

Youth Partnership Project for South Asia Regional Consultation

13 – 17 December, 2007
Dhulikhel & Kathmandu, Nepal

*Empowering Youth to Fight Trafficking and the
Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*



Host Organization:

Maiti Nepal



Implementing Partners:

ECPAT International, Maiti Nepal, Sanlaap India, Aparajeyo-Bangladesh



Supported by:

Christian Aid and Comic Relief



The Youth Partnership Project for Child Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation in South Asia (YPP) is an innovative project coordinated by ECPAT International working to empower and build the capacity of child survivors and youth at risk of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking to take the lead in the fight against CSEC.

The YPP is supported by Christian Aid and Comic Relief and implemented at the national level by ECPAT partners Maiti Nepal, Aparajeyo-Bangladesh and SANLAAP in India. Through these organizations, young people are supporting one another, offering help to children in dangerous red-light and border areas and advocating for changes to the law to prevent these forms of abuse. So far the YPP has reached out to over 50,000 children.

Large numbers of children are trafficked annually in South Asia, with estimates as high as 350,000 in India, 40,000 in Nepal and 29,000 in Bangladesh. Trained YPP youth have set up peer support programmes in schools located in high-risk areas and are reaching out to local communities through awareness campaigns in an effort to reduce the numbers of children trafficked to cities and neighboring countries. The YPP also works with trained caregivers and local organizations to give them the tools to provide quality psychosocial care for child survivors. With the support of ECPAT and YPP teams in each country, YPP youth are working to improve the lives of child survivors and persuade adults at the community, national and international level to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Young survivors and youth at risk of commercial sexual exploitation in India, Bangladesh and Nepal involved in the YPP organized a Regional Consultation to share experiences and lessons learned by involving experiential and at-risk youth in the fight against CSEC. The aim is to 1) influence governments to better protect children against commercial sexual exploitation and recognize the value and importance of child and youth participation, 2) to influence other stakeholders on these topics and 3) for children and young people to review, analyze and select key advocacy messages. Youth representatives from all three project countries were elected by their peers to present evidence of the efficacy and impact of peer support programmes and youth-led advocacy campaigns in supporting survivors and lobbying government to improve legislation to better protect children.

The regional consultation was held in Nepal and consisted of a two-day youth workshop, where the youth representatives had an opportunity to meet and share the outcomes of their national level consultations. This was followed by a preparatory day and on the final day of the consultation the youth organized a press conference and presented their recommendations to government officials, the media and other high level delegates.

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Goal: To influence policy and practice among key stakeholders across the region and beyond.

Specific Objective:
Identify Youth Advocacy Messages for the Third World Congress

Outputs:

- Key TWC Youth Advocacy Messages

Key Activities

- Announce TWC date / location / themes

Specific Objective:
Generate Media Coverage to Highlight Key YPP Issues & Youth Recommendations

Outputs:

- Newspaper articles and TV news reports on the RC and YPP topics
- Youth interviews with journalists
- YPP youth press releases during workshop days
- Media guidelines for interviewing youth

Key Activities

- Develop media guidelines for interviewing youth
- Prepare youth for exposure to media
- Address confidentiality issues with media & youth
- Youth press releases during workshop days
- Prepare youth video clips / interviews by youth

Specific Objective:
Influence Government Policymakers to Support Youth Recommendations

Outputs:

- Quotes and government statements supporting youth recommendations

Key Activities

- Invite Ambassadors for India & Bangladesh
- Youth to present policy recommendations
- Appropriate protocol followed / Carmen and partner heads to sit with high level guests
- Invitations should be sent by end Oct.
- Banners to display youth advocacy messages
- Info sheets with background on the project and stats

Specific Objective:
Encourage Donors to Support Youth-Led Projects Against CSEC

Outputs:

- Future donor support for projects similar to the YPP
- Donors contact ECPAT to see how they can become involved in and support the YPP

Key Activities

- Make Phase II diagrams into posters
- Invite Save, ILO, UNICEF, Plan

Specific Objective:
Express Gratitude to YPP Youth and Partners

Outputs:

- YPP youth and partners are recognized for their hard work and dedication
- YPP youth and partners are motivated and enthusiastic to support the project in Phase II

