FINAL ADOPTED RECOMMENDATIONS

OF

THE 7th SAIEVAC GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
(SGBM)

14 May 2018
Royal Convention Centre, Thimphu, Bhutan

Organized by the SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat
Supported by the Ford Foundation and UNFPA APRO
Hosted by the National Commission for Women and Children
Royal Government of Bhutan
Draft Recommendations of The 7th SAIEVAC Governing Board Meeting (SGBM)

A. Introduction:

The 7th Governing Board Meeting (GBM) of SAIEVAC was held on 14 May 2018 in Thimphu, hosted by the National Commission for Women and Children, Royal Government of Bhutan. The meeting was organized by the SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat with support from the Ford Foundation, UNFPA and other Key Partners.

All the Governing Board Members except for India attended the GBM. However, the SRS reported to the 7th GBM that it received a ‘Briefing Note’ from the Governing Board Member, India, expressing support to the work on containing the ill practice of child marriage and menace of Child Sexual Abuse in the region through legal, policy and plan interventions and extended its whole hearted cooperation to SAIEVAC for the purpose.

B. Welcome Remarks:

Ms. Kunzang Lhamu, Chairperson of the GBM expressed a very hearty welcome to all the GB Members. She also provided a brief overview of the recommendations of the 6th Governing Board Meeting and the 4th Ministerial Meeting and said that 12 substantive decisions and recommendation were adopted during these two meetings.

She also briefed the Meeting on the Objectives of the 7th GMB:

1. To review progress and challenges of the decisions of the 6th SGBM and the 4th SAIEVAC Ministerial Meeting (SMM);
2. To consider the Pre-technical Events outcomes of the Review of the NHRI and RAP on Child Marriage;
3. To assess the progress of the drafting of the Regional Strategy on Child Sexual Abuse, Exploitation and Online Safety and appropriate institutional framework (National and Regional) for its implementation;
4. To review existing status, challenges and way forward for NACG – Nationally and Regionally;
5. To discuss the milestones for finalization of the 2nd Five Year Work Plan (FYP) and decide the time and venue for the 8th GBM and the 5th SMM

She also provided a brief overview of the 8th Cross Regional Meeting and reiterated the importance of such a forum in moving the children’s agenda through Cross Regional solidarity and sharing.

She also informed the meeting on the Pre-Technical Sessions on the ‘Follow Up Meeting of the Regional Consultation to Accelerate Efforts to End Child Marriage in South Asia in partnership with National Human Rights Institutions’ and ‘the Review of Regional Action Plan on Child Marriage’ and said that this will be further elaborated under the relevant agenda items.

The Director General (DG) of SAIEVAC thanked the GB Chair for her remarks and extended his welcome to all GB Members. He informed the GB Members that the 7th Governing Board Meeting is devoted to providing updates and appraisal of the progress on the work undertaken by SAIEVAC in taking forward the decisions of the 6th GBM and the 4th SMM.
C. Review and adoption of the Agenda for the 7th GBM

The DG SAIEVAC presented the Agenda for review which was adopted without any changes.

D. Review of the Recommendations of the 6th GBM, Status and Further Course of Action

1. The DG presented the Follow Up Report (FUR) of the Recommendations of the 6th GBM. The GBM noted that the 6th GBM Report was presented to the 4th SMM and that significant efforts have been invested in following up on the recommendations.

While considering the FUR, the GBM further directed the SRS to note the following:

a) Given the situation related to SDF project closures, the meeting decided that henceforth this should be a bilateral process and that there is no further merit to table this to the Governing Board. However, the Board directed the DG SAIEVAC to link with SDF to explore opportunities to expedite the Project Closure process.

b) On the SAIEVAC Interfaith Platform, the Board directed the SRS to ensure that proper considerations be made in terms of how religious and faith leaders are involved taking into consideration the sensitivities associated.

While noting the ongoing efforts to move this process forward, the GB directed the SRS to report the progress of this initiative to the 8th Governing Board Meeting.

c) The GBM noted that the ‘Regional Consultation on Child Labour with Focus on the Brick Kiln Industry’ held in Pokhara, Nepal in January 2017’ was successfully held which resulted in the adoption of the Pokhara Joint Outcome Statement. The Meeting also noted that follow up actions were taken in India, Pakistan and Nepal.

