 of the Convention defines a child as every human being under the age of eighteen years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.[2]

2. Definition of the Child in Law No. 15-12 Concerning Child Protection:

Article 2 of Law 15-12 defines a child as any individual who has not yet reached the age of eighteen years in full.[3]

Hence, a child is any individual below the age of eighteen who has not attained physical and mental maturity, necessitating protection from all forms of physical and psychological violence.[4]

Definition of the Abused Child in Light of Law 15-12.

The abused child is one who experiences neglect, mistreatment, physical and psychological abuse, and even sexual exploitation or ill-treatment, whether by parents, organizations, schools, or any other environments within which the child interacts.[5]

However, under Algerian law, as per Law 15-12, the term "abused child" is not explicitly defined. Instead, the law introduces the concept of a "child at risk,"

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which is a broader term. This is stipulated in paragraph 2 of Article 2, stating that a child at risk is "a child whose health, morals, upbringing, or safety are at risk, or exposed to risk, or whose living conditions or behavior may expose them to risk."[6] This indicates that a child at risk encompasses abused children from others, self-abuse, and even delinquent children. Through this provision, Algerian legislation aims to enumerate various situations of risk or violence that children may encounter[7]. By categorizing these situations, we can identify abused children through the types of violence they experience, including:[8]

- Exploiting or subjecting the child to begging.

- Ill-treatment of the child, particularly through torture, physical assault, confinement, deprivation of food, or assigning tasks involving cruelty that could affect the child's emotional or psychological well-being.

- If the child is a victim of a crime by their legal representative.

- If the child is a victim of a crime by any other person, if the child's interest requires protection.

- Various forms of sexual exploitation of the child.

- The child becoming a victim of armed conflicts or other situations of unrest and instability.

Second requirement: Definition of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children and Explanation of its Organizational Structure.

In furtherance of child protection, Algerian legislation established the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children under Law 15-12, reinforced by Executive Decree 16-334 concerning the establishment of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children. This decree delineates the legal framework for this committee, including its functioning procedures[9]. This will be elucidated as follows:

First section: Definition of the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood:

Referring to Law 15-12 and Executive Decree 16-334, Algerian legislation does not explicitly define the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion

of Childhood; rather, it only discusses its establishment, functions, and organization.

According to Article 11 of Law 15-12, it states:

"A national authority for the protection and promotion of childhood is established under the Prime Minister, chaired by the National Commissioner for Child Protection, tasked with ensuring the protection and promotion of children's rights, enjoying legal personality and financial independence."

This provision is supported by Article 2 of Executive Decree 16-334, which states:

"The authority enjoys legal personality and financial independence. The authority is placed under the Prime Minister. The headquarters of the authority are located in Algiers."

Furthermore, Article 12 of Law 15-12 states, "The National Commissioner for Child Protection shall be appointed by presidential decree from among national figures known for their expertise and dedication to child welfare."[10]

From these texts, it is evident that the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood is a public administrative institution directly under the Prime Minister's authority, chaired by the National Commissioner for Child Protection. It has a designated headquarters in Algiers and enjoys legal personality and financial independence[11]. The state provides this authority with all necessary human and material resources to carry out its tasks related to protecting and promoting children's rights, including supervisory aspects through field monitoring and awareness activities coordinated with civil society and various relevant organizations.[12]

Second section: Organizational Structure of the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood:

According to Article 12 of Law 15-12, the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood is headed by the National Commissioner for Child Protection, responsible for child protection and operating under the supervision of the Prime Minister. The Commissioner is appointed by presidential decree, granting them the authority to carry out their duties rigorously. Additionally, under the authority of the Commissioner, several administrative bodies are established and structured according to Presidential Decree 16-334,

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Article 7, which stipulates that the authority includes a General Secretariat, a Directorate for Child Rights Protection, a Directorate for Child Rights Promotion, and finally, a Permanent Coordination Committee.

Articles 9 to 18 of the same decree detail the various procedures carried out within the administrative structures specified in the aforementioned Article 7.

Third requirement: Definition of Civil Society and Explanation of its Main Characteristics.

