REPORT OF THE CONSULTATION ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN (SAIEVAC ACADEMY)

Funded by the SAARC Development Fund (SDF)
Organized by the SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat, Kathmandu, Nepal
Hosted by the National Commission for Women and Children, Royal Government of Bhutan
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Executive Summary

A. Brief Background

As highlighted in the Concept Note, the creation and establishment of a new institutional body to provide practical support, guidance and to further evolve child protection training and capacity initiatives across the region continues to be an important priority for SAIEVAC. Complementing the on-going work of the SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat (SRS) and its well-established network of partners, the proposed SAIEVAC Academy would further promote best practices in child protection, enhance linkages for learning, act as a conduit for cross-country exchange of successful strategies and also further strengthen use of an evidence-based based approach and facilitation of research work on eliminating violence against children in the region.

In support of this, the SAIEVAC Secretariat organized a 3-day Regional Consultation on Human Resource Development Strategy (SAIEVAC Academy) from the 26th to 28th June 2014 in Thimphu, Bhutan. A core group of 21 experts (academicians, HR professionals, trainers and child rights advocates from government, universities and academic institutes, civil society and other international agencies) from eight countries - including Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan, Thailand and the United Kingdom - gathered together to review preliminary plans, support completion of both short and medium term objectives and forge partnerships with regional academic institutes, as part of the process. Work included identification of existing resources (both human and material) through mapping of training and academic courses on child protection dimensions as well as identification of skilled professionals and trainers and compilation of an initial “Experts List” for future use. As a continuation to the work initiated at this consultation, a second meeting – including wider representation from the governments, NACGs, additional potential partners and other human resource experts - will also take place towards the end of the year. The venue and date will be confirmed in consultation with interested Member States.

Moderated by Dr. Rinchen Chophel, Director General, SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat, the Consultation was hosted by the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), Royal Government of Bhutan and funding support provided by the SAARC Development Fund (SDF). The event also included two child participants from Bhutan as active observers.

B. Key Points from the Working Sessions and Discussion

Presentations and briefings were provided from institutions / organizations across the region and from Thailand as well which described successful strategies, capacity
building and academic courses at varying levels aiming to build skills for multiple stakeholders and participant groups. These existing opportunities helped to create a foundation for both the mapping exercise and identification of regional experts who will further contribute towards and provide direct support to the planned SAIEVAC Academy and those accessing services from the wider network.

**Key issues noted in discussion following the presentations included the following:**

- Need to translate from training to actual application or practice (along with activating this) and assessment of impact on policy change, progress or development.

- Between skills and standards, there is also a wide gap. As part of SAIEVAC’s efforts how can we ensure that our planned center of excellence addresses both?

- There must also be distinction between building competencies of individuals and the building of capacities for organizations.

- In addition, it was noted that violence against children is a silent emergency and there is need to include / infuse this definition into the SAIEVAC Academy and that the issue isn’t just about the law but about justice.

- The aims of the Academy will address a variety of things: “competence” – not quite enough, “capacity building” – not just this alone and “credibility” also very important – all of these dimensions must be considered.

- It was also emphasized that a great deal of time and resources are spent on training and “learning” but how to ensure that these efforts do impact on the performance or attitudes of people and the results of organizations and that follow-up strategies and approaches can also be included (such as continued learning, role as mentors and accreditation through practice and use) – in order to extend both learning and continued participation.

**C. Mapping Exercise:**

A detailed mapping exercise related to opportunities and potential resources for both academic and other level training courses across the region was also completed by participants, which will be further developed for finalization during the next Consultation.
As highlighted by Dr. Chophel, the proposed Institutional Framework for the Academy as outlined in the Concept Note should consider not only just looking at the courses required but also the development of a comprehensive package through a consultative process. An attempt to this effect is being made through the Joint Consultative Forum and Strategy Development. He also stressed the “dual scope” purpose which the Academy will hopefully fulfill by serving as a “Regional Resource Hub” providing access to multiple opportunities in the region while at the same time functioning as a knowledge pool for South Asia and beyond and, in the long run, become a “Center of Excellence” established in partnership with regional academic institutes.

D. Roster of Experts and Trainers:

The group then compiled a roster of experts and trainers related to various dimensions of child protection work for further use and sharing across the network and which will also be further evolved with review and additional input.

E. Agreed Follow-Up Action Points from the Meeting for the participants:

1. As the preliminary mapping of training opportunities / course has been completed, within two weeks the SRS will share the mapping results with all so that further revisions or additional inputs can be added and returned to the Secretariat.

2. The SRS will also distribute – as agreed on the first day of the meeting – the list of topics / dimensions to the NACG Chairs, SAIEVAC Coordinators and other partners and ask them to prioritize (top ten) what is most important to them as part of a more in-depth needs assessment (and results would also be shared with this group).

3. The SRS will also put together a report on the mapping exercise and the prioritized areas and results of the needs assessment which will help in developing a clear understanding of opportunities and needs for all and based on this, the next consultation will be arranged and an action plan completed.

F. The Way Forward – the Next Steps

In closing the meeting, the following next steps were also agreed.

1. The SRS will send out an Executive Summary as soon as possible along with the ‘Mapping Framework’ and ‘List of Experts’ for additional input.
2. **Need for formal contact points** – it was agreed that participants would serve as the formal link or contact point for sharing information and following up with respective universities or institutes or agencies.

3. The SRS will also ensure that the outcome of the Consultation will be provided to the SAARC Secretariat along with the summary report so that the SAARC Secretariat is also aware with the ongoing progress of the SAIEVAC Academy.

