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 **South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children**

**3rd Technical Consultation**

**on**

**Eliminating Harmful Practices Affecting Children**

**in**

**South Asia**

**IN-COUNTRY CONSULTATION GUIDELINE**

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SAIEVAC

SAARC Apex Body

**24th to 29th September 2013 – Thimphu, Bhutan**

**Hosted bythe Royal Government of Bhutan**

**Organized and Showcased by the SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat**

**With Support from the South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Children (SACG), the SAARC Development Fund (SDF) and in Collaboration with the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children (SRSG-VaC)**

**DRAFT GUIDELINES TO ADAPT DURING THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN ON**

**“ELIMINATING HARMFUL PRACTICES AFFECTING CHILDREN”**

**ATTENTION: This document is linked to the “Selection criteria for national consultations” document. So, please familiarize yourself with its content before going through the information provided below.**

**In-country Focus Group Discussion with children – boys and girls about …………(?) number of children will attend the national consultation – *AGAIN please refer to guidance note on ‘Selection Criteria for national consultations’ to ensure children, both boys and girls are selected and participate at the national consultation based on the selection criteria***

**Explain to the children why we have gathered………..**

* Please ensure sufficient time to spend with children on creating warm and welcoming environment. Then, it will be useful to do a quick refresher on what children’s rights are and how those rights are violated due to numerous reasons (children themselves can do these sessions slowly linking to VAC and thus exploring if any child/children will have understanding on traditional practices that are harmful for children
* Afterwards it will be useful to give a quick introduction about SAIEVAC initiative and what has been done to date and the brief on the national consultation and how this is going to link/tie up to the SAIEVAC regional Technical Consultation in Bhutan – make sure that children again do not raise expectations since only few children like the SAIEVAC Child Governing Board Members and Observers will participate at the regional consultation this time. Yet there are several ways to explain why and how the outcomes of this national consultation will be taken up at the regional level…………….(of course, countries can be creative and customize it the way they want it – the SAIEVAC Child Participation Advisory Group CPAG will closely work and support the national consultation processes and will provide technical assistance and ideas/clear steps on how to proceed ahead as this will also have to relate much with the concept note and agenda for the national consultation)

**Basic outlines of the National Children’s Consultation**

* Sharing/Discussion on SAIEVAC as explained in the children’s agenda document
* Share with children about children’s participation within SAIEVAC and having child representatives to the SAIEVAC Governing Board (also briefly tell about the composition of SAIEVAC Governing Board)
* Inform them about the initiatives being taken to establish SAIEVAC children’s forum on VAC and what message they would like to send as a set of recommendations to the delegates/ministers to the SAIEVAC Regional Consultation
* Explain and discuss on the Initiatives and Campaigns undertaken on "Eliminating Harmful Practices Affecting Children" in their country.
* How do they like to work with SAIEVAC, with other children of their country/ region and their government to eliminate harmful traditional practices?
* Also discuss with them on what a network is and what does it comprise of, particularly children networks – those already involved in such networks could lead the discussion

Then get into the thematic discussion (the agenda and the methodology will further guide this)

* What are harmful traditional practices and their effect on children? Are all traditional practices harmful for children? - separate for boys and girls (if necessary/possible to see and understand the different perspectives they bring in also in relation to gender norms and practices)
* On a flip chart get them to list and identify the areas that they understand or experience which traditional practices are harmful – discuss on how and why such practices are harmful……………..

**The facilitators should simplify this term in the beginning as there may be a risk of country level facilitation while doing a direct translation of this term into local languages which would be very difficult for children to understand (e.g. we can ask children to think about things/ways that parents, grandparents and other adults in general have been doing as normal practices to help children to develop in a positive way and otherwise - the SAIEVAC CPAG will provide necessary support as needed)**