Civil society is considered one of the most important actors that stands alongside the state. It is a part of the Western tradition distinguished by individualism, freedom, the absence of constraints, reinforcement of pluralism, and participation[13]. The term "civil society" is used to refer to a group of non-governmental institutions that work to ensure the realization of democracy, convey citizens' demands to the rulers, and create a kind of balance within society to prevent the concentration of power on one side[14]. Through this element, we will focus on defining civil society and explaining its main characteristics.

First section: Definition of Civil Society.

Definitions of civil society vary depending on the perspectives defining it. In this element, we will focus on the most important of these definitions.

Muhammad Abid Al-Jabri defined it as: "The sum of social frameworks that organize the activities of modern political, economic, and cultural structures."[15]

Gideon Beker defined it as: "A diverse group of non-governmental institutions that possess sufficient power to balance the state, which can prevent the state from having absolute control over the rest of society."[16]

An important procedural definition that serves this research paper is one that portrays civil society as "organized social life in voluntary organizations that are mostly self-reliant, independent of the state, and governed by a specific legal system."[17] In this definition, civil society seeks to mobilize its material and human resources to bring about developments aimed at achieving the public interest and protecting a particular segment of society.[18]

Second section: Characteristics of Civil Society.

Civil society possesses several characteristics, the most important of which are summarized as follows:

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– Voluntary and deliberate action to join civil society institutions, in addition to systematic and organized work.[19]

– Independence of civil society from the state to prevent public authority from becoming oppressive.[20]

– The ability of civil society to adapt to the environmental changes in which it operates, making it more effective.[21]

– Homogeneity among actors within civil society institutions, as well as compatibility in their goals.[22]

Through these characteristics, civil society works towards achieving its orientation towards achieving the common good, meeting the demands of individuals, and protecting vulnerable groups among them.

THE SECOND TOPIC : The Oversight Role of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children in Collaboration with Civil Society on Child Violence.

If the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children plays a crucial role in protecting abused children, civil society also has an equally important role, especially since the former operates in coordination with various bodies and institutions concerned with child protection, with civil society at the forefront. This is acknowledged by Law 15-12 in Article 13. One of the most significant activities carried out by the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children in coordination with civil society is supervisory work. This serves as an effective element in demonstrating the committee's commitment to promoting children's rights and establishing protection, which is essential as it represents a cornerstone in developing protective work and programs, as well as enhancing the legal framework concerning children's rights.[23]

Through its supervisory role, the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children works on developing national and local programs, expressing opinions on child-related legislation, receiving notifications and reports from various authorities regarding the situation of children, and submitting reports to the relevant authorities. Civil society assists the committee in this role. For further detail, this section is divided into the following elements:

First requirement: Development of National and Local Programs for Child Protection and Expression of Opinions on Child Legislation.

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This element includes two fundamental points. The first point concerns the effectiveness of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children in developing programs for child protection. The second point involves the activity of civil society in influencing decision-making and legislation regarding children, which will be addressed through the following branches:

First section: Effectiveness of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children in Developing Programs for Child Protection.

Under the leadership of the National Commissioner, the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children is tasked with developing national and local programs for the protection and promotion of children's rights, as stipulated in Article 13 of Law 15-12. In this regard, the National Commissioner for Child Protection coordinates with civil society institutions that work on implementing various programs. This is done through fieldwork. Additionally, the committee expresses its opinions on national legislation concerning children's rights to enhance it. For greater effectiveness in this matter, the Commissioner works to enhance the participation of civil society organizations in monitoring and promoting children's rights.[24]

Second section: Civil Society's Role in Influencing Decision-Making and Legislation Regarding Children.

In support of the National Committee's role in improving child rights legislation, civil society acts as a mediator between the governing authorities and the governed, aiming to convey the people's demands and preserve the rights of children. Civil society institutions scrutinize policies not only after their implementation but also during the discussions preceding their enactment[25]. They participate in drafting legislation by offering opinions and advice to parliament, aiming to reach a consensus and convergence of diverse views as the basis for improving children's lives.[26]

Civil society institutions can also exert moral pressure on the legislative authority to urge improvements in legislation related to children's rights. This is achieved by mobilizing public opinion to exert popular pressure for the repeal of laws that do not serve children's interests or the amendment of laws to enhance greater protection for children.[27]

Second requirement: Receipt and Referral of Notifications and Reports.