4. **For the next consultative meeting**, it was agreed that efforts will be made to include participation of key HR Experts/institutions from Member States who could not participate in this meeting. The group also discussed the possibility of one of the universities hosting the next consultation and requested those attending to consider this and that the SRS would follow-up through bilateral discussions and announce the venue in due course of time.

5. **Timetable for the next meeting**: The group discussed consideration of the end of October or early November or mid to end December as possibilities. However the date and location will be finalized through bilateral consultations and announced in due course of time.
Day 1 - Thursday, 26 June 2014

A. Opening Session

a. Introductory Remarks by the Director General, SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat

The Director General in his address says that the main purpose of the Consultation is to bring together a core group of experts in Bhutan to review the Draft Concept Paper on SAIEVAC Academy which will be a resource for child rights and child protection training for all and also create an information management system which can generate evidence around SAIEVAC’s work while also supporting our activities and strategies.

The Consultation’s aim is to also explore how we can interface and follow up on the further development of this idea. The expectation is also that ultimately the HR Core Group which represents the supply side, as well as representatives from each country that represent the demand side, will come together for a second round of discussion to expand on the discussions we hope to have in this consultation.

He also said that based on these two meetings, the SRS hopes that by 2015, we can see if a north-south arrangement can be established to support a set of training programs and courses which is accessible to anyone and serve not only as a platform for child rights actors in SA but also be one that can include global actors and include their engagement/participation here in South Asia.

He also informed the participants that the Consultation is being organized by funding support from the SAARC Development Fund. He also thanked the participants who are participating at their own cost to contribute to the larger objective of furthering child rights in South Asia.

b. Introduction of the Delegates

The Director General took the privilege to introduce the key officials and the Child Participants present for the Consultation.
Mr. Hassan Shifau, Special Invitee and the Permanent Secretary of the MOFA, Government of Maldives who has been a main supporter/architect of SAIEVAC during the process of its establishment and as we moved forward over the years.

Ms. Phintsho Choeden, Director General of the NCWC, the National Machinery for Women and Children in Bhutan. She is the Governing Board Member of SAIEVAC for Bhutan.

The two child participants - Ms. Dorji Lham and Master Dorji Youten who will observe the proceedings of the Consultation.

Thereafter the Participants and the Secretariat introduced themselves to the larger group.

c. Opening Remarks by Ms. Phintsho Choeden, Director General, NCWC and GB Member, SAIEVAC Bhutan

She said that it was an honor and privilege to welcome members of this distinguished group compromised of many distinguished academicians and Human Resource personnel who will be able to contribute to this new initiative. She said that the NCWC considers this a matter of pride and satisfaction to be able to host an event like this in Bhutan – and for Bhutan, we have always placed children in the center of development.

She said that SAIEVAC has made immense progress within the short time of establishment and it is now a well-know entity.

The idea of the SAIEVAC Academy she said emerged as an idea to address the gaps and need across the region. The Concept Paper includes a vision that “all children across SA enjoy their right to enjoy freedom of violence and to be protected” and Academy objectives include the opportunity to strengthen cross-regional exchange and sharing of experiences, resources, strategies and training and capacity building across the region.

She expressed her excitement that such an initiative is happening but in the end, we need everyone to be on board and share the same or a common understanding in order to move this idea forward.

She welcomed all the participants and wished all a very happy stay in the land of Gross National Happiness.
Bringing the Opening Session to a close the Director General SRS share about a newspaper article he was reading in Nepal which was entitled, “Schools are not created to provide jobs for teachers but training and education for child” and emphasized this as being very relevant for our work. He said that people at all levels in our systems wants to contribute in a tangible way, but they don’t know how to go about getting the action on the road. This therefore provides the rationale that we need to create a more solid understanding on what child rights and child protection is by enhancing our advocacy and capacity building measures

B. Business Session

1. Adoption of the Agenda for Day 1: (Annex –I)

The Director General presented the agenda for the Consultation by expanding on each of the agenda items and sought for comments from the floor. The agenda was adopted without any amendments.

2. The SAARC Dimension to the SAIEVAC Mission – Mr. Hassan Shifau, Special Invitee / Permanent Secretary, MOFA, Maldives

Mr. Hassan Shifau covered the following areas in his presentation to the forum:

- As a former director of the SAARC Secretariat, I would like to share a presentation I gave to students in 2012. Asked the question of what people know about SAARC - often people compare to EU, Commonwealth or ASEAN but actually SAARC is very different as SAARC is owned by the eight Member States, governed, driven and implemented by the 8 Member States.

- Why is SAARC important to us and would regional cooperation stop if SAARC wasn’t there? Maybe other things would replace it but the most important thing about SAARC is the fact that our region has conflict, violence ……but SAARC was envisioned to bring us closer and reduce violence and conflict.

- The main order of business is the SAARC Summit, which is very important as it brings all the countries together to address issues and concerns. SAARC is not only important to our region but other regions, other agencies and international bodies – it impacts upon global initiatives (and includes “Observers” who come and engage with SAARC).

- Also very important to understand SAARC if you want to work through SAARC … when there were disconnects, progress cannot happen. In terms of SAIEVAC (as an
Apex Body), it is a recognized body and can participate in various forums and due to this, enters the SAARC mainstream. This took place in a very short time. In the SAARC Secretariat, SAIEVAC falls under social sector / development.

- And finally, there is no other regional initiative that deals with violence against children - this mechanism and new direction – which includes and brings in new stakeholders – helps to create an opportunity for others to be part of the process and a new approach for SAARC. SAIEVAC has helped to provide this new thrust and this is very important.