The GBM after considering the above reports, directed the SRS to continue to expand the partnership of the Brick Kiln Industry focusing on Child Labour and correlated issues of environment and animal welfare using the Pokhara Joint Outcome Statement and provide periodic progress reports.

E. Review of the Recommendations of the 4th SAIEVAC Ministerial Meeting

1. The DG presented the Follow Up Report on the recommendations of the 4th SAIEVAC Ministerial Meeting. The 7th GBM considering the report, further directed the SRS to address the following areas:

a) The SRS to continue to pursue technical and financial support by following up on the institutional funding proposal with Member States and partners.

b) The GBM also endorsed to continue to make efforts to develop a compendium of Foster Care for compilation into a compendium of laws that can be used for cross border
learning and sharing and agreed that member states will share the relevant information by 31st May except for Maldives who will share by 15th June.

The compendium will be refined by the SRS and shared with all member states and this will be further reviewed in the 8th GBM.

2. The GBM noting that the 3rd TRM on RIMS will be held in India to take forward the recommendations of the 6th GBM and 4th Ministerial Meeting and the outcome will be presented to the subsequent relevant events for further consideration. The GBM further directed the SRS to pursue the operationalization of the regional trafficking project with a comprehensive plan.

3. On discussions pertaining to the possibility of setting/linking up existing Forensic Laboratory for women and children, the GBM noted the submission of the DG that the Government of India (GoI) has expressed their commitment to the decisions of the 4th SMM including this, The GBM on further discussions endorsed that:

   a) The Bangladesh mechanism will develop a concept note taking into consideration the need for regional cooperation and share with the SRS and the Pakistan mechanisms (Ministry of Human Rights) for inclusion in the agenda of the SAARC Technical Committee on Women, Youth and Children which will be hosted by the Government of Pakistan in July 2018.

   b) Further, the Government of Pakistan will also ensure that a presentation on Forensic/DNA profiling will be made in the same event to move the agenda forward.

F. On the appraisal on the Follow Up Meeting of the Regional Consultation to Accelerate Efforts to End Child Marriage in South Asia in partnership with the National Human Rights Institutions and Key Regional Partners held on the 12th May 2018, the Board endorsed that:

   a) The country status report and the Country Strategic Actions presented by the Member States will be compiled, refined and shared by the SRS with all the participants for further inputs on timeframe and lead agency; and

   b) The Country Strategic Actions will form part of the Regional Action Plan on Ending Child Marriage and will form the basis for ongoing partnership and reviews of progress for implementation of the RAP.

G. On the appraisal of ‘The Review of the Regional Action Plan (RAP) on Ending Child Marriage in South Asia: 2015-2018’ held on 13th May 2018, the GBM endorsed that:

   a) The SRS will compile all the comments provided by the group exercises and share a refined version of the RAP to all participants with a timeline to revert back with any additional comments. Following this the SRS will share the final version of the RAP to all;

   b) The GBM further reiterated that given that the RAP is already endorsed plan, the reviewed and refined RAP should also be considered approved in principle.
However, the SRS will table the RAP for further consideration of the 8th GBM as and when it is hosted.

H. **Considering the progress review of the Draft Regional Strategy on Child Sexual Abuse, Exploitation and Online Safety (CSAE&OS) and appropriate institutional frameworks (National and Regional) for its implementation**, the GBM endorsed the following:

a) The Draft Regional Strategy to be shared with all the Member States in preparation for the proposed Regional Validation Workshop which will be held in Colombo in August 2018;

b) All Member States to share a short write up with the SRS outlining the current/existing legal and policy frameworks or plans for legal or policy initiatives pertaining to CSAE&OS by 31st May 2018.

c) The GBM also endorsed the development of appropriate institutional frameworks at National and Regional level and a comprehensive proposal on this will be tabled during the Regional Validation Workshop in August 2018 for review and inputs. The final proposal will be tabled to the 8th GBM for review and endorsement.

