

Committee: Association of Southeast Asian Nations Committee

Issue: Collaboration with civil society to eradicate violence against children

Student Officer: Alexandra Kavantouri

Position: Deputy President

INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Alexandra Kavantouri and I am beyond excited to be serving you as the co-chair of this unique committee.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) stands out in this year's conference. Its motto "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" is proof of the alliance's shared values and goals, built upon placing people at the centre. Our duty, as a committee, is to live up to such standards, settling disputes, promoting sustainability and eliminating humanitarian crisis.

As the expert chair on the third topic of our agenda, I need to stress the gravity of violence against children. How we care for and support children is one primary evidence of our common humanity. As Nelson Mandela has reminded us, "violence thrives in the absence of democracy and respect of human rights". The spread of democracy and protection of human rights is accompanied by the emergence of civil society. So, it is of utmost importance for the ASEAN to help civil society blossom and collaborate with it.

This study guide aims to lay the groundwork for your research. What makes a delegate skilled and ready to act, is how well they are prepared. Knowledge of the topic facilitates participation in all procedures and discussions. Persuasiveness is based on mastering not only the topic but your country's involvement and relations. Devising strategies requires an in-depth study, the foundations of which are set by study guides.

I wish you luck in your research and hope that it will produce exquisite position papers and resolutions. Should any questions arise, feel free to reach me at akav04@gmail.com.

Best regards,

Kavantouri Alexandra

Important note from the chairs' team

In order for the chairs to fully understand the dynamics of the committee, discovering any misunderstanding prior to the debate and for the better preparation of the delegates you are asked to proceed as indicated below;

- 1) Conduct your chairs via email and informing them about your mun experience so that they can know what exactly to expect of you.
- 2) Prepare and send your chairs by 11:59 of the 6th of November one position papers for each of the topics you are going to discuss during the conference. You can conduct the expert chair, of each topic for further information concerning your country's policy if needed, and for general guidance when it comes to your position papers (word limit structure etc). You are going to receive general comments during the lobbying for your position papers as well as personal feedback and grades for your papers. The points you will receive will add up to your general score which is one of the factors that determine the best delegate award. If you for any reason fail to send your papers before the final deadline you will not be eligible for any award.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Violence against children (VAC)

According to ASEAN, it is any act on children which causes harm, injury, abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment and/or exploitation whether accepted as "tradition" or disguised as "discipline", including hindering child development.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

As stated by the European Commission, it can be defined as violence directed against a person because of that person's gender (including gender identity/expression) or as violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately.

It can be physical, sexual and/or psychological, and includes:

- violence in close relationships
- sexual violence (rape, sexual assault and harassment)
- slavery
- harmful practices, such as forced marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM) and 'honour' crimes
- cyberviolence and harassment using new technologies

- infanticide.

Civil society actors

As reported by the UN Office of High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), they are individuals who voluntarily engage in public participation and action around shared interests, purposes or values that are compatible with the goals of the United Nations.

Civil society encompasses a variety of actors, such as:

- Human rights defenders
- Human rights organizations (e.g. non-governmental organizations, victims' groups)
- Networks or coalitions (e.g. focusing on migrants' rights, environmental issues)
- Social movements (e.g. peace movements)
- Community-based organizations (e.g. of indigenous peoples, minorities)
- Faith-based groups (e.g. churches, religious groups)
- NGOs
- Professional associations (e.g. trade unions, journalists' associations)
- Academic institutions (e.g. universities, research bodies).

Human rights defenders

The Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms refers to "individuals, groups and associations ... contributing to ... the effective elimination of all violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of peoples and individuals".

Honor crimes

In line with the BBC's definition, honor killing is the murder of a person accused of "bringing shame" upon their family.

Victims have been killed for refusing to enter a marriage, committing adultery or being in a relationship that displeased their relatives.

In many instances, the crimes are committed by family members against a female relative.

In some parts of the world, women who have been raped have also been murdered for the 'dishonor' of being a victim and the 'disgrace' it brings to their family.

It stems from the age-old view that 'a life without honor is not worth living.'

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This issue can be segmented into two sections: the implications and challenges of cooperating with civil society in Southeast Asia; and the violence against children in its many forms, including socially and even lawfully accepted acts of violence. This section of the study guide gives you a picture of all these aspects in a generic manner as it corresponds to what is found in virtually all countries. Before the conference, you should do a more targeted research contextualizing the analysis.