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We will divide this subsection into two main branches as follows:

First section: Role of the National Commissioner for Child Protection in Receiving Notifications.

As part of the supervisory role exercised by the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children, as per Article 15 of Law 15-12, the National Commissioner for Child Protection receives notifications related to any harm or assault on a child. These notifications may come from the child, their legal representative, or any natural or legal person. The notifications provided by civil society organizations concerned with child protection are also included in this category.[28]

Article 19 of Executive Decree 16-334 specifies the methods of notification as outlined in Article 15 mentioned above. Additionally, it introduces the concept of the Commissioner's automatic intervention to assist abused children and provides a hotline to facilitate the notification process.[29]

To ensure the effectiveness of the notification process, Article 19 of Executive Decree 16-334 and Article 18 of Law 15-12 provide guarantees for the informants or reporters of child abuse cases. These include maintaining the confidentiality of the informant's identity and exempting them from administrative, civil, or criminal liability if investigations do not yield results.

Second section: Role of Civil Society in Reporting Cases to the National Committee for Child Protection.

In addition to the National Committee's role in receiving notifications, civil society also plays an active role by receiving individuals' complaints and notifications and forwarding them to the committee. Civil society institutions are entirely qualified to conduct meticulous monitoring of the conditions of children, especially abused children. They excel in directly accessing cases of child abuse, contacting victims, and reporting these notifications or information to the advocating body or the National Committee for Child Protection.[30]

Furthermore, these institutions collect as much information as possible about child abuse cases, record various observations related to obstacles and barriers preventing children from enjoying their rights, and submit them to the National Committee[31]. After receiving these notifications, the National Commissioner for Child Protection forwards them to the competent regional open prosecutor's office for investigation and appropriate action, as per Article 16 of Law 15-12 and Article

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20 of Executive Decree 16-334[32]. In cases where the notifications contain a criminal description, they are referred to the Minister of Justice, who informs the relevant public prosecutor to initiate public prosecution if necessary[33]. Additionally, the Committee informs the juvenile judge in cases where the child is in danger and requires removal from their family, as per Article 23 of Executive Decree 16-334.

Third requirement: Submission of Reports on Child Rights Protection Victims.

We will elucidate the roles of both the National Committee and civil society in submitting reports to the government, which, in turn, elevates them to international human rights organizations, through the following:

First section: The National Committee and National Commissioner for Child Protection's Role in Preparing Periodic and Annual Reports.

In the framework of Algeria's commitments to implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its other international obligations, the National Committee tasked with protecting and promoting children's rights is linked to international bodies concerned with child rights[34]. This committee is responsible for preparing periodic reports submitted to the state, which, in turn, elevates them to various international bodies. This role was affirmed by Article 19 of Law 15-12.

Furthermore, Article 20 of the same law mandates the National Commissioner for Child Protection to prepare an annual report on the state of children's rights and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This report is submitted to the President of the Republic, published, and disseminated within three months of its submission.

In preparing periodic and annual reports, the National Committee and the National Commissioner for Child Protection receive full cooperation from public administrations, institutions, and all individuals responsible for child welfare. These entities are obliged to provide all requested information to the Commissioner without relying on professional secrecy.[35]

Second section: Civil Society Assistance to the National Committee and National Commissioner for Child Protection in Report Preparation.

Civil society contributes to assisting the National Committee and the National Commissioner for Child Protection by providing necessary information, primarily

through periodic reports submitted by the Committee. These reports, characterized by their regularity, include evaluations of the status of children's rights. Consequently, this exerts pressure on authorities responsible for children's rights to adhere more closely to respecting these rights[36].