He also shared a few points related to moving ahead:

- SAIEVAC was conceived as a regional institution that should be sustainable and its key focus should be policy support and providing intelligence to each of the governments.

- All work provides input in order to shape policy and direction and needs increased collection of data and information.

- At the same time, SAIEVAC should also be a disseminator and serve as a regional representative (of the face of children) to the rest of the world. It needs to share information and evidence with others so it can be used.

- And lastly, it should become the conduit for governments to connect with various stakeholders and to support both national and regional level projects.

3. Human Resources Development Strategy on Child Protection and Violence against Children – SAIEVAC Academy – Director General, SAIEVAC

He introduced the presentation by highlighting that the challenges and issues in the Region identified through the Regional Consultation held in Islamabad, Pakistan in 2005. These include the following areas:

- Child marriage,
- Child labor,
- Sexual abuse and exploitation;
- Trafficking, and
- Corporal punishment

He said that during the Consultation, the South Asia Forum (SAF) was established as the South Asian Response to the Global Call to End VaC. This evolved over a period of 5 years into SAIEVAC with the status of SAARC Apex Body granted in 2011 during the 17th SAARC Summit in Maldives. The status is valid till November 2016.
He than presented the different aspects of the SAIEVAC Academy which he said needs the attention of the Consultation. The following areas were covered:

**Vision and Objectives for the SAIEVAC Academy**

**Overall Vision**

Children, girls and boys, throughout South Asia enjoy their right to an environment free from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and discrimination.

**Overall Goal / Aim:**

To enhance and further promote application of best practices and strengthening of cross-country exchange and sharing of resources, lessons learned, expertise and human resources in support of improved child protection capacity building, advocacy, documentation and research.

**Overall Objectives of the Academy:**

1. Enhance protection of children through establishment and strengthening of functioning, comprehensive child protection systems established at both national and regional levels.

2. Concerned duty-bearers and key stakeholders (including governments, civil society and children) formalize linkages and exchange in order to enhance cooperation, exchange experiences and share learning and best practices to increase impact on ending violence against children in South Asia.

**Additional Aims and Objectives:**

**Short term:**

- Existing resources (both material and human) within the region are identified and shared in order to contribute to and further strengthen practical actions and learning within the region.

- Regional cross-country exchange and learning based on “best practices” and specific areas of expertise is promoted in order to increase exposure and capacity building for various stakeholders.

**Medium term:**

- A comprehensive “needs assessment” is completed in order to identify further learning and areas for support and to perhaps inform the development of generic
curriculums or training modules / advocacy materials which can be used and adapted based on country-specific issues and context.

• Identification of and partnership building completed with regional academic institutes (both in South and South East Asia) having expertise in child protection research or academic work in order to facilitate further learning and mutual exchange on child protection dimensions.

• A network of skilled professionals and trainers (drawing from government, university or academic institutes, civil society and / or other international agencies) is created in order to support and further evolve training and capacity building initiatives across the region.

Long term:

• A database of existing research work, documentation, best practices, surveys, etc. related to child protection initiatives is established to enable sharing across the region drawing from regional and international standards / practices further contributing to knowledge management.

• Functioning as a regional center of excellence, the academy will improve and further strengthen services (prevention, detection and response) as well as inform future policy development.

• Additional funding resources are secured - in addition to SAARC’s core funds – for use in addressing or responding to emerging issues through research or other initiatives.

Proposed Institutional Framework for the SAIEVAC Academy

Rationale:

Rationale 1: In order to fulfill the second overall objective mentioned above and also due to the fact that the area of child protection remains a relatively new area of work, there continues to be need for further action, support and exchange related to both capacity building and evidence building across the region.

Indicators identified for measuring capacity are:

• Number of States with regular in-service training on child protection is in place for all government employees working for and with children,

• Number of States with national curriculum regulations for relevant professions should include compulsory, on-going training on prevention, identification, assessment and reporting of violence against children and the protection and continuity of care to children,
• Number of States with Bachelor’s of Social Work or Master’s of Social Work programmes,
• Number of States with Child Development and Child Counseling Bachelors and Master’s programmes,
• Number of States employing social workers as government employees,
• Number of states that provide short training on prevention and response to all forms of violence against children for religious institutions, their leaders and related opinion makers.

Rationale 2: Through the establishment of formalized partnerships, support can be provided specifically related to additional training, research and provision of academic programmes for capacity development of SAARC Member States in meeting the objectives of ending violence against children and establishing greater accountability for securing the rights of the child (as stipulated in CRC, CEDAW and other related instruments).

Formalization of Institutional Partnership:

Bilateral Discussions: It is proposed that SAIEVAC Secretariat – following the mapping exercise to be carried out and mentioned above - will as part of the framework of this draft Concept Note - initiate bilateral discussions with the institutions and individuals with a common mission or goal.

Joint Consultative Forum and Strategy Development JCFSD): Once mapping and review of existing resources / trainers / potential institutions has been completed, it is proposed that a 3 day Consultative Workshop/Meeting for all the interested potential partners and HR experts join together to further review and discuss the SAIEVAC Academy framework and further assist with the development of a strategic plan in order to address the goals and objectives of the Academy.