A restricted civil society through legislation

Civil society's operation and outreach are often regulated through national legislation. Policies and legal frameworks may be repressive or exceedingly restrictive in order to curb civil society actors and deprive them of formal organization or a voice in society.

For example:

- barriers to entry, discouraging, burdening, or preventing the formation of organizations;
- barriers to operational activity, to prevent organizations from carrying out their legitimate activities;
- barriers to speech and advocacy, hampering free expression and public policy advocacy;
- barriers to communication and cooperation, preventing or stifling the free exchange of contact and communication within and outside organizations;
- barriers to assembly that ban or interfere with peaceful public gatherings;
- barriers to resources, leading to restricted ability of organizations to secure the financial resources necessary to carry out their work.

Developing partnerships with civil society

The ASEAN should engage in an open dialogue with civil society. It is key to fruitful partnerships and a milestone towards better pursuing collective action.

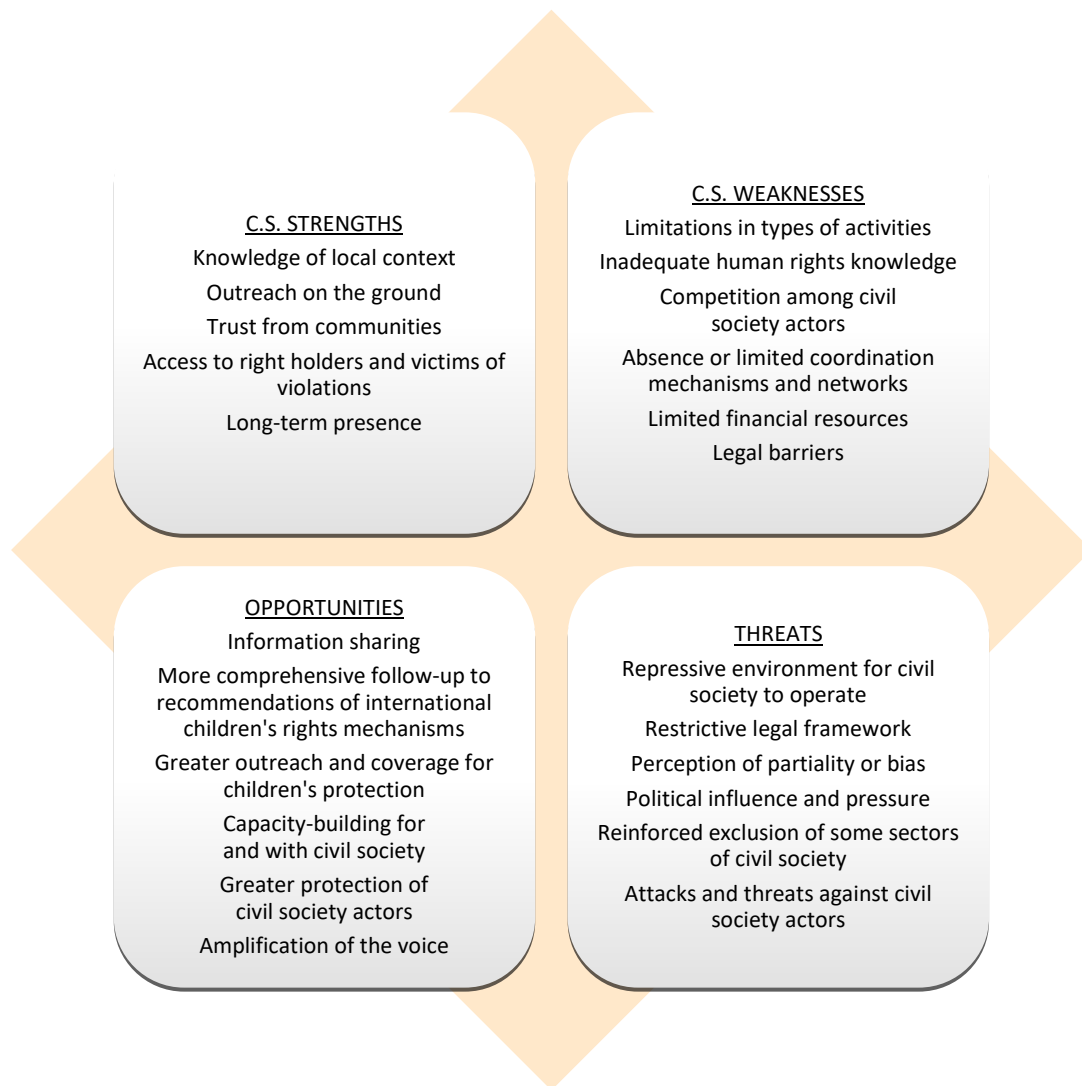
Profound knowledge of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of civil society can be useful when devising engagement strategies with it. The analysis demonstrates which aspects of civil society's activities have the potential to be reinforcing or complementary to ASEAN's action. Additionally, it outlines the action needed in order to create an environment where civil society can flourish and establish effective partnerships with the ASEAN.