Key Activities

- Gifts for YPP Youth and Partners
- Brief speeches and presentation of gifts to youth representatives

Specific Objective:
Ensure Protection of Youth

Outputs:

- All youth involved in the RC are able to participate fully in the event

Key Activities

- Develop RC child protection guidelines
- Organize preparatory CP session with adults and caregivers

CORE RC STANDARDS & PRINCIPLES:

- **Protection**
- **Participation**
- **Sensitivity to gender, race, ethnicity and health status**

Participants: Fifty YPP youth from India, Nepal and Bangladesh

Regional Consultation Outputs & Activities

Objective 1: To identify key youth advocacy messages for policymakers and stakeholders.

Key Activities:

- Large banners to display national youth policy recommendations and final youth RC recommendations
- One page YPP information sheet to be developed and provided to advocacy targets
- Phase II Poster outlining key objectives and activities
- Pledge Sheet to be provided for all participants to sign on Advocacy Day
- RC Stickers designed to be affixed to materials and handouts
- RC Title/Slogan: *Youth Partnership Project South Asia: Empowering Youth to Fight CSEC*
- Invitation cards to be published explaining RC process, youth participation in the event and planned follow-up
- Regional Consultation Report to be developed
- Advocacy Day Exhibition Area: Maiti, SANLAAP, AB, ECPAT, Christian Aid
- Partner organizations to set up information booths during youth workshop
- Follow-up materials (on CD-Rom) to be sent to participants and advocacy targets: RC video & report
- Common RC design / branding
- Registration Desk: Information Packs, Name / Press Cards, Green Bands provided to participants (separate Information Packs for 1) Press, 2) NGO / Government, 3) Youth, 4) Nepali Pack)
- SMS Advocacy Campaign
- Press release and youth recommendations sent to relevant Child Rights e-groups

Objective 2: To generate media coverage to highlight youth advocacy messages and the Regional Consultation.

Key Activities:

- Pre-RC Press Release
- RC Launch on Nov 13th
- Preparatory meeting with journalists in KTM in the final week of November
- Press Pack to include:
 - Ethical Guidelines for interviewing children
 - Youth Quotes (including pseudonyms, ages, nationality, etc)
 - Project Overview (quantitative indicators, SA specific info)
 - Press Cards
 - TDH CD information regional statistics
 - Partner organization information brochures

- Youth Press Release on Advocacy Day
- Appeal to media for long-term commitment to non-exploitative / sensationalist coverage on CSEC issues
- Schedule interviews / preparatory sessions for youth
- Senior management of YPP partners to hold interviews with Kathmandu Post, Himalaya Times and TV media in Kathmandu
- Post-RC National Press Conferences in India and Bangladesh (end December 2007)
- Video / photo documentation of RC by 1) youth journalists and 2) professional team to produce 15 minute video to be shown on Advocacy Day
- Christian Aid youth journalist to attend RC and publish stories
- Advance publicity: radio jingles, print ads, road signs, etc.
- Separate room to be organized on Advocacy Day for press conference / media interviews

Objective 3: To share YPP experiences as an emerging good practice for working with experiential youth with international donors and organizations.

* Outputs / Activities covered under Objective 1/3

Objective 4: To congratulate and show appreciation to the YPP youth and partners.

Key Activities:

- December 17th: Celebration Dinner to congratulate youth, t-shirts (for all YPP youth), YPP pins, certificates
- Evening entertainment: Talent Shows, cultural nights
- December 18th: Youth Recreation Day in KTM
- Early morning activities
- Group photo taken on Workshop Day One / print provided to all youth

Regional Consultation Youth Workshop

December 13, 2007: Day I

On the opening day of the consultation, short inauguration ceremony was held during which media and government representatives were briefed about the Regional Consultation along with its objectives, the number of participants and expected outcomes. This event was attended by fifty journalists and several distinguished guests. Mrs. Chitrlekha Yadav, Deputy Speaker of the Nepali Parliament, was the chief guest of the program. A group of youth representatives from Nepal, India and Bangladesh participated in this program and representatives from the YPP partner organizations shared the project work and accomplishments in the respective countries.

Concurrently, at the second consultation venue in Dhulikhel, participants from Nepal, Bangladesh and India received a warm welcome by the youth of Nepal with traditional red tikas and garlands.