Two Dimensions of the Academy – The Dual Scopes of Work

Regional Resource Hub - Short-term Scope of Work

SAIEVAC is expected to begin collection of materials, resources, training curriculum/modules, list of trainers and human resources available to support this while at the same time identifying best practices and areas of expertise in various countries across the region (in order to serve as an cross-country exchange hub). These materials would be gathered together and made available through a regional web-based clearing house and in addition to helping serve or further strengthen various training / advocacy components also from the basis for the Information / Knowledge Management (IMC) dimension.
Center of Excellence (in partnerships with regional academic institute/s) - Long-term Scope of Work

Moving forward with the identification and agreement of partnership/s with regional academic institute/s will require more time and thought. Partnership/s with identified institutes will need to explore addressing both the Academic Programme required for further and more long-term professional staff development as well as the Research Component which would include both qualitative and quantitative research dimensions. In addition, work with the academic institute/s could assist in exploring and establishing the data collection dimension.

Training Component (TC)

To address and operationalize Objective 2 of SAIEVAC and the SAIEVAC Academy along with Objective 6 of the SAIEVAC Work Plan (2011-2016), Professional Training and Learning, there is an immediate need to move forward in collection, review and fine-tuning of existing resources – along with development of a list of proposed trainers who could support roll out of “generic” training curriculums.

Research Component

Objective 5 of the SAIEVAC Work Plan (2011-2016), “Data Collection” states that by 2016, all States have developed and started implementing systematic national research and consolidated data collection, analysis, and dissemination systems disaggregated by sex, race, language, religion, caste, class, disability or other status, national or social origin, to inform evidence-based effective action, mobilize adequate resources and assess progress achieved.

Indicators:

- States who have established national databases with data collection systems at local, district and national level which include children’s births and deaths, children entering or leaving institutions, on persons convicted of violent offenses against children and other child protection issues;
- States who have carried out baseline interview studies with representative groups of children, parents and other caregivers to identify the experience of children of all forms of violence;
- States who are collecting quantitative and qualitative data on the length and outcomes of judicial proceedings involving children are collected; and
- States who have agreed regional standards for data collection to ensure comparability of data.

Information and data collection on the above indicators can be initiated as soon as the IMC is established and national level researchers are identified.
In subsequent years – and through soliciting partnership with the identified / selected academic institute/s – both qualitative and quantitative research studies can be conducted based on emerging issues or continuing challenges as per specific country contexts.

Research work might also be considered or tied together with advanced degree program work or requirements of staff selected and participating in extended professional development courses. This will be based on discussions and agreement with the academic institute/s involved in the formal collaboration or partnership established as part of SAIEVAC Academy.

Advocacy

SAIEVAC Academy will with time evolve – together in its partnership with the regional academic institute/s - as a Centre of Excellence not only in research work, which informs policy development and highlights new or emerging trends, but also as leader in regional level advocacy.

4. Existing Opportunities for Human Resources Development in Child Rights in South Asia: Short Presentations by Participants

The participants were than invited to provide a brief presentation on their institution and his or her role, existing courses or training programmes on child rights or related fields and/or plans of setting up or starting any such courses.

a. Dr. B Ananda Karunaratne, Dean, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka:

Dr. Karunaratne made a presentation on the experience of promoting child rights in the community through a project called ‘Measuring Happiness in Community Settings in Sri Lanka’. In his presentation he covered the following areas.

• Happiness calendar initiated as a collective community action (for families and family life) as a pilot program. This is currently implemented in 114 community settings and directly benefitted 1711 households with 6,923 individuals. It was a simple tool which can be actively used which increased interest and actions – happiness improved along with other aspects of well-being.

• The tool was introduced into communities but then also evolved with time (new mood to represent “anger”, recording reasons for happiness or unhappiness, etc.).
• Results included improving family well-being (enhanced), improved children’s role in improving family well-being. He showed/demonstrated this through video footages of the activity/s

He also said that a University Diploma in Health Promotion (general and special – 3 and 4 years duration) including both theory and field work is being implemented by the University. The programme has also international students who come for internship programs (Sweden). The Health Promotion programme also has early childhood development linked to it.

He said that SAIEVAC Sri Lanka is also planning to replicate and upscale the Smile Approach with NGOs partners and in wider areas. This was further reinforced by the Director General who said that this is an activity under the SDF/SAIEVAC project and hopefully become an important regional learning pilot activity.

b. Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Missouri, India

The presentation covered the following areas:

• Established in 1959 and dedicated to training offices of the country’s higher civil services.

• Promotes good governance through quality training and organization oriented to civil service, which blends academics and practitioners as resources.

• Strives for outreach to all States and including all levels and types of Ministries.

• Includes specialized center for providing training and research on gender issues through National Gender Center.

• Gender Center (est. 1995) and now also includes Child Rights in policy, program formulation and implementation within the government. Provides training through regular academic courses as well as short-term trainings.

• Module development – on both gender issues and child rights … now coming up with these as per the target group / audience. Related to Child Rights – Ministry of Women and Children assigned them to undertake this task and held a national level consultation on this and a second follow-up program will be organized in order to move forward on pilot testing.
• Provided training on this topic at Gangtok, Bangalore and also Srinagar / Chandigarh. Putting focus on States in order to incorporate context (including Gender and Child Rights and Violence against Women).

• The Centre also signed a MoU with Bangladesh government to begin training their government staff as well.

c. **Child Rights Education (CRE) Initiatives at Kathmandu University – Bal Chandra Liutel, PHD – School of Education**

• Completed 1-year research project and another to be wrapped soon on ECD (with UNICEF and Plan).

• In earlier years – 3 research projects on children (associated with Plan, SAVE and UNICEF) and another looked at children’s clubs.