In the SWOT analysis, the opportunities and threats relate to the external environment of a partnership with the ASEAN, while strengths and weaknesses concern internal aspects of civil society organizations.

SWOT Analysis of a Prospective ASEAN-Civil Society partnership based on OHCHR's Handbook for Civil Society as well as its manual on human rights violations information gathering and advocacy "Attributing Individual Responsibility"

The many faces of VAC

VAC has no limitations happening to children of every origin, race, class, religion and culture, while cutting across all geographical boundaries. It occurs in homes, schools and streets, in places of work and in care and detention centers. Perpetrators consist of parents, family members, teachers, caretakers, law enforcement authorities and peers.



Gender, race, ethnic origin, social status and disability put some children at greater risk than others. Take for example, child refugees. A high proportion of crimes and disputes in refugee camps fall under the broad category of sexual and gender-based violence. In Sierra Leone, domestic violence was second only to theft as the most pervasive justice issue arising in the camps.

We are also witnessing the rise of new trends in the issue. As internet access expands, VAC is finally taking on new dimensions such as cyber-bullying and online sexual exploitation, with damaging and life-changing consequences. In addition, many countries are increasingly vulnerable to natural hazards. Consequently, child protection by families and communities is weakened, increasing the risks of violence in a dangerous world where, as Kofi Annan put it, “no country is immune, whether rich or poor”.

The UN Secretary General’s Study on Violence against Children ([A/61/299](#)), led by Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, addressed violence against children in five settings: family,

schools, alternative care institutions and detention facilities, places where children work and communities.

Settings in which VAC occurs	home and family: physical violence(homicide and non-fatal); neglect; sexual violence (related to sexual behavior/social norms/child marriage); psychological violence:harmful traditional practices
	schools and educational settings: physical and psychological punishment; discrimination/gender-based linked violence; HIV and sexual violence;bullying;fighting/physical assault /gangs/ weapons in schools
	care and justice systems: in institutional care:violence by staff, in the guise of treatment, lack of care, by other children; in custody and detention: by staff, in custody of police and security forces, as a sentence, by adult detainees, by other children
	community: trafficking; by police and other authority figures; sexual violence by strangers; coerced first sex; physical violence (homicide and non-fatal); within intimate and dating relationships: civil conflict and unrest
	places of work: traditional forms of slavery; trading drugs; illicit activities; bonded servitude; forced and bonded labour; sex exploitation; isolation and psychological distress: child domestic labour

VAC comes down to five settings each of which includes different types of acts of violence

Corporal punishment, harmful traditional practices and honor crimes

According to the UN Study on VAC, the prohibition of every inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is of utmost importance. To be more specific, the UN is abhorrent to early and forced marriages, FGM and so-called honor crimes to name just a few. Unfortunately, such forms of VAC are still tolerated in some parts of the world. In such cases, not only is there a need for explicit law and bans but civil society groups also have an important role to play.

To illustrate: “Trokosi” was part of many ancient religions. In West Africa, the practice has persisted for several hundred years. It is a religious form of sexual slavery and VAC where young virgin girls are sent to shrines to atone for the crimes committed by their male relatives.

In the 21st century, it is no longer in place going against today’s society founding values. As proof, Ghana’s constitution Article 16 (1) prohibits slavery and servitude, which includes trokosi. A more detailed prohibition is included in the Criminal Code, Section 314A:

(1) Whoever (a) sends to or receives at any place any person; or (b) participates in or is concerned in any ritual or customary activity in respect of any person with the purpose of subjecting that person to any form of ritual or customary servitude or any form of forced labor related to a customary ritual commits an offense and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not less than three years.