Civil society institutions often rely on direct fieldwork and fact-finding missions in preparing these reports[37]. Therefore, they enjoy high acceptance and credibility with the National Committee for Child Protection because they reveal many practices to which children are subjected. Law 15-12, under Article 13, emphasizes the necessity of strengthening the Commissioner's engagement with civil society in monitoring and promoting children's rights.

THE THIRD TOPIC : The Awareness Role in Child Rights Played by Civil Society under the Supervision of the National Committee for Child Protection and Promotion.

The collaborative work between the National Committee for Child Protection and civil society aims to protect abused children through various approaches and methods. In addition to the supervision exercised by both entities, an awareness role is evident through the establishment of a civil society network, supervised by the Committee, to spread awareness and education about children's rights. This is essential for understanding the root causes of child maltreatment, ultimately fostering a conscious society aware of children's rights and issues of violence against them.

Through this section, we will shed light on the concept of awareness and education about children's rights, followed by its objective aspects and the most effective methods used to achieve the goal of awareness, as outlined below:

First requirement: The Concept of Child Rights Awareness and Education.

The process of raising awareness and disseminating the culture of child rights within society is a priority for civil society under the supervision of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Child Rights. It serves as an effective guarantee for child protection, as societal unawareness of this demographic inevitably leads to its mistreatment.

The pivotal role played by the National Committee in collaboration with civil society in raising awareness was underscored in Article 13 of Law 15-12. This article mandates the National Commissioner for Child Protection to undertake all

necessary actions for awareness and information dissemination, in addition to promoting research and education in the field of child rights. The aim is to comprehend the economic, social, and/or cultural reasons behind child neglect, abuse, and exploitation, and to develop policies for their protection. The article also emphasizes the necessity of enhancing civil society's participation in these tasks[38]. Through this element, we will begin by defining child rights awareness and education, followed by elucidating their significance, as follows:

First section: Definition of Child Rights Awareness and Education:

Sensitization and awareness of child rights involve acquiring information about children and their rights, along with the skills necessary for interacting with them. This aims to identify the legal obligations of legal representatives or any natural or legal person towards children, while proving the child's entitlement to this care and these rights according to various laws pertaining to childhood.[39]

Within the framework of awareness-raising, spreading the culture of child rights in society is crucial. This depends on incorporating children's rights into educational systems and instilling them in individual cultures, thereby enhancing understanding of these rights and regulating negative behaviors towards children.[40]

To further solidify child protection by disseminating the culture of child rights, it is imperative to include children's rights in human rights education curricula at all educational levels. This constitutes a qualitative leap in the cognitive and educational field, safeguarding childhood by instilling this culture in the social conscience of all societal segments and individuals.[41]

Education in the field of child rights helps individuals develop their potential while instilling a sense of respect for children and advocating for them. Education aims to build a high-level rights-based culture regarding children's rights, while elevating the values associated with them.[42]

Moreover, educating and disseminating the culture of child rights does not only entail knowledge of the legal texts concerning this demographic. Rather, it involves reshaping the societal mindset towards rights, urging individuals to regulate their behaviors and acquire skills to actively protect children's rights. This ensures a strategy for change towards greater implementation and respect for children's rights in society across all segments.[43]

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Second section: Importance of Spreading Awareness and Culture of Child Rights:

The importance of spreading awareness and the culture of child rights is evident through the following:

– Building a societal culture of child rights, fostering the complete development of children's personalities, and ensuring an improvement in their quality of life.[44]

– Enhancing the awareness of all societal segments about children's rights and empowering them to eliminate various social, economic, cultural, and political causes of child neglect and abuse.[45]

– Instilling values and attitudes in individuals within society that prioritize respect for children, promote their ownership, and allow them to voice their opinions on decisions that affect them.[46]

– Spreading awareness of child rights enables children to speak more about their concerns, feelings of insecurity, or lodge complaints, thereby enhancing child safety.[47]

Second requirement: Civil Society Activities in Promoting Child Rights Awareness and Culture under the Supervision of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood.