**Ask questions on:**

* Traditional harmful practices they or their peers have experience?
* Identify other similar risks that they face in the community?
* Who are most vulnerable? And why? Effect of harmful practices
* Who carry out such practices?
* Where does this these occur? School, house, community
* Is this violence against children?
* Any psychosocial issues? Worries and concerns?
* Do they feel that they are well protected against this violence?
* Who protects them and how?
* Do they feel that VAC in the name of traditional practices is justified?
* What do they feel should be the role of the family, community and governments to prevent such violent traditional harmful practices?
* Also ask them share good practices, lessons learnt how children are benefiting from the available services in their communities

**Sharing/Discussion on the Harmful Practices Affecting Children…..contd….**

* Inform them about the harmful practices affecting children that are prevalent in their country – this needs to be a very intensive/detailed and interactive session using participatory approaches
* What are the relevant action to take to prevent and safeguard children from such traditional harmful practices
* What are the achievements and gaps on the work done so far to protect children from such harmful practices affecting children?

Drawing

* Drawing is used with children because it is effective at getting a lot of information in a short period of time. It helps children to quickly communicate concerns and problems, which can then be followed up in discussion. Pictures can help children to communicate feelings and perceptions, and usually results in them reporting more than they would otherwise.

Giving a child time to draw…………….

* Provides them with time to think about the discussion topic
* Increases memory retrieval
* Helps children to organize thoughts
* Prompts children to tell more than they would during a purely verbal interaction

Stages

* In the right hand bottom write the name, age and sex of the child (if they feel ok, else not mandatory)
* The moderator asks the children to draw what they know, experience and feel about harmful practices affecting children
* Take care not to comment on the quality of the pictures-no picture is good or bad and the children shouldn’t feel that their art is being judged.
* Once the children have all finished - ask about the drawing, this demonstrates to the child that you are interested in his or her creation.
* Be careful not to make it too personal. If a child has drawn something of interest then probe for additional information from the entire group (“does anyone else have experience of this?”)
* Questioning will also allow new information to surface and clarify what the child is trying to express.
* Don’t be afraid to stop and ask children to draw something else that has been left out of discussion
* Ask children permission if you can keep their drawings and have them sent to Bhutan to be shown at the SAIEVAC meeting/consultation.
* Take detailed notes of what the children state about their drawings

Finally………

* Group work through democratic/participatory approaches to select children
* What will the selected children think of doing after coming back from the SAIEVAC Consultation(ONLY IF PARTICIPATION AT THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION)

**ELSE, adapt this to suit the national consultation and follow-up with the participating children**

**A brief guidelines on implementing the draft agenda for National Consultation on the expected outcomes and processes.**

Following points are suggested to maintain a degree of consistency on the topics covered for the national consultation across SAIEVAC countries so that we are able to meet the objectives of the children’s participation:

* Ensuring that each country conducts first welcome/introduction and background information session from 9:00 am to 10:00 am (considering the limited time frame if organized for a day only)
* Please use the Q & A document on the history of SAIEVAC and if possible to translate in local language and distribute hands-out the summarized version of this key document
* The participating children need to have a clear understanding on SAIEVAC as the only largest children’s entity in the region and on children’s participation as key component in it
* As the proposed topics in the agenda are still flexible, please prioritize and allow more time on Mapping various forms of harmful practices affecting children in different settings including brainstorming on how children experienced violence on such harmful practices – how this can be prevented etc.
* The other priority should be on how such harmful practices can be reduced and roles of children in preventing such harmful practices affecting children – can encourage children to share good practices and campaigns undertaken to stop violence against children.
* Start with giving an overview of what constitutes violence and how and where they usually take place – at the end of this session, each child participant will have greater understanding on violence against children and how, where they usually take place and how these can be prevented (all the national level outcomes/recommendations will be presented and considered at the regional level consultation)

**NOTE**: Please ensure that these following guidelines are strictly followed including having a clear child protection briefing: (all the background documents and guidelines have been shared by the SAIEVAC Secretariat to each country which needs to be adapted and translated as necessary so that children have adequate understanding and feel safe and secure throughout the consultation period – this also thus helps in generating/ensuring ethical and meaningful participation of children:

* Code of conduct
* Child protection policy and procedures
* Child protection minimum standards
* And other related background documents/guidelines