At the end of the inauguration ceremony, the RC preliminary evening in Dhulikhel opened with a debriefing on the Child Protection Guidelines, ToR, review of the Codes of Conduct for Media and Translators, as well as the roles and responsibilities of chaperones. This session was led by the YPP National Coordinator for India and ECPAT International's CYP Programme Officer. The debriefing session was followed by a brainstorming session on the objectives of the Regional Consultation led by the RC Lead Facilitator from SANLAAP India. Youth responses during the brainstorming session are presented below:

"We, the youth from three countries Nepal, India and Bangladesh, are here together at this Regional Consultation because it helps us in following ways:

- Cross Learning
- Cultural Exchange
- Build Positive Relationships
- Develop innovative methods and new fields
- Regional experience sharing of our accomplishments and hurdles
- Draw media attention to the issue of CSEC
- Advocate for and address problems of other youth in our countries."

The Day I session ended with short inauguration, welcome, briefing on the RC Child Protection Guidelines and sharing of the consultation logistics and schedule.

December 14, 2007: Day II

Prior to the formal start of Day II, a YPP youth from Bangladesh gave a short presentation to share the special relevance of this date of national pride for Bangladeshi people.

“On this day many scholars of Bangladesh encouraging people to fight for independence were killed. Our national Victory Day will be celebrated two days from now, on 16th December. It is as a result of these historic events that Bangladesh is a free and sovereign country today.”

She concluded with an inspirational statement concerning national pride and respect. As a mark of condolence for the Bangladeshi scholars killed on this day in history, a minute of silence was observed by all participants.

At this point the formal workshop began. The lead facilitator began introductions by pairing youth to introduce one another. The instructions were as follows:

- Change seats so that we all can interact with each other
- Try to interact with each other despite language barriers, using creative forms of communication
- Learn the name of your partner, their nationality and one interesting incident that has happened in their life.

The youth introductory session was followed by the introduction of all the adults present to support the RC.

The youth then began drafting the RC Ground Rules, which were recorded by two youth volunteers. The Ground Rules set forth by the youth participants for the YPP Regional Consultation are as follows:



- Respect each other at all times and do not talk at once.
- Follow the set schedule and allocated time.
- No unnecessary noise or side talk.
- Switch off all cell phones
- Active participation by all representing youth during the consultation.
- Pay full attention during each session.
- Request permission from the facilitator to leave the room during working sessions.
- Do not only speak, listening is also important for “positive communication”.
- If anyone makes a mistake, never laugh at them, but encourage and help them.

- We will operate on the Principle of Confidentiality: Personal issues shared during the four days of the consultation are not to be disclosed or shared anyone outside the session.
- Fun and entertaining games will be organized between sessions.
- Ask adults for help anytime and use the suggestion box to share confidential concerns.
- Don't be afraid or shy to express thoughts and opinions.
- Utilize opportunities to speak but be aware of providing enough time and space for others to speak also.
- Raise hands to speak and ask questions.
- If any participant feels hesitant to speak, it is the responsibility of other youth to help them.
- Workshop discussions should stick to the issue and not go off track.
- Irrespective of these ground rules, if anything unexpected happens, participants should work together to address the issue collectively.
- Do not use or express harmful or unacceptable body language that may upset another person.
- Simply writing down these ground rules alone will not make them effective, we must also follow them responsibly. This is the core ground rule.

The facilitator then shared information about setting goals, explaining that preparatory sessions/workshops have been held in each country to develop national recommendations to take forward to the RC. The key objective is now to work together to develop a set of regional recommendations.

ECPAT International's YPP Project Coordinator added, "During the next three days, we look forward to supporting you as you work together to refine the regional youth policy recommendations. On December 17th, you will have an opportunity to put forward these recommendations for involving youth in ending CSEC and protecting children to the government and media."

The key objectives of the workshop are as follows:

I. Immediate Objectives:

Review and prioritize all the recommendations put forward by each country and agree upon most important recommendations that will be presented at the youth Advocacy Day on 17th December.

II. Longer- term objectives:

The Regional Consultation recommendations will form the basis of future advocacy led by YPP youth, implementing partners and ECPAT International in the years to come. The recommendations will be presented at the upcoming Third World Congress to will be held at the end of 2008.