The coordinated efforts between civil society and the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood must encompass an understanding of the causes and types of child abuse, as well as the rights this demographic should enjoy. In this context, the National Commissioner for Child Rights Promotion, Meriam Chorfi, announced the establishment of a civil society network comprising representatives from 30 national and local associations active in the field of childhood. She highlighted the significant role this network plays in fieldwork, particularly in child welfare, by promoting a culture of child rights awareness among various societal segments.[48]

In accordance with Article 13 of Law 15-12, the National Commissioner for Child Protection works to enhance civil society participation in monitoring and protecting child rights, including the dissemination of awareness and education about these rights. It is also the responsibility of the Commissioner to oversee and encourage awareness-raising activities. Noteworthy activities undertaken by civil

society under the supervision and encouragement of the National Commissioner for Child Protection include:

– Awareness programs conducted by civil society target all members of society regardless of their differences in educational levels or social status. These programs address child care issues and various types of abuse, highlighting their psychological effects on children. Moreover, awareness programs extend beyond mere sensitization and knowledge of child protection requirements to shaping public opinion, ensuring a form of popular scrutiny of political programs concerning children or even monitoring the behaviors of other individuals in society.[49]

– Through the dissemination of awareness and culture of child rights, civil society has participated in several training and capacity-building sessions on areas related to child protection and promotion organized under the Committee's supervision[50]. These institutions aim to transfer this knowledge to various members of society. Their role extends beyond mere lecturing or imparting knowledge; they engage in dialogue to raise awareness of child rights interactively, addressing challenges and proposing solutions to change individuals' mindsets towards better handling of children according to their circumstances and levels.[51]

– Training trainers, activists, and specialists in the fields of child care and culture, and involving them in practical fields, enable individuals to benefit from their experiences and skills. They rely on them to provide consultation and clarify concepts related to child rights and methods of dealing with this demographic and other activities that support child rights.[52]

– Integrating the identification of all economic and cultural causes of violence against children into awareness and education programs mobilizes efforts and organizes them to ensure the eradication of the main causes of this violence and continuous interaction in reality.[53]

– Civil society organizations disseminate specialized awareness programs tailored to specific groups or specific institutions, considering their nature of work, such as emergency childcare centers or child care centers. Educating and training those in charge of these institutions makes a difference in child protection and empowerment, increasing the child's self-confidence.[54]

Third requirement: Civil Society and the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood in Promoting Child Rights Awareness.

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Civil society, in collaboration with the National Committee, relies on two fundamental means in their educational role regarding child rights. The first means is through direct communication, while the second means involves the utilization of media. This is elaborated upon as follows:

First section: Awareness dissemination of child rights through direct communication:

The National Commissioner for Child Rights Protection works to enhance the participation of civil society organizations in spreading awareness and culture of child rights within the community. Civil society engages in direct communication with various segments of society through the following methods:

Firstly: Organizing seminars and lectures to promote child rights:

Seminars, gatherings, and lectures are among the most important means of raising awareness utilized by civil society in the field of child rights promotion and protection. These forums are used to educate citizens about the necessity of advocating for the care and protection of this vulnerable demographic[55]. These lectures aim to mobilize public opinion about the seriousness of the violations perpetrated against children, whether from a psychological or societal perspective. Often, these gatherings yield positive results that contribute to strengthening efforts aimed at advancing and enhancing child rights.[56]

Sometimes, these seminars take on a specialized character by targeting various social actors to raise their awareness and consciousness of child rights and the need for their promotion.

Secondly: Issuing publications on child rights:

Civil society institutions produce teaching materials, publications, and posters that support educational and awareness-raising efforts related to child rights. Most civil society institutions are equipped with specialized mechanisms for teaching child rights, whether by enriching libraries with scholarly sources on the subject or by incorporating childhood-related vocabulary and concepts into educational curricula.[57]

Second section: Awareness dissemination of child rights through media and communication channels:

The National Commissioner for Child Protection works on awareness-raising activities in coordination with civil society through the utilization of media and

communication channels, as stipulated in Article 13 of Law 12-15. Media outlets are crucial aspects of exercising freedom of expression and opinion and are among the most important means of raising awareness, given their significant impact on public opinion. They draw attention to important issues in general and child abuse in particular.[58]