However, impunity and lack of enforcement are huge obstacles. Since the law was passed, there hasn't been any arrest of a single priest or family member for continuing the practice. Criminalization of trokosi is facing serious disapproval by powerful religious and political lobbying groups campaigning against it, on the grounds that it is part of their cultural and religious heritage, and is misunderstood. On top of that, human rights campaigners fear the practice has been driven underground. It is estimated there are still between 4,000 and 6,000 women and children under bondage in shrines in Ghana alone.

In the light of such civil unrest, important questions arise. What happens when an age-old abusive custom has become part of people's identity? What if the practice maintains order in the community and assuages powerful, visceral fears? How to balance religious freedom and respect for the traditions and respect of human rights of thousands of children?

Rather than relying on the corrupted justice system, stakeholders must target their efforts and resources on mobilizing the support of priests, community leaders and teachers. The whole community must be educated so that we achieve long-term change and build positive social norms. This is true for every such case where ancient religious and cultural principles are violating the human rights of minors.

Why children are vulnerable to violent behavior

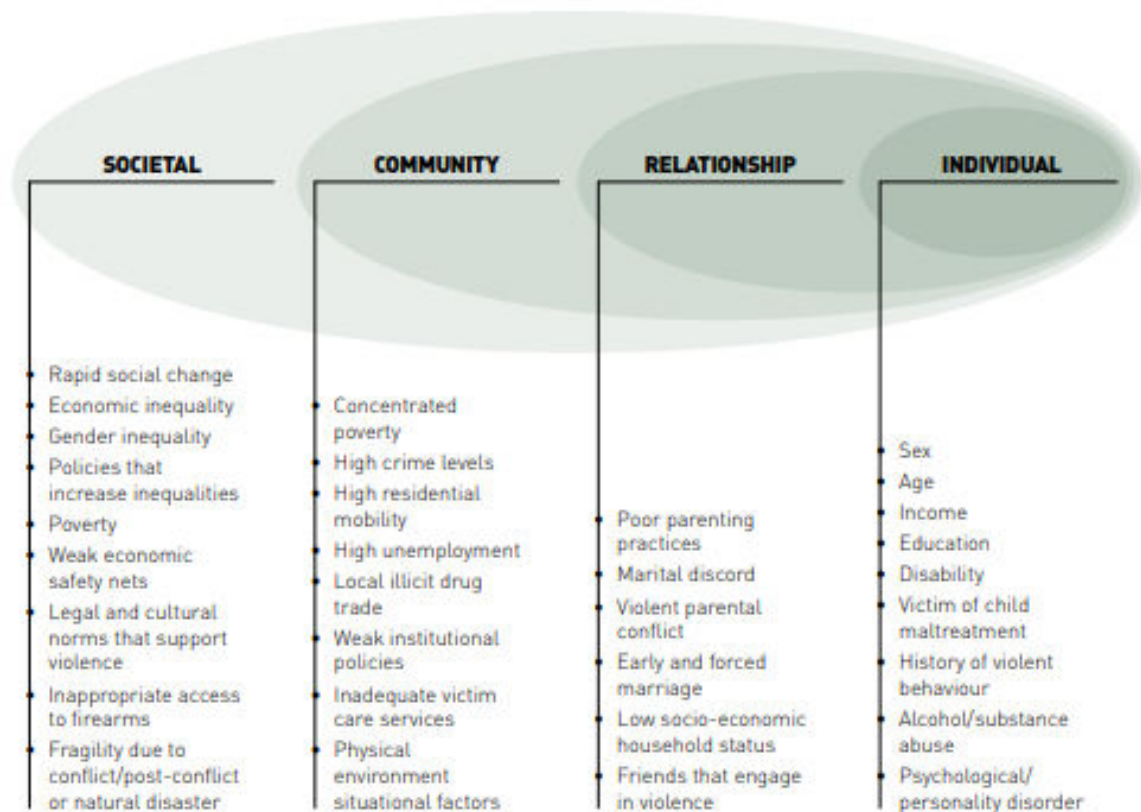
“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Among the many idioms attributed to Benjamin Franklin, this phrase stands out as a timely admonition for the world of diplomacy. To address a global issue, it's fundamental to pinpoint its principal causes.

