



# South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children

SAARC Apex Body

SAIEVAC  
SOUTH ASIA INITIATIVE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

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SAIEVAC  
In Solidarity with the Children of SAARC

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## South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children

**The South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC)** is the SAARC Apex Body for Children. During the 17<sup>th</sup> SAARC Summit in Maldives in November 2011, SAIEVAC was granted the status of a SAARC Apex Body, making it the first ever regional organization for children to achieve this. As a SAARC Apex Body, SAIEVAC is the recognized entity to represent the cause of children of South Asia.

The Apex Body status provides SAIEVAC with the opportunity to engage with the larger framework of SAARC and to support the plans and programmes of the SAARC

Member States in the area of child rights in general and ending violence against children in particular.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2004, the “South Asia Coordinating Group against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Women in South Asia” was formed to follow-up on and work towards the Mid-Term review of the Yokohama Global Commitment on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. Represented by regional agencies/ organizations and with the SAARC Secretariat as observer, the “South Asia Coordinating Group against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Women in South Asia” in its meeting on 23 July 2004, agreed to coordinate regional initiatives towards the UN Study on Violence against Children.



minimum age of criminal responsibility to be set at 16 years as per the CRC recommendation and urges States to have alternatives to institutional care for children in conflict with the law.

**Raising Awareness and facilitating change:** The Workplan emphasizes raising and sustaining awareness through public information and media campaigns and supporting the meaningful and active participation of civil society, including children and young people, so that they can prevent, monitor and make recommendations and be involved in decision-making processes for actions to end violence against children.

**Issue based action:** for SAIEVAC, the issues of early marriage, sexual abuse and exploitation, trafficking, corporal punishment, and child labour are critical issues affecting children throughout the region. Gender and discrimination are cross-cutting issues throughout all areas. Addressing all the region specific issues remains fully integrated within the broader efforts to establish and sustain effective national child protection systems.

**SAIEVAC promotes Children’s participation as a cross cutting strategy** in all its work and believes that all stakeholders need to be accountable to fulfilling right of all children- girls and boys, to be protected from all forms of violence in all settings.







SAIEVAC places great value on an effective Data and Information Management System to provide necessary evidence to build effective interventions. It envisages supporting all member states to implement a systematic national research and consolidated data collection and analysis.

**For SAIEVAC, capacity development** of stakeholders and increasing the numbers of child protection practitioners and professionals is an urgent priority. The SAIEVAC workplan supports the up-scaling of training opportunities and the development of appropriate curricula for relevant professionals.

**One of the many key areas** of SAIEVAC's work is to support Member States in the development of standards for caregivers of children and for alternative care options such as community-based care and regulations for institutions; services and facilities for the care, education and protection of children which entails proper case management and regular and independent monitoring.

**SAIEVAC also mandates itself to support Member States** to have clearly defined procedures for the child friendly reporting and referral mechanisms of child victims/survivors of violence and the modalities for inter-sectoral and inter-agency cooperation and to take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and rehabilitation, as well as reintegration of child victims and witnesses of violence and their families.

**SAIEVAC believes that children should be provided with free legal aid** and aspires for judicial systems based on the best interest of the child and take into account the rights of children in difficult circumstances and in conflict with the law including the rights of witnesses to be duly protected. The SAIEVAC Workplan suggests the



**SAIEVAC began its journey as SAF** (the South Asia Forum) in 2005, in Islamabad, as one of the most important outcomes of the Regional Consultation on Violence against Children. This regional consultation, facilitated by the South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Children

(SACG) was preceded by national consultations and contributed greatly in providing the South Asia input to the UN Study on Violence against Children anchored by the Governments of South Asia in partnership with the civil society including children and young people, UN agencies and, INGOs.

**SAIEVAC is a unique regional initiative** led by the Governments of South Asia which focuses on raising awareness, developing capacities, sharing good practices and lessons learnt in preventing and responding to violence against children in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

**SAF transformed into SAIEVAC** during the 3rd SAF Ministerial Meeting in Kathmandu on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2010. The meeting endorsed the decision to create a new institutional mechanism for SAIEVAC at both the regional and national levels; collaboration with SAARC, and a Five-year Work Plan to end violence against children.

Through the formation of SAIEVAC, the South Asian governments have reemphasised their commitment to paying more attention to root causes and all forms of violence against children and SAIEVAC has initiated a number of activities on the ground, under its **Five-year Workplan** to help make South Asia a violence-free region for children.

**The SAIEVAC institutional mechanism:** The SAIEVAC institutional mechanism is governed by its **Governing Board** with representation from each Member State, the SACG Chairperson, two child representatives and two representatives of Civil



## SAIEVAC Workplan 2011-2016

The 5-Year SAIEVAC Workplan aims to ensure the realisation of children's rights as stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the various SAARC Conventions and Declarations, to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against children in all settings.

Society Organisations (CSOs). The Board is headed by a Chairperson appointed for a tenure of two years. The SAIEVAC Secretariat reports to and receives directives from the Governing Board during its periodic meetings. The Director General of the Secretariat is entrusted with executive functions for SAIEVAC and takes guidance and approval from the Chair of the Governing Board.

SAIEVAC mechanisms in each Member State is represented by a Governing Board Member and a Coordinator and SAIEVAC national offices are in the process of being established to implement SAIEVAC national level programmes and activities.

**SAIEVAC strongly believes** that children's input and involvement are essential to making any response against violence against children successful and actively encourages children's participation in every area, and at every level. SAIEVAC believes that children should have national children's networks to make recommendations regularly to governments in their home countries. The SAIEVAC Governing Board therefore ensures one male and one female Child Representatives' involvement as Board Members, democratically chosen by their peers through national and regional processes.

**SAIEVAC's vision** is that all children, girls and boys, throughout South Asia enjoy their right to protection from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and discrimination. This is expected to be achieved through the implementation of the Five-year Workplan, which is based on a child protection systems' building approach.

A child protection systems' building approach ensures that children are treated as individuals and receive a comprehensive range of services for larger overall impact. It encompasses a whole range of strategies, policies, plans, laws, regulations and services needed across all social sectors-especially social welfare, education, health, security and justice. Strengthening such systems require attention to policy reform,

institutional capacity development, planning, budgeting, monitoring and information systems. SAIEVAC believes that the national Child Protection systems are most effective when structured around community-based protection and require an aware and supportive public.

**SAIEVAC's Five-year Workplan** links different levels of activities through several objectives and indicators in order to measure annual progress.

Since increased coordination and cooperation throughout the South Asian Region is vital, SAIEVAC aims to achieve this by organising annual technical consultations to address various aspects of violence against children and sharing of established good practice.

Another important component of the SAIEVAC Workplan is each Member State's implementation of a comprehensive national strategy, policy, or plan of action on violence against children which is integrated into the national planning process with realistic and time-bound targets and adequate resources and is coordinated and monitored by a nodal agency that has the human and financial resources to sustain multi-sectoral collaboration and coordination.

SAIEVAC supports Member States to enforce national legislative measures to prevent, prohibit and eliminate all forms of violence against children in all settings including in families, schools, communities, workplaces, institutions and emergency situations. SAIEVAC believes that measures to prevent violence need to be in place to effectively address underlying causes, as well as more immediate risk and protective factors.