Media outlets serve as an ideal tool through which civil society endeavors to inform the public about all developments concerning child rights. Furthermore, they are effective in addressing individuals and sensitizing them to violence against children. The use of media is not limited to traditional visual, auditory, and written media but extends to the digital realm, which has become a distinguished media space that significantly influences collective awareness[59]. Media outlets fulfill their educational role through the following:

– Supporting child rights by providing a simple legal and rights-based culture to all members of society, thereby bringing rights-based concepts closer to citizens to make them more aware of child rights.[60]

– Revealing cases of child abuse and various crimes committed against them, while elucidating the most important measures to combat these acts. They also work to shape public opinion in support of child rights and exert pressure on relevant authorities to employ greater and more effective means to protect children.[61]

– Participating in directing the majority of public opinion in favor of children's issues, whether concerning laws protecting children or concerning various means, institutions, and centers dedicated to child care. This is aimed at developing policies that are more conducive to better childcare.[62]

In conclusion, civil society serves as a link between societal groups and the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood. It contributes, through various means, to the care and promotion of child rights.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Algerian legislature has taken a positive step in the field of child protection by enacting specific laws for childhood and establishing the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood. This committee plays a coordinating role with civil society institutions, which have a strong societal influence in supporting childhood, whether in protection or

prevention. Through studying this role, we have arrived at some results and proposals summarized as follows:

Results:

– The protective role of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood complements various social actors, especially civil society. This integration and coordination allow for broader coverage of various types of child abuse and ensure ongoing protection or oversight, particularly for children who may be more vulnerable to violence.

– Civil society, supported by the National Committee, contributes significantly and effectively to child protection by mobilizing various activists in the field of child rights, as well as psychological and social specialists. It also works to uncover facts related to all acts of child abuse through fieldwork and raises these facts to the National Committee through notifications for action.

– Civil society contributes to the oversight exercised by the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood through the reports prepared by the committee, which are enriched by civil society's periodic reports submitted to the committee. These reports are based on its fieldwork and the realities it reveals.

– The National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood, in collaboration with civil society, works within a network to dedicate efforts to prevention. This is done through raising awareness of the importance of childhood and its rights, relying on various means, whether through media or fieldwork. This work contributes to building an aware society and public opinion supportive of child rights, making societal behaviors more supportive of childhood.

Proposals:

– Encourage more civil society institutions to join the rights network that the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood deals with. This supports the activities of this committee and contributes to greater protection for children.

– Provide greater means for civil society and the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood to support their oversight and awareness-raising work while adopting political systems that support them by

promoting dialogue, establishing transparency, and accountability to increase effectiveness in child protection.

– Dedicate centers for the development, empowerment, and rehabilitation of abused children to rebuild their confidence, develop their capabilities, and open up opportunities for their integration into society.

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Footnotes:

[1] Nahed Abdel Wahab Mohamed Sadiq et al., "Children's Rights in Islam," Academic Library, Egypt, 2010, p. 26.

[2] Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 24/25 of November 20, 1989, with critics beginning on September 2, 1990.

[3] Article 2 of Law 15-12, dated 28 Ramadan 1436 corresponding to July 15, 2015, concerning child protection.

[4] Amin Soueigat, "Social Protection of Children in Algeria Between Reality and Hope," Al-Bahith Journal of Social Sciences, issued by the University of Kasdi Merbah Ouargla, Issue 33, March 2018, p. 308.

[5] Child abuse, (Child Abuse) (http://wikipedia.org/wiki.22/11/2019 Accessed on 22/11/2019.

[6] Refer to Article 2 of Law 15-12, supra.

[7] Abdel Halim Ben Mechri, "At-Risk Children: Verbal Indicators on the Scale of Preventive Policy," in: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference, Legal Protection of Children in the Maghreb Countries, University of El Hadj Lakhdar, El Oued, March 13-14, 2017, p. 101.

[8] Refer to Article 2 of Law 15-12. It is noted that this article did not specify these cases exhaustively but by way of example, and we have focused on the most important.