Risk factors of VAC can be identified within:

- a) society: financial instability, flawed governance, socio-economic inequalities
- b) community: intense criminal activity, high rates of poverty and unemployment, ill-functioning community service
- c) relationships: growing up beside violent parents, peers

- d) individuals: particularities of victims (e.g. gender, sexual orientation, disabilities) and perpetrators (e.g. past experiences, disorders, substance abuse)

It is advisable to examine thoroughly the diagram below to grasp the magnitude of the problem in your delegation and ultimately pursue preventative action.



Root causes of Violence based on World Health Organization’s Report on Violence and Health

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Cambodia

Cambodia has developed legislation and policies specifically to reduce gender-based violence. In fact, Cambodia Action Plan for Gender Mainstream (2009-2013) was a very ambitious project.

Unfortunately, unconsolidated and poorly-enforced legislation, with gaps in children’s legal protection and between law and practice makes such initiatives ground to a halt. As a result, Cambodia is notorious for being a major destination for traveling sex offenders.

This is one of the many challenges faced by the authorities and that is quite widespread among most ASEAN countries. To begin with, there is a low investment in child-sensitive mechanisms for counseling, reporting and complaints on violence against children. The scarcity of data and research for the governing bodies is also a big obstacle to designating efficient strategies. Finally, policy interventions are uncoordinated, with weak communication and articulation across government departments and between central and local authorities.

Indonesia

Steps have been taken to protect children in justice institutions. For example, Law No. 11/2012 that entered into force in 2014 was framed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and addresses children as offenders, as victims and as witnesses of crimes. Children's right to legal counsel and other assistance and to access justice before an objective and impartial court and in closed proceedings are recognized, as is the right to humane treatment and freedom from torture and other inhuman, cruel and degrading treatment or punishment.

The minimum age of criminal responsibility has been raised from 8 to 12 and marital status no longer constitutes grounds for treating the child as an adult.

Such efforts must be applauded as it shows a willingness to strive for change and build new positive social norms.

Philippines

In the Philippines, the Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009 stands out. Aside from defining and prohibiting the grooming of children for sexual purposes, it is an innovative approach meeting the demands of a new technology era.

It requires private sector actors, namely Internet Service Providers (ISPs), private business establishments and Internet content hosts, to assist in the fight against child pornography. ISPs have the obligation to notify the national authorities upon discovery that their servers or facilities are being used to commit child pornography offenses. They are also obliged to preserve evidence for use in criminal proceedings. Upon request by law enforcement authorities, they must give details of users who access or attempt to access websites containing child pornography. ISPs must also install programs or software designed to filter and block child pornography. Importantly, the Act also requires appropriate protections for child victims of pornography offenses. This includes strict confidentiality in handling evidence, protecting witnesses and assisting in recovery and reintegration.

Malaysia

Malaysia's Sexual Offences against Children Bill 2017 provides enhanced legal protection from sexual abuse and exploitation. The legislation addresses a range of matters, including offenses related to child sexual abuse material, and the presumption that a child is competent to give evidence in relevant proceedings.

However, there are some concerning facts about the state of things in the justice sector where the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years old. More strikingly life sentences, the death penalty and corporal punishment are legitimized for every criminal offender.

Overall, albeit a variety of targeted legal measures, there is always room for improvement to assure complete legal protection and ultimately eliminate VAC.

Laos PDR

The official labour law of Laos PDR has the following rules: Article 101 sets the working age to 14 years; however, prohibits working overtime. Under certain circumstances, youth employees aged 12 may be accepted and used but the work must be light without any negative impact on the body, psychology or mind or hampering attendance of school, professional guidance or vocational training. In addition, Article 102 prohibits youth employment in activities, duties and locations that are unsafe, dangerous to the health of the body, psychology or mind.

Regardless of the strict legislation, though, it is estimated that two out of three children in the area are subject to hazardous work. This goes to show the loopholes of law enforcement across the country and the need for more rigorous control.

International Centre for Not-For-Profit Law (ICNL)

ICNL envisions "individuals empowered to improve their everyday lives" seeking "a legal environment that strengthens civil society, advances the freedoms of association and assembly, fosters philanthropy, and enables public participation around the world". It has initiated an Asia-Pacific program to empower local partners in addressing civic space issues.