The participating YPP youth (26 from Nepal, 14 from India and 8 from Bangladesh) then broke in country teams to begin refining each set of national recommendations, identifying through consensus the ten most important and relevant recommendations from each country. Where possible, two or more

related recommendations were merged into one. Youth also focused on recommendations that involved active participation and partnership with young people.

After breaking into working groups to complete this activity, youth from each country presented their final recommendations. Prior to breaking for the day, the lead facilitator requested the youth to set aside time in the evening or prior to the beginning of the workshop the next morning to further refine, consolidate and rank their final set of country recommendations.



The day concluded with an excellent cultural presentation by the Nepali youth, including costumes from different regions of the country, national songs and the Kumari goddess dance. Local youth from Dhulikhel also participated in the performance.

December 15, 2007: Day III

Day III opened with a review of the recommendations for further prioritization. Youth from each country presented the revisions that they had made the previous evening to all participants.

The first presentation was made by the Nepali youth, who shared the following prioritized recommendations:

- Government and schools should encourage adults to involve youth when developing and executing policies and programs to stop violence against children.
- Government should allocate funds for special programs to commemorate social awareness days (including a Youth Day) to encourage youth and raise public knowledge of child rights issues. Youth actively participating in various social programmes should be publicly recognized for their efforts.
- Government should include information about social issues including child marriage in school curricula and support practical activities as project, fieldwork, and visits to accompany this.
- Skill development, leadership, opportunities should be provided to the youth by their government.

Opportunity: Youth who have been rescued from CSEC often do not have sufficient education and face lack of future employment opportunities. This should be addressed by providing realistic livelihood opportunities for all young people.

Skills: Uneducated youth should be provided practical skills and training to help them be able to live independently and with dignity according to their abilities.

Leadership: Youth should be given opportunities to work with government to develop policies and programmes on child and youth issues in an effort to make a difference and bring change, which they have the potential to do with great dedication and skill.

- Government should organize awareness programs on CSEC and trafficking in coordination with NGOs targeting citizens living in border and business areas that have high incidence of these problems.

The YPP Youth from India then presented their recommendations, which are as follows:

- In order to prevent CSEC and trafficking, government should support the establishment and replication of YPP youth groups as a model for awareness-raising in trafficking-prone areas. YPP members should be empowered trained in leadership skills and equipped with necessary information to enable them to conduct educational community awareness programmes.
- In order to ensure the protection of victims of trafficking and CSEC, government must provide all citizens with formal identification and birth certificates.
- Awareness-raising initiatives in high-risk areas can be led by YPP youth in close coordination with the government.
- Issues of CSEC and trafficking must be included in all government school curricula.
- Government should support the implementation of Peer Support programmes in schools. Toolkits containing guidelines for establishing Peer Support programmes should be developed and shared by government with schools across the country in order to reach the maximum number of schools.
- All South Asian countries should develop specific laws against CSEC, as well as strengthening and implementing existing legislation. Youth groups should work together to pressure the government to create and uphold these laws.
- Juvenile Justice Act
 - Adults who commit crimes against children should be arrested and punished.
 - The Juvenile Justice Act should be upheld in an efficient and clear manner for use in the juvenile court system. In order to prevent cross-border trafficking, YPP members can serve on Border Surveillance Teams working in coordination with Boarder Security Forces (BSF).
- Discrimination against persons who are HIV positive should be a punishable offence by law.
- Youth groups should work in coordination with the media to highlight issues of CSEC and trafficking with empathy and sensitivity.

Finally, the youth from Bangladesh presented the following recommendations:

- The number of youth involved in YPP Peer Support Schemes should be increased in order to strengthen youth participation and youth partnerships with government at the national level.
- Issues of CSEC, trafficking and HIV/AIDS should be included in all school curricula and youth should be involved in the drafting of this information.
- During religious programmes, religious leaders should include information related to CSEC, trafficking, HIV/AIDS in their messages to the public. Preparatory sessions should be organized to motivate and share information with religious leaders. This

could be very effective as religion is a very important component of South Asian culture.