[9] Refer to Executive Decree No. 16-334 dated December 19, 2016, concerning the establishment of the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood.

[10] In this regard, Mrs. Meriem Chorfi was appointed as the national commissioner for child protection. She has held several positions related to childhood, starting her professional career as a juvenile judge, then as a deputy director for the protection of juveniles and vulnerable groups at the General Directorate of Prison Administration, and as a professor at the Higher School of Judiciary. She was also a member of the ministerial committee that prepared the Child Protection Law (see: Hassiba Cherron and Fatima Kefaf, "The Protective Role of the National Authority for the Protection and Promotion of Childhood," Annals of the University of Algiers 1, issued by the University of Algiers 1, No. 32, Part II, June 2018, p. 550).

[11] Ibid., p. 543.

[12] Refer to Article 13 of Law 15-12, supra.

[13] Verena Beittinger-Lee, "(UN) Civil Society and Political Change in Indonesia," Routledge, London and New York, 2009; p. 13.

[14] Gideon Baker, "Civil Society and Democratic Theory," Routledge, London and New York, 2002, p. 147.

[15] Fareh Masri, "Modernity in the View of Mohammed Arkoun: An Initial Interview," 1st ed., Arab Scientific Publishers, Beirut, p. 148.

[16] Gideon Barker, Op. Cit., p. 148.

[17] Ahmed Al-Mufti, "Good Governance in the International Experience," Intellectual Works Authority, Khartoum, 2006, p. 35.

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[23] Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[24] Refer to Article 19 of Law 15-12, supra.

[25] UNICEF Research Office, "Report on Children's Rights Advocacy," UNICEF, Italy, 2012, p. 10.

[26] - Israa Alaa Al-Din Nuri, "The Role of Civil Society Institutions in Combating Administrative Corruption," International Political Journal, issued by the Arab Democratic Center, No. 15, 2010, p. 978.

[27] - Kareem Barkat, "Contribution of Civil Society in Protecting Human Rights" (Master's Thesis), University of Boumerdes, 2004-2005, p. 66.

[28] Refer to Article 15 of Law 15-12, supra.

[29] Refer to Article 19 of Executive Decree 16-334, supra.

[30] Amer Ayash Abd and Adib Muhammad Jasim, Ibid., p. 34.

[31] - Kareem Barkat, op. cit., p. 66.

[32] - Regarding the Open Middle Services and their role in investigation and protection, Law 15-12 stipulates in its second section related to social protection at the local level. These services are considered one of four specialized centers for child protection under the auspices of the Ministry of National Solidarity. They are established based on the interest of each province, composed of specialized employees, caregivers, social assistants, psychologists, social workers, and legal experts. These services monitor the situation of abused children by moving to their location, listening to them, and to their legal representatives (see Articles 21 to 29 of Law 15-12).

[33] Article 16 of Law 15-12, op. cit.

[34] Rachid Ouchao, "The Role of Social Protection Bodies for Childhood in Algeria under Law No. 15-12," in: The Sixth International Conference entitled Legal Protection of the Child in the Maghreb Countries, University of Shahid Hama Lakhdar, Ouargla, March 13-14, 2017, p. 115.

[35] See Articles 17 and 18 of Law 15-12, op. cit.

[36] Kareem Barkat, op. cit., p. 67.

[37] Aamer Ayyash Abd and Adeeb Muhammad Jasim, op. cit., p. 30.

[38] Refer to Article 13 of Law 15-12, op. cit.

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[50] "Installation of the Civil Society Network for the Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights," the aforementioned website.
[51] Dr. J. Ravindran, op. cit., p. 401.
[52] Amer Ayyash Abd and Adeeb Muhammad Jasim, op. cit., p. 40.
[53] Dr. J. Ravindran, op. cit., p. 403.
[54] Amal Yaeesh Tamam, op. cit., pp. 67-68.
[55] Kareem Barkat, op. cit., p. 40.
[56] Amer Ayyash Abd and Adeeb Muhammad Jasim, op. cit., p. 40.
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