• Master in Education Program promotes child-friendly (CF) and child-centered education process.

• Training and School Support Unit – weekly training activities (CF teaching and learning methods) and week-long training packages on – child rights, NGO management, M&E in the context of Child Rights (CR) programs and researching child related issues.

• Aspiring to develop a CR Education Center at the regional level – collaborating with IUKB (University of Geneva), IDE, which is chaired by former Chair of UNCRC and in coordination with UNICEF, Save, MOWCSW and MOE.

• Masters in Child Rights Education – a one year program – hoping to start in Feb 2015 – a professional Master Program and includes field work to connect with academic perspective or process.

• Hope to use blended mode which incorporates distance learning / education (working with Norway to establish distance learning unit).

d. **Ms. Tulasa Kharel – AiBi Representative Nepal: “Amici dei Bambini”**

• An Italian NGO working in Nepal from 2006 on child protection and capacity building. The aim is to strengthen the situation for vulnerable children and their families.
• Capacity building and training initiatives include enlistment of a Professor from the Philippines to support research on Child Welfare Policies, Services and their Aptitude for Care and Protection of Vulnerable Children and Their Families.

• Work also includes support for the training of professionals: 2 complementary but inter-related courses i.e. Social Work Prospective on CR and Child Protection. Specialized training course for CR Managers by St. Xavier’s College and specialized training course for Child Protection Workers by SWI.

• First batch completed in 2013 and second batch to come in 2014 – practical and short-term. The participants have the option to participate in the training while still working. Also provides institutional capacity building for organizations, and opens up career path for practitioners and fresh graduates.

**Issues raised during the discussion following the first four Presentations**

• The presentation clearly indicates that there is substantive opportunity for child rights education within the region if one could coordinate the efforts and create a regional convergence and solidarity.

• Institutionalization or coordination of all these different programs and educational approaches so that they translate from training to actual application or practice and to assess the impact on policy changes or development.

• Given the ground reality of a wide gap between skills and standards it will be worthwhile to explore how SAIEVAC’s efforts can address the need for establishing a center of excellence that addresses this factor.

• There has to be a distinction between building competencies of individuals and the building of capacities for organizations and it is important that we acknowledge or respond to this.

c. **A Brief Introduction of Pokhara and Pokhara University – Dr. Indra Tiwari, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Dr. Chandra Bhadra, Visiting Professor**

• Every aspect of humanity is concerned with the child and protection of children.

• School of Development and Social Engineering where we offer our programs: Bachelor in Development Studies, Social Work and also Child Rights NGO
management (including student internships). Also bachelor level degree in Behavior Change Communication.

- Master’s in Contemporary Population, Health and Gender Issues – including issues of children, women and so on.

**f. Dr. Meshquat Uddin Pro VC North South University, Bangladesh, – Steps Forward for SAIEVAC’s Consideration:**

a. First private university in Bangladesh but now majority of universities are now privately run. Have 15,000 plus students in 40 schools and some programs and courses which specifically address issues of women and children. Two specifically include School of Social Sciences and School of Public Health.

b. The university has good collaboration with the government (unusual in this context) because government doesn’t provide funding support but have tried to build linkages with government and NGOs.

c. Student Social Services club also provides an opportunity to focus on women and children.

d. In terms of policy development and strategy formulation, SAARC and SAIEVAC have done a great job but the main focus should be on implementation. Most of the programs where children are at risk focus on creating awareness but lack proper mechanisms to address perpetrators and non-compliance. Need to identify institutions and partners to work and universities could pay a strong role.

e. There is a big difference or gap in practices associated with child rights violations between rural and urban areas. Case in point is associated with treatment of girl vs boy children. If all the actions or activities focused in the urban areas, so many things are missed and actions lack an effective approach.

f. There are national and international NGOs who play a vital role in addressing these issues but we still have a long way to go – awareness has been created but problem still exists in a very large scale and SAIEVAC has a long way to go.

g. In Bangladesh – all universities would be interested to cooperate and work together with SAIEVAC in order to address these issues.
g. **Strategy and Existing Opportunities Related to Child Rights – Dr. Amber Prasad Pant, Kathmandu Law School**

- Tribhuvan University is one of the oldest in the region for legal education established in 1954 before the University Act and in partnership with Patna University. Then in 1959 started its own courses and since 1954 to 1972 we offer a BL course.

- Some of the thematic areas also are included: early marriage, trafficking (some parts related to this), exploitation of women and children (as part of Family Law) and child labor / forced labor – so even during the days when these issues weren’t so critical, they were covered and addressed.

- After 1989 when the CRC was adopted and Nepal it ratified in 1990 the country started improving the laws. In 1990 the Children’s Act came into force and many other laws were formulated to protect children and in this way, the legal framework and policies related to protection of children came into place into Nepal.

h. **National Law School of India University, Bangalore – Dr. V.S. Elizabeth**

- Set up in 1988 with a mission to improve the legal agenda and support social engineering. NLS has students from the SAARC Region graduating from both under-grad and graduate programs.

- To advance and disseminate the rule of law in national development – and where does child rights fit into to this? We have a compulsory course on human rights and while we don’t have a specific course on child rights, it is accessed through other courses.

- We also have a Master’s program (a one year program) – business law and human rights stream and within this thread, child and women rights / law is also emphasized. Also a post-graduate diploma in child rights law. We also have a distance education program.

- The school also reaches out to the larger community so we provide advocacy and training.