- Youth should work with customs, border security systems and CBOs to prevent trafficking and other forms of CSEC, forming youth groups within these structures.
- Networks of NGOs, INGOs, Government officials, youth and other stakeholders should be established to combat CSEC and trafficking.
- Celebrities should be encouraged to participate in media public awareness campaigns on CSEC and trafficking.
- Information about CSEC, child abuse, trafficking, and prostitution should be displayed on government documents such as stamps, government bills and consumer goods. Youth should be invited to join the committee responsible for drafting the messages to be displayed in partnership with the government.
- Government should declare a national “Anti-Trafficking Day” to raise awareness about CSEC and trafficking.
- An International Child Committee should be established which affected children/youth can join and acquire services from. This recommendation relates specifically to the UN or CRC Committees specifically tasked with upholding child rights – the YPP youth feel that young people themselves, especially experiential youth, should also have an opportunity to serve on these Committees.
- SAARC and the UN should insist that all member states uphold their commitments to fight CSEC, trafficking and HIV/AIDS. Membership of countries who do not uphold these commitments should be suspended.



At the conclusion of the presentations by the youth from all three countries, the group shifted their focus to concentrate on drafting the final list of regional recommendations. Prior to the commencement of that session, the youth participated in a fun game/energizer outdoors to strengthen the group morale and unity.

The youth recommendations were then organized into the following three categories:

- ❖ Government, Laws and Policies
- ❖ Public Awareness, Education and Media
- ❖ Youth Participation, Networking and Partnership

The revised recommendations under each of these headings were then presented to the youth participants for further discussion. The youth debated and voted on whether each recommendation should be included in the final set of regional recommendations, with

overlapping recommendations from different countries being merged together. A thirteenth recommendation focusing on legislation on repatriation was added by a youth from Bangladesh with the support of the group. The recommendations to be presented to the government, national / international non-government organizations, UN agencies, the media, youth and other stakeholders on the final Advocacy Day of the consultation were finalized and agreed upon by all of the youth participants through this collaborative process. The final 13 regional youth recommendations conceived discussed, drafted and finalized by the YPP South Asian youth are as follows:

FINAL YPP YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

Government, Laws & Policies

- 1) Governments in Bangladesh, India and Nepal to ensure implementation of existing laws on trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC), especially punishment of perpetrators and speedy resolution of cases. If needed, governments should introduce new legislation to better protect children.
- 2) Government programmes to ensure the provision of appropriate vocational training and employment opportunities for vulnerable youth and survivors of CSEC and trafficking.
- 3) SAARC and UN member countries must uphold existing agreements to protect children from CSEC and trafficking. Membership of governments failing to do so should be suspended.
- 4) Regional Anti-Trafficking Day to be commemorated and governments to allocate budget for youth involvement.
- 5) Governments must ensure that all survivors of CSEC and trafficking have legal identity cards to ensure citizenship rights.
- 6) Governments of India, Bangladesh and Nepal should establish tripartite agreements or treaties and work with NGOs to facilitate repatriation of CSEC and trafficking survivors within six months of rescue.

Public Awareness, Education & Media

- 7) Government officials should be oriented on issues and policies related to CSEC and trafficking in order to prioritize child welfare in all development plans.
- 8) National primary and secondary school curricula should include information about issues including CSEC, trafficking and HIV/Aids. This theoretical knowledge should be supported by opportunities for practical community prevention work.
- 9) Religious leaders should use their religious platforms to work in partnership with youth to prevent to CSEC and trafficking.

- 10) Media to work in partnership with youth groups to raise mass awareness and to ensure sensitive and positive coverage of cases of CSEC and trafficking.

Youth Participation, Networking & Partnership

- 11) Strengthen existing youth groups and expand youth leadership and peer support programmes across the region.
- 12) Youth awareness and vigilance groups should be supported to work along the borders, red-light and high risk areas in partnership with local government and border security forces to prevent cross-border trafficking.
- 13) Youth participation in all shelter homes and rehabilitation centres run by government and NGOs for CSEC survivors to ensure minimum standards of care and protection.

At the end of the Day III formal workshop session, the youth focused on assigning roles and responsibilities for the Advocacy Day. Youth volunteered to be responsible for different activities based on their individual interests and talents. The key Advocacy Day working groups were as follows:

- Greeting VIPs and guests
- Cultural Program
- Media Interviews and Press Conference
- Presentation of Recommendations by youth of all the three countries
- Word of Thanks

The session was followed by an evening cultural presentation performed by the youth from India, including performances in both Bengali and Hindi, a puppetry show as well as the presentation of small gifts to all participants.



