Introduction

National Action and Coordinating Group (NACG-Nepal) is a part of South Asian civil society initiative by SAIEVAC, an apex body of the SAARC to end violence against children in South Asia. It was established in Nepal in 2010 being comprised of three prominent child rights networks, Consortium of Organizations Working for Child Participation (Consortium-Nepal), Child Care Home Network Nepal (CNET Nepal) and National Coalition for Children as Zones of Peace and Child Protection (CZOPP). In 2012, six more networks came join the group. They are: Alliance Against Trafficking in Women and Children in Nepal (AATWIN), CRC Committee, HRTMCC, Inclusive Education Forum Nepal (IEF Nepal), National Child Protection Alliance (NCPA), National Alliance of Organizations for Street Children (NAOSC), National Alliance of Child Rights Organizations (NACRO), Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW).

It closely works with SAIEVAC national coordinator, the ministry of women, children and Social welfare (MoWCSW). UN agencies and eternal development partners i.e. Plan International, Save the Children and World Vision are extending their support as the observer members.

Background

The “South Asia Coordinating Group against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Women in South Asia” was established in March 2004 to work towards the Mid-term Review of the Yokohama Global Commitments on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

After the Regional Consultation on Violence against Children held in May 2005, Islamabad, Pakistan, the group was renamed as “South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Women and Children (SACG)” in its meeting in June 2005 to respond to a broadened scope of issues. It was further proposed that women and children will be included within the title and scope of the Group.

Further, in the SACG Roundtable meeting in September 2009, SACG members recommended that: “Regional interagency cooperation in South Asia be reproduced at the national level in each SAARC country and promote coordination and a comprehensive mapping on the child protection work of all agencies to assess synergies, promote joint initiatives and complementarity.”

SACG is composed of regional representatives from UN agencies and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) working in South Asia. In addition, a number of organizations have Observer Status. UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia is the Chair of the SACG and Plan-International the Co-Chair for 2011-2012.

In 2010, SACG has supported the strengthening of government cooperation in the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC), which has a Governing Board consisting of representatives from Member States (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), civil society and children, SACG Chair, a Secretariat and a Five Year Work Plan.

Vision

NACG-Nepal envisions all children throughout South Asia are enjoying an environment free from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and discrimination.

Mission

NACG-Nepal aims to prevent and respond to all forms of neglect, abuse, exploitation and violence against children through a comprehensive child protection system at the regional and national level where governments, civil society and children are empowered to share experience, formalize linkages and reinforce cooperation to end violence against children.

Objective

The overall objective of NACG-Nepal is to strengthen inter-agency work including with government, stakeholders and children groups to end violence against children.

Strategies

1. Support and Collaborate with the SAIEVAC Governing Board Members/Coordinator, and National SAIEVAC Mechanisms
2. Support the implementation of the SAIEVAC Work plan
3. Networking and capacity building
4. Advocacy on ending violence at the national level and in South Asia
5. Building knowledge base on violence issues
6. Strengthening national monitoring function on violence issues
7. Institutionalizing child participation at National Level

Thematic Areas for Advocacies:

Child Marriage

Early marriage is rampant in South Asia with 48 percent of young women reporting being married before the age of 16. Early marriage usually occurs because of poverty and the lack of economic opportunities for girls in rural areas. Girls are either seen as an economic burden or valued as capital for their exchange value in terms of goods, money or livestock. Early marriage may also be seen as a way of protecting young girls and ensuring their security.

Trafficking

The criminal and clandestine nature of trafficking makes it difficult to gather reliable data but child trafficking is wide spread in South Asia, and includes both internal trafficking and trafficking across international borders. Victims of trafficking end up in various forms of abuse and human rights violations including sexual and economic exploitation, i.e. doing domestic work, working in factories, on the streets, or in other forms of hazardous labor that come in the way of the children’s enjoyment of rights and fundamental freedoms.
Corporal Punishment

Violent punishment of children is now recognized as a human rights violation. The Committee on the Rights of the Child and other human rights Treaty Bodies systematically recommend prohibition of corporal punishment and other humiliating forms of punishment in all settings including the home/family. Explicit prohibition was also recommended by the UNSG’s Study into VAC. South Asian States committed to prohibiting all corporal punishment following the Study’s 2005 regional consultation and the follow-up meeting in 2006. Corporal punishment is widely practiced at home and in schools, other institutions and penal systems for young people, as well as in situations of child labor.

Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

The most hidden and underreported form of violence against children and youth is sexual abuse. Sexual abuse affects both boys and girls and often happens within the family, in schools and the community, in the majority of cases (outside armed conflict zones) perpetrated by someone familiar to the child. Additionally, commercial sexual exploitation of children continues to be one of the most pervasive violations of children's rights in South Asia and includes child abuse through child prostitution, sex tourism, child pornography, internet pornography and trafficking. Recent studies provide evidence of sexual exploitation of boys to a much larger extent than previously recognized. The victims of exploitation and abuse are also at high risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Child Labor

In South Asia, around 44 million or 13% of all children are involved in child labour. Economic exploitation is seen as one of the most common forms of violence in the region. Children often work long hours with little or no pay. There is a great deal of commonality across the South Asian countries in the forms of child labour, most notably in the areas of children in hazardous child labour, child domestic labour, children in export oriented industries, child bonded labour particularly in agriculture, and child labour in the informal economy, particularly in urban areas.

NACG-Nepal Progress Update:

National Technical Consultations on Stepping up Protection of Children with Disabilities in South Asia

The objective of the consultation was to protect the children with disabilities (CWDs), related to Child Rights, UN Conventions on Child Rights and coordination with institutions to strengthen the rights of the children with disabilities.

Theme of the consultation is to discuss on issues related to children with disabilities and their concerns and to be addressed in the two day national consultation workshop and particularly on how to step up protection for these children in Nepal. The workshop outcomes were presented at South Asia SAARC meeting in Sri Lanka on 3-4 December 2014

Workshop on SAIEVAC Academic

Mr. Noot Jung Shah from the NACG-Nepal secretariat participated the 2nd Regional Consultation on the Human Resources Development Strategy on Child Protection and Ending Violence against Children (SAIEVAC Academy) which was held on 24-26 December 2014 in Pokhara, Nepal.

Training to Youth and Child Club Members on Child Right and Child Protection

Two days long training was organized on 29a - 30s. December, 2014 targeting youth and Children at Bhaktapur. Training was conducted to youths and children separately and trained on child right, child protection focusing on corporal punishment.

Interaction Program on NACG Nepal: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

NACG-Nepal has organized the interaction program on 26a. March, 2015 at Indreni Complex, Kathmandu, Nepal. The program was focused on NACG-Nepal Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. There were 17 participants from NACG-Nepal's member organization and INGO's representative. The program was chaired by Mr. Kumar Bhattrai Chair of NACG-Nepal. Interaction program was focused to explore the ways to NACG-Nepal in coming days. Interaction program shed light on the activities carried out till the date in coordination with SAIEVAC and MoWCSW.