- Research centers associated with Women and Law and Child and Law – initially joined but later separated as needs were different.
• Child and Law Center – addresses care, protection and justice for marginalized children in India. Includes focus on Juvenile Justice Act and Indian Penal Code – along with advocacy taken up on child law issues. The other dimension is related to education and how government funded schools can be improved (and not closed down) as this is where the marginalized children usually attend.

• Contribute toward integrated research with continued education and capacity development linked to education / teachers associated with implementation of child laws. Also provide training programs for police, judges, administrative officers and so on. Sensitization to both gender and child rights issues.

i. Rajib Haldar – Child In Need Institute (CINI) - West Bengal

• CINI has contributed innovations to research related to malnutrition and child health working with ICDS and also community-based monitoring related to mother-child outcomes.

• An inner learning is promoting child-friendly community approach and this includes addressing violence against children. CINI’s five year experience proves that communities have a strong capacity to end violence against children and this has been done in partnership with the government. From this we’ve developed tools and resources, which have been shared with government officials and other stakeholders in West Bengal.

• We also provided training to doctors and health professionals, as they are very important in the response mechanism.

• We have also set up a child protection resource center for West Bengal and developed a training curriculum for professionals working with children in partnership – and have been implementing training for many service providers.

• Investment in and capacity building in front-line workers is critical to engagement and convince policy makers so we also have plans to establish two more child protection resource centers as well in support of this.

• Partnering with a community college programs in the form of a distance-learning and on-site programs on child health and other issues and have also worked on a counseling training program with several universities that are now being used.
• We also provide and collaborate with training institutes and other NGO to provide trainings for both government and civil society and we find that there is huge scope for additional work in activating both the general public and other institutes in support of legal education, children’s rights and more.

j. Dr. Sunil Mehra, Executive Director, MAMTA HIMC, India

• Health issues very much a child rights issue and we consider gender and rights as a cross cutting issue. Focus on four key areas that are part of the life-cycle approach and all very inter-connected.

• We have a child protection, sexual harassment and gender policy at our institute and this has helped us also mainstream these issues across our work.

• Our theory of change is based on community ownership and partnerships and participation. Working to strengthen the evidence based component linked to our interventions and this resulted in a separate department to address this but then further contributed to policy development.

• An example of this is related to child marriage, adolescent friendly health services, child protection schemes and what we’ve learned is that working with the system is a pride - not a shame. You keep your voice and space separate in order to raise issues.

• Networking is a very effective strategy for us in terms of working with NGOs and other networks and this includes both technical and funding support which supports scaling up of our work not only in the country but across the region – again, an example of child marriage in Nepal, India and Bangladesh in cooperation with SAIEVAC.

• We also have MOUs signed with some of the best universities in the world – this also demonstrates our commitment to establishing an evidence based approach in support of this. Thematic areas identified for these partnerships.

• But in the end, it is about your own country and good relationships / partnerships with local institutes and agencies. How we can support and contribute – needs assessment should not only be done by researchers but also involve community members.

• Development of training manuals and modules important but don’t forget mentoring dimensions as well in order to reinforce learning and knowledge acquisition!
• Developing country level score cards must happen. These scores can be linked to investments put forward - is a challenging approach but something very necessary.

• Advocacy and communication requires a separate unit in order to push information and share these out.

k. Dr. Pravin Patkar, Adjunct Professor, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Bombay

• We have much to offer related to potentiality – first university to start a full-fledged Master’s course in child rights and protection. This includes children in crisis, social work, community development, social work intervention in climate change.

• A computer strong university, with computer technology back up. A new platform also in use which is like multiple Skype where we link many universities and students can discuss or join into any particular classroom and can interact with students or others. We would like to use this with high profile schools and pair with institutes that could use training facilities and life-skills education to students that don’t have access.

• Computer-human interface is another dimension we are working on – using lap top based vocational training. Have done this with women’s group and provided skills such as plumbing, etc.

• Now have taken up 101 villages, which include children and promote specific activities or actions (such as “no child fails”).

• Inter-disciplinary research with ICDS, Ministry of Women and Children, MCA project and also developing a distance degree course on child protection.

• Along with the training of other professionals mentioned, we also provided training for nurses and have also tried to introduce rights prior to birth or “pre-birth” rights such as addressing issues related to surrogacy and / or exclusive breast-feeding.

l. Deepak Sapkota – Creating Possibilities in Nepal, CR Researcher

• I got my opportunity to do a Master’s in Child Rights in Europe and then wanted to explore what we could in our region but luckily Kathmandu University was very interested. But many universities didn’t feel at all it was
related to an academic discourse. But after listening to many of you here – we can see it is moving forward and gaining much support.

- I now serve as the chair of an INGO, Karuna Nepal, that looks at disability in Nepal and is also a member of the Juvenile Justice Strengthening Committee and assisting in the drafting of the policy for the country.

- One of the biggest challenges that we face is that there are no training or human resources in child rights sector and with SAIEVAC’s initiative, hopefully we can train more people who are sensitive to the issue and want to continue working on child rights and protection across the region.

m. Dr. S. Sivakumar, Indian Law Institute (Deemed University), New Delhi, India

- Mainly we are doing research and offering degree program and one full paper is devoted to child rights.

- We are also doing policy research with Supreme Court Judges in India – looking at the legal provisions which remain very ambiguous. We initiated a project that concerned re-instatement of Indian law and developed three volumes on different aspects.

- Once the product is ready, we hand over to the consultant and share with the public to comment on and then want to produce at a very inexpensive rate.

- Now the constitutional project is going on – even the definition of the child is a big issue and area for us to explore.