In a 2017 report - The Law Affecting Civil Society in Asia, ICNL notes that "the dominant trend in Asia is clear: government regulatory controls on civil society are becoming increasingly restrictive, particularly for advocacy and other groups engaged in independent civil society activity." A big part of its work is therefore focused on helping partners, some of which are part of the ASEAN, defend civic space as their representative and ally with skilled advocacy and innovative ideas.

South Asia Initiative for Ending Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC)

The SAIEVAC is a South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Apex body working like an Inter-Governmental Organization so that local children can reap the benefits of an environment free from violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and discrimination. With a focus on child marriage, sexual abuse and exploitation, child labor, corporal punishment and trafficking, SAIEVAC initiates processes and operations that ensure the protection of children against violence, such as policies, frameworks and program interventions in line with SAARC and international instruments. Civil society has an active role in SAIEVAC decision-making by offering ground-level experience.

ASEAN

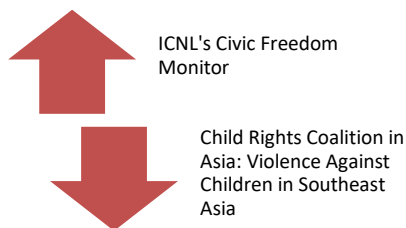
ASEAN member states have made a commitment to “promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building”, as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter. It’s thus their legal obligation to protect human rights and their defenders.

Quite surprisingly, though, they fall short on respecting those principles. The media keeps making a mockery of their commitment by calling out governments for turning a blind eye to human rights violations and protection.

Freedoms of association, expression and peaceful assembly are highly disregarded. Across societies, the intimidation and criminalization of human rights defenders is on the rise. There are continued efforts to restrict and disrupt any of the events organized by civil

society that are not halted by governments, although it’s their responsibility. A strong dismal human rights record that deteriorates and impunity that remains entrenched are worsening the situation.

In 2016, a collection of facts and figures about violence against children was published, with a strong focus on the Southeast Asia region. The prevalence of violence against children in the region and to child protection issues made themselves clear in that report. It shed light on how difficult it is for them to enforce laws protecting children and how VAC has been repeatedly justified by social or cultural norms.



I strongly advise you to consult these sources for to gain a deeper insight into your country's policies and challenges.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1998	United Nations General Assembly Declaration on Human Rights Defenders
2010	South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children
2010	Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association
2012	ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC)
2013	The New Delhi Declaration on South-South Cooperation for Child Rights in the Asia-Pacific
2013	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Children in ASEAN
2016	ASEAN Guidelines for a non-violent approach to nurture, care and development for children in all settings
2018	Colombo Declaration

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

Sustainable Development Goals



In 2015, countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Protecting children from violence is a core component of this milestone in the UN history as it's a cross-cutting concern of the following global targets:

- ✓ 4A: provision of safe and non-violent learning environments;
- ✓ 5.2: elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls;
- ✓ 5.3: elimination of harmful traditional practices;
- ✓ 8.7: elimination of the worst forms of child labor;
- ✓ 16.2: end the abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children;
- ✓ 16.9: promote the rule of law and strengthen institutions [...] to prevent violence.

World Health Organization

The World Health Assembly, the governing body of WHO, in resolution WHA 49.25 (1996), declared violence to be a leading worldwide public health problem and expressed particular concern at levels of VAC. In response to this resolution WHO prepared the first world report on violence and health, launched in 2002. In 2016, WHO initiated seven domains -the INSPIRE strategies- critical to ending violence against children.

The INSPIRE package of seven strategies

The INSPIRE strategies

- Implementation and enforcement of laws
- Norms and values
- Safe environments
- Parent and caregiver support
- Income and economic strengthening
- Response and support services
- Education and life skills

Resolutions and Secretary-General Reports

- Report of the Secretary-General on the issue of **child, early and forced marriage**; 26 July 2018; A/73/257

An overview of progress in efforts to eliminate child, early and forced marriage during the period from June 2016 to May 2018.

- Annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; 22 January 2018; A/HRC/37/48

A clear picture of major initiatives and developments made at a regional, national and global level aimed at safeguarding children's right to freedom from violence.

- UN Resolution on Protecting Children from **Bullying**; A/RES/71/176; 19 Dec 2016
- Report of the Special Rapporteur on the **sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**; A/70/222; 31 July 2015

A description of activities undertaken to tackle the issue and recommendations for a recovery and re-integration program.