I. **Taking into consideration the submission of the DG on the Financial Rules and Regulations, Administrative Management of the SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat including the expanded annexures of Financial Policy, Human Resource Policy and Administrative Policy, Risk Matrix and the critical need to strengthen the institutional capacity as well as Internal Control systems**, the GBM agreed that:

a) The tabled documents are crucial steps forward and therefore endorses them. However the GBM also agreed that:

- Additional inputs if any will be provided by the Member States through relevant experts; and
- The final refined version will be tabled to the 8th GBM for further consideration if any.

J. **Considering the status, challenges and way forward for NACG – National and Regional, and taking into perspective the FUR actions presented as part of the review of recommendations of the 6th GBM and the 4th SMM**, the GBM endorsed that:

a) The NACGs are important CSO responses to move the SAIEVAC mission forward and recommended that the SRS and the Government Mechanisms continue to explore opportunities to strengthen the platform;

b) The NACGs must ensure that they maintain regular and transparent interfaces with the Government mechanisms and ensure that their work is in harmony with the National and Regional VaC priorities;

c) The NACGs also develop proper guidelines for accessing institutional support that has implication on other NACGs besides a guideline that clearly defines the procedures/mechanism for collaboration with Government mechanisms;

d) The GBM also endorsed that the CSO Project currently under the custody of NACG Nepal will ensure that the products of the Phase I (Children’s Report, Review of the
Report on assessing the SAARC Convention on Trafficking etc) are properly mainstreamed within the SAIEVAC mechanism by following proper procedures;

e) It was also endorsed that the proposed SAIEVAC logo under review will now be delegated to the NACGs to ensure that there is a common identity for the NACGs; and

f) The SRS to make efforts to convene the 5th NACG Regional Consultation at the earliest feasible time to take stock of the current status of the NACGs and define a long term plan that ensures proper and sustainable institutionalization of the NACGs.

K. The GBM considering the appraisal on the Ford Foundation Project ‘Strengthening multi-sectoral and convergent approach in South Asia to address child marriage with evidence building in Nepal and India’, endorsed that:

a) The learnings/outputs of the project will be disseminated appropriately both at national and regional levels; and

b) The SRS will continue to explore other sources of funds to replicate similar strategies in other Member States.

L. The GBM endorsed the Milestones/Timelines for the 2nd Five Year Work Plan presented by the DG with the guidance that where practical and possible, considerations to be made to shorten the time frame/accelerate the process.

M. The GBM considering the submission on the Monitoring Framework for thematic areas of the FYP and Child Marriage endorsed that:

a) The Member States will review and provide inputs to strengthen the drafts; and

b) The final drafts of the frameworks will be tabled to the 8th GBM for consideration and endorsement.

N. The GBM endorsed the following major Upcoming Regional Events:

a) 3rd Technical Review Meeting on RIMS (Repatriation Information Management System): 12-13 June 2018, India;

b) Regional Validation Workshop on the Regional Strategy of CSAE&OS and 3rd Regional Convening on Child Marriage: 6 – 10 August 2018: Colombo. The 2 events will be convened back to back in order to ensure optimal utilization of resources.

c) Regional POCSO Seminar – End October 2018 (?), India

O. With regard to the hosting of the 8th GBM, the meeting after considering various options particularly due to the fact that most Member States are undergoing elections towards the end of the year, endorsed that the 8th GBM could be held back to back with the Regional Validation Workshop in Colombo or in Islamabad towards end of January 2019.

However, the DG will initiate bilateral discussions with the respective Member States to finalize the venue and time, and circulate the information.

P. The 8th GBM welcomed the offer of the Government of Pakistan to host the 5th SMM.
Q. The Review and Adoption of the Recommendations of the 7th SGBM will be considered as follows:

a) Hard copies and soft of the draft Recommendations shared with the GB Members on the same evening of the GB Meeting;

b) The GB Members will provide their comments by close of business of 21st May and thereafter the SRS will finalize the Recommendations and share with the Hon’ble Members by the 25th of May as the Final Adopted Recommendations