- We are very comfortable to work with judges and try to create a forum for academics, lawyers, judges and other to come up and discuss such issues and matters and contribute especially at the implementation level.

n. Ms. Razia Ismail – Alliance Convenor, India Alliance for Child Rights (IACRs)

- Our engagement as an alliance began with the UN Special Session on the Child and the involvement of academics and practitioners on the rights of child. Our work is advocacy – pushing and pulling – and trying to create a few circles among ourselves on what we know and what we need to do ourselves.
• The focus is also on what government needs to do – looking at the SAIEVAC Academy Concept Note it talks about policy makers and also service providers which is also what we do.

• We are chronically addicted to coalition building and doing this with academia and this is something that most NGOs don’t do.

• Two things to flag:
  
  i. The silent emergency – children die one by one and they die in very large numbers and this is an emergency. We have tried to take this phrase and propose it to our government and partners. It is an emergency. We need to include or infuse this definition into SAIEVAC Academy as well.
  
  ii. In terms of training, we transfer knowledge but this isn’t the same as building capacity or activating this. It is not about law, it is about justice - this should be our second slogan!

• Children’s rights are not a separate thing but part of the human rights continuum … and we need to understand and accept this.

• If we take these three things – then you have the syllabus. This is what we need to communicate and to whom it needs to be shared.

• The nexus between noise making NGOs and ourselves and the academics / researchers and the “pushers” like SAIEVAC is that we have to find the uncomfortable questions and look at these. We are looking at this – un-prevented human disasters and we need anticipatory governments. If you know that there is a risk that could happen – you take steps to prevent it. We know how to do it – in anticipatory governance can we also act on the one to one deaths or issues? This is part of what I’d like to propose as anyone’s syllabus for training.

• What are we trying to produce – conscious change agents and this requires “wake up” training so that people see things in a different way. This sense of urgency on child rights is well placed but what are we supposed to do? The region also has its shares of preventable problems and we’re not addressing this.
• The work we are trying to do is different – competence – not quite enough, capacity – also not all – credibility also important – all these things need to be considered.

• We can offer you a small but useable score card which we’ve been using with NGOs and other bodies and we’ve been using it for 7 years but you can also use this too – on child rights.

• If we have a picture of what the challenge should be – it helps get there and this should be a positive approach, not only a corrective action.

5. An Overview of the PLAN Academy with focus on Creating and Managing Resources for Child Rights – Don McPhee, Project Manager, Plan Academy (Annex – 2)

• The word “standards” not yet discussed too much and maybe this is something that SAIEVAC can share and address with partners as they move ahead.

• Training vs. learning – lots of time and resources spent on training but this hasn’t really improved performance or attitudes of people or improving the results of organizations.

• Learning is also continuous and it connects people … and be able to relate to people about what you are learning and share this!

• Example of: Alumni associations so that participants remain involved in learning and become coaches and mentors for others – extended participation!

• Structured learning supported by a blend of methods: content is 40 – 50% and the learning is 50% (often too much emphasis on the content and not enough emphasis on the process of learning!).

• Importance given to accreditation. When you complete a course / module, you get acknowledgement that you completed the course but they are also told that they must practice with skills and when they feel they are beginning to use and practice with what has been learned, they approach manager for assessment in order to validate acquirement of the competency or skills.

• Accreditation not based on completion of the course but through demonstration of competency!
• For Plan and the Academy – pre-birth dimensions and early childhood care and development a key priority.

• Focus on practitioners – yes but also include managers – their roles and importance.

**Day 2 - Friday, 27 June 2014**

6. **Recap of the Day:**

The DG provided a quick recap of Day – 1 and than briefed the participants on what was expected for Day -2 as follows:

• Mapping Opportunities for the SAIEVAC Academy and charting out next potential steps – using outline of existing programmes compiled by SRS
• Setting Short-term Targets and Identification of Possible Institutions to move the SAIEVAC Academy agenda forward
• Creating a roster for Resources / Experts / Trainers in the different aspects of the SAIEVAC Academy
• Way Forward – the Next Steps
• Closing Session

7. **Thailand Group Presentation - Sudarat Sereewat, Director, FACE (Fight against Child Exploitation) and Dr. Anunthavoraskul, Chulalongkorn University and Dr. Chayan, RCSD Director**

• FACE Foundation has worked with Bhutan in terms of organizing study tours related to systems of CP and amendment of CP law. At the same time, we continue to learn from Western countries / organizations.

• Review courtroom procedures and practices when interacting and including children who have been abused and to also protect children in conflict with the law and during the process. Quite a lot of support from the Thai authorities but of course the law / procedures are not perfect but improving all the time.

• Engage with shelters for children (those for boys and girls – men and women) associated with implementation of the Trafficking Act and these are now in place and also improving.
• With regard to collaboration with this region (mostly Bhutanese), Judges and Bench Clerks visit us and three weeks ago had a group from Nepal to look at trafficking issues and visit facilities.

• Training for Child Protection Officers (12 positions / professions included here) and this includes both government and non-government staff.

• ESDI – 7 professors and 5 full time staff – Research and development, monitoring, academic work, etc. on ESD and also includes CF school and Children’s Rights and we work with UNICEF in 27 schools related to child-friendly schools and supporting teacher training.

• Strengthening capacity of local community work began in 2009 and brings together youth and community members.

• Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD) – Chiang Mai University (Dr. Chayan) – established 1998 to address sustainable development in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia) and also respond to foreign investment in these countries.

• Looking at resource management, trans-boundary resource governance, trans-border migration, development’s impact on local livelihood and state – ethnic relations.