- Discrimination and violence against individuals based on their **sexual orientation and gender identity**; A/HRC/29/23; 4 May 2015

Good practices and ways to overcome discrimination leading to VAC in application of existing international human rights laws and standards.

- Report of the Special Rapporteur on **trafficking in persons**, especially women and children, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro; A/HRC/29/38; 31 March 2015

Recommendations for protecting trafficked children's best interests with a human rights-based and victim-centered approach.

- Good practices and major challenges in preventing and eliminating **female genital mutilation** Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; A/HRC/29/20; 27 Mar 2015
- United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the **Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**; A/RES/69/194; 26 Jan 2015
- UN Resolution on Ending Violence against Children: a Global Call to **Make the Invisible Visible**; A/HRC/RES/25/10; 14 April 2014
- Resolution on Strengthening **collaboration on child protection** within the United Nations system; A/RES/68/145; 30 January 2014
- Resolution on Human rights in the **administration of justice, including juvenile justice**; A/HRC/24/L.28; 23 September 2013
- General comment on **children and enforced disappearances** adopted by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances at its ninety-eighth session; A/HRC/WGEID/98/1; 14 February 2013
- Report of the Special Rapporteur on **contemporary forms of slavery**, including its causes and consequences, Gulnara Shahinian Thematic report on servile marriage; A/HRC/21/41; 10 July 2012
- Human Rights Council Resolution: Rights of the child: a holistic approach to the protection and promotion of the rights of **children working and/or living on the street**; A/HRC/RES/16/12; 12 April 2011

- **Small arms** Report of the Secretary-General; S/2011/255; 5 April 2011

This document gives an insight into VAC in areas of conflict and how weapons have extinguished many young lives.

- UN Human Rights Council Resolution on **Civil Society Space**; A/HRC/27/L.24; 23 September 2014

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The CRC is part of the legally binding international instruments for the guarantee and the protection of Human Rights. Adopted in 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly, the treaty's objective is to protect the rights of all children in the world. ⁽¹⁷⁾

The CRC consists of 41 articles, each of which details a different type of right. These



articles are grouped together under the following themes:

UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme to Eliminate Female Genital Mutilation

UNFPA and UNICEF have established a two party-coordinated global program to put an end to FGM. The UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme benefits from mutually reinforcing expertise and insights of the two agencies, establishing partnerships with governments and often working closely with grass-roots community organizations and other key stakeholders, backed by the most current social science research.

UNFPA and UNICEF have been receiving grants from the public and private sectors to help reach a resource target of \$77 million, for the period 2018 to 2021, which is required to fulfill its objectives.

Good Treatment of Girls, Boys and Adolescents with Disabilities in the World

The Asia and Pacific regional launch of the Campaign is co-organized by the Special Envoy to the UN Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), with the support of the Royal Thai Government, the Embassy of the Republic of Chile to the Kingdom of Thailand, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and UN Women.

It's an awareness-raising campaign on eliminating violence against children with disabilities by supporting stakeholders, particularly families, educators and the broader community.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Daphne III Funding Programme

The EU Daphne program has been developed for the period 2014-2020 as part of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. It is a funding line for NGO projects that support victims of violence and combat the violence against women and children.

Since its initiation in 1997, it has struck a chord with NGOs and responses to calls for proposals are high. Through the years it has reached funding of 20 million Euros over four years (2000-2003) and in 2013 16,7 million Euros were invested in the program.

A part of the program is the Daphne Toolkit: a rich repository of project descriptions, reports, studies, tools and awareness-raising and training materials.

Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA)

VPA is a network of WHO Member States, international agencies and civil society. It targets the risk factors leading to violence and promotes multi-sectoral cooperation.

In the past, it has advocated for reductions in the incidence of VAC through increasing effective parenting with a particular focus on low- and middle-income countries. In addition, the synergies created by good parenting early in life reduce the likelihood of VAC later in life.

Furthermore, VPA has been using the VPA web platform to provide members and the public with online access to personal testimonies of victims and survivors of violence, as well as their families. The goal is to make these stories available for education and policy work on violence prevention, including media outreach, to help illustrate the human costs of violence and tackle underreporting.