• MA program includes students from neighboring countries in SE and South Asia – 135 total students with 96 graduations and 34 current students.

• Also organize workshops on Human Trafficking – capacity building on return, repatriation and reintegration of persons and research work on citizenship (particularly for ethnic minorities), stateless children in Northern Thailand and ethnic language revival.

8. Building Skilled Workforce for Child Protection – Cadre Development and Management – Ms. Shireen Vakil Miller, Director of Advocacy, SAVE India (Annex – 3)

• Protection in the Indian context - has less attention paid to this and understanding also limited. Focus on violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect – often forgotten. Something we are all grappling with and there still isn’t a cadre of people addressing protection dimensions.
• Very much dependent on CP professionals but also an acute shortage of these and great need for professional trained group and a standardized, specialized protection course (yet lack of these courses as well).

• Many organizations due offer courses but these are fragmented and training materials specifically for internal staff – while good, lack wider perspective.

• All of this contributes to additional violence / abuse and re-traumatization to the child.

• Need for a regional framework for creating a professional cadre of child protection workers - including standardizations and licensing in order to establish professional standards and address both theoretical and practical application.

• Building a cadre needs mapping of how many are needed, skills, competencies and knowledge required for different functions, existing staff with skills and experience and resources available.

• Agree need to work with existing platforms and regional experiences especially with regard to trans-boundary issues which is very relevant to South Asia.


The participants both during the individual presentations as well as in a separate exercise listed out different academic and training programmes currently being implemented through different institutions and organizations. These were listed out in a table so as to provide a basis on which

10. Setting Short-term Targets and Identification of Possible Institutions to move the SAIEVAC Academy agenda forward

Short Term Targets / Activities:

1. We’ve been able to come together and complete the preliminary mapping and after 2 weeks – Share the mapping results with the participants so that they can add and further contribute and return to us.
2. We would also like to send out – as agreed yesterday – the list of topics / dimensions to the NACG Chairs and SAIEVAC Coordinators and other partners and ask them to prioritize (top ten) in terms of what is most important to them (from those we’ve been discussing) as part of our needs assessment (and this would also be shared with all of you).

3. Third activity would then be to put together a report on the mapping exercise and the prioritized areas and results of the needs assessment, which help result in a clear understanding of opportunities and needs that can be further, distributed. Based on this, the next consultation will be arranged and an action plan completed.

Discussion points raised by participants:

• Propose a well structured tool that can also go out to the institutions we’ve mapped and gather additional information and then also develop a time-line associated with the development of various training or capacity building components.

• Maybe useful to have a glossary put together by SAIEVAC on the terms and definitions we plan to use.

• In terms of advocacy – will there be focus on specific issues and regional work we could do together on in support of this? (Dr. C refers to SAIEVAC Regional Advocacy and Communication Strategy and the database related to this and the Regional Action Plan).

• SAIEVAC also has a role to represent the group / work outside of the region both to share the good resources and initiatives and to also act as a conduit to bring other resources into the region.

• What is it that SAIEVAC / SAARC can do for members to create a facilitating environment – challenges with civil society exclusion related to law and amendments and then later some issues re-emerging again due to this!

• The regional challenges of migration and one of the drivers of this should be in the “basket” of SAIEVAC and this is the role of SAIEVAC and SAARC to bring this to the regional arena (such trans-national issues) and this is where SAIEVAC can play a very active role. Also related to resource generation and funding opportunities (through development of an inter-
country proposal) and this would also help to support country partners as well.

11. Creating a Roster of Resources / Experts / Trainers Related to the Different Aspects of the SAIEVAC Academy: (Annex – 5)

(Card exercise) Three cards for resources from area / institution who can assist in the areas we have defined. If we have these, can compile and put into specific categories and develop a first draft list for use and contact in the future. We will also link through you to get the CVs and contacts.

12. Way Forward – the Next Steps

1. Send out an Executive Summary as soon as possible – a couple of paragraphs on process and what was agreed during the meeting along with mapping framework.

2. Formal contact points – agree on contacting the respective universities or institutes represented as the first point of contact and then they disseminate information to the Experts listed.

3. Short brief to the Secretary General of SAARC on this event

4. Next meeting would also include Pakistan, Afghanistan, Maldives and Bhutan as well – the next meeting may be larger which would include government and NACG representatives.

5. Timetable for the next meeting: Consider end of October or early November or in mid to end December? Through bilateral discussion we will finalize both the dates and the location.

13. Closing Session

The Director General thanked the distinguished participants for their contribution to this most important consultation and for their cooperation in the smooth and productive conduct of the Consultation. He also expressed his deepest appreciation to all for accepting the request from SRS and coming together to find a sustainable solution to the SAIEVAC Movement for children.
He thanked the Royal Government of Bhutan and the NCWC particularly the Director General/SAIEVAC Governing Board Member Bhutan for her support and guidance to this critical consultation.

He also thanked Mr. Hassan Shifau for his unwavering support to SAIEVAC and for the children of SAARC.

Prof. Pant on behalf of the participants thanked the SRS for inviting them to this most exciting and productive consultation. This he said definitely provided the participants an opportunity to consider a role beyond their usual academic pursuits. He hoped that the SRS will take the agenda forward successfully and committed their support to the cause.

He also thanked the Royal Government of Bhutan and the NCWC for their most warm hospitality. He also thanked the hotel Phuntsho Pelri for their wonderful hospitality.

The Meeting was then closed after providing a briefing on the field visit on the 3rd Day.