Child Fund Alliance (CFA)

CFA is a global network of 11 child-focused development organizations which cater to the needs of children worldwide and assist more than 12 million children and their families in over 60 countries. It works in partnership with children and their communities to create lasting change by supporting long-term community development, responding to humanitarian emergencies and promoting children's rights. CFA implements programs with a range of local partners in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Vietnam and more.

CFA has done outstanding work to end VAC focusing on two areas:

- I. Child protection systems development: strengthening national child protection services and community processes to protect children; violence prevention initiatives; targeted projects for high-risk groups of children.
- II. Building children's resilience: programs to develop children's confidence, competencies, skills and interests so they can cope with challenges and crises.

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC)

IPEC was created in 1992 with the aim of the progressive elimination of child labour, which was to be achieved through strengthening the capacity of countries to deal with the problem and promoting a worldwide movement.

IPEC's outreach is 88 countries, with an annual expenditure on technical cooperation projects that reached over US\$61 million in 2008. Its network has constantly been growing and now includes employers' and workers' organizations, other international and government agencies and has a very strong collaboration with civil society.

IPEC's goals are defined in the International Labor Organization Convention on the worst forms of child labor, 1999 (No. 182) as:

- all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs;
- work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Global Partnership to End VAC

It is the ultimate collaboration between stakeholders: UNICEF, UN Women, WHO, SRSG on Children and Armed Conflict, SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict and SRSG on VAC. Voices, actions and resources are united for the mere purpose of ending VAC, with a commitment to collaborating with civil society, which is deeply embedded in its action plan.

The Partnership's Goals are building political will, accelerating action and strengthening collaboration.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

As previously stated, the topic encompasses two broad problems (a restricted with civil society and violence against children) both of which are fundamental to designate a complete strategy for South-East Asia.

On one hand, you must reflect on ways to optimize civil society's transformative potential. Only by practical recommendations for a safe and enabling environment, will discussions on the establishment of partnerships be possible. Intimate knowledge of your country's civic freedom would boost such efforts. This is clearly a case of common legislative action. After any regulation hurdles of a prospective partnership have been eliminated, SWOTs of civil society-ASEAN collaborations should be taken into consideration to embark on collaborating with civil society in various ways. This will help you integrate it into the efforts you propose to confront VAC as effectively as possible. So, one fundamental goal would be developing a systematic framework to collaborate against VAC, along with a thriving civil society.

On the other hand, there are plenty of emergencies to be taken care of in order to eradicate VAC. Traditional practices and culture, as well as deep-rooted attitudes (e.g. violence as a form of discipline) that violate children's rights, must be addressed. For example, awareness-raising should take place to change attitudes that condone or normalize violence. Furthermore, it's important to have a prevention-targeted approach. For example, positive child development should be promoted in all settings where violence occurs through appropriate budgeting and staff training, protocols and guidelines and exchange of information. Lastly, given the great variety of cases, there is not a "one-size-fits-all approach", so all specific needs of not only vulnerable groups and particular victims, such as children in areas of conflict or street situations but emerging areas such as abuse of new information and communication technologies, must be catered.

In conclusion, a potential blueprint would include civil society freedom measures, efforts to develop effective partnerships and a holistic approach to respond to VAC.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Child Rights Coalition Asia (2017). *Annual Report 2017*. Mongolia

Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (2018). *Who's responsible*. New York & Geneva

International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (2016). *The Law Affecting Civil Society in Asia: Developments and Challenges for Nonprofit and Civil Society Organizations*

International Labor Organization (1999). *Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention*. Geneva

World Health Organization (2016). *Inspire: Seven Strategies to End Violence Against Children*. Luxemburg

World Health Organization (2002). *World report on violence and health*. Geneva

World Movement for Democracy (2012). *Defending Civil Society*. Washington DC

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2016). *Victims are not Virtual*. South Asia

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2018). *What ASEAN Integration could mean for children: Assessment of the ASEAN Community Blueprints and potential impacts on children*. Thailand

United Nations Secretary-General (2006). *World Report on Violence Against Children*. Geneva

United Nations Special Representative of Secretary-General on Violence against Children. [Legal Ban on Violence Against Children](#)

United Nations Special Representative of Secretary-General on Violence against Children (2006). *Toward a World Free from Violence: Global Survey on Violence Against Children*

If I can be of any assistance, please mail me with any questions or concerns at akav04@gmail.com . I would be glad to be of any help during your preparation.