December 16, 2007: Day IV

The Day IV session started with a review of the recommendation development process so far and an overview of the structure of the upcoming Advocacy Day presentation to government officials, national / international organizations and the media schedule. The lead facilitator noted that efficient planning would be necessary in the limited remaining time before the Advocacy Day and that all of the preparations for the day will be led by the youth.

The session then focused on a briefing on the proposed and content of the Advocacy Day program. Participants discussed their opinions on the importance of showing the film of the youth workshop. A Nepali youth stated, "It is important to show the film because it will help the invitees and participants from government and NGOs to understand that these recommendations have genuinely been developed by youth and the process that this involved. The film will prove to the government officials that the recommendations were not prepared by adults." Another Nepali youth added that the film will also be useful for future documentation. A YPP youth member from India noted that the video will help government officials understand that that the youth from the three different countries have genuinely come together to bring about change. Other youth participants agreed that it was important to recognize that the recommendations were not developed quickly, that this required an extensive process of consultation, debate and discussion.

The lead facilitator thanked all of the participants for working so hard to develop the content of the recommendations. He reminded the youth that they will be questioned about their proposed recommendations by the Advocacy Day participants and the media. It will therefore be important to be prepared to respond with confidence. The YPP Project Coordinator added that the youth will have an opportunity to practice their responses with the RC supporting adults playing the role of government and media. The media questions will focus only on the policy recommendations and youth will not be asked to respond to questions of a personal or sensitive nature.

The youth then asked additional questions about the upcoming Advocacy Day. A youth from Nepal asked, "Who will be responsible for answering the questions? Will this be handled by the youth presenting the recommendations or by any of the participating youth?"



The lead facilitator responded by explaining that only the group members leading in the specified question / answer session or the press conference will be required to directly answer questions. A YPP India team Youth Motivator noted that the group should make sure all of the

recommendations and our responses are clear and agreed upon among all participants so that we are able to put forward a united and a consolidated vision.

The group then discussed the following components of the upcoming Advocacy Day in detail:

Signing the Pledge: Youth leading this activity will bring participants to the pledge banner and provide them with markers to sign their name. This is an important element of the day that will show solidarity and united support for the youth recommendations.

Cultural Performance: The objective of this performance will be not only to entertain the participants, but also to provide support for our recommendations in a creative way. The performance will take place following the presentation of recommendations so that they are reinforced in this way.

At the end of this short orientation, the youth divided into their Advocacy Day planning groups to begin discussing their individual responsibilities.

In the afternoon, all of the youth participants, accompanied by the YPP team members and other adults, departed Dhulikhel for Kathmandu. Upon arrival, the Bangladeshi team began preparations for their cultural program scheduled for that evening, which focused on national songs and dances related to the Bangladeshi "Victory Day" celebrations.

Following the performance, the Chairperson of Maiti Nepal, Ms. Anuradha Koirala, arrived with the special announcement that a few youth representing all three countries would have the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, the following morning. This represented an exciting opportunity for the youth to present their recommendations to the leader of the Nepali government, an incredible achievement for the youth advocacy effort against CSEC and trafficking.

December 14, 2007: Day V

Day V of the Regional Consultation was a much anticipated day for all of the youth participants, YPP teams and partners. In the morning, a group of representative youth departed to present the youth policy recommendations to the Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, at his residence. The remaining youth travelled to the Advocacy Day venue to begin preparations at the Yak and Yeti Hotel in Durbarmarg, Kathmandu.

The youth group meeting with the Prime Minister was accompanied by representatives of the four YPP partner organizations from Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Thailand, along with members of the YPP team. The meeting was very successful as the Prime Minister was impressed by the youth recommendations and promised to contact his counterparts in India and Bangladesh to set up a committee to work together to combat CSEC and trafficking.



The YPP Advocacy Day opened later in the afternoon with the arrival of the distinguished guests, media representatives, government and UN officials. Prior to the commencement of the day, youth participants from all the countries were busy preparing the venue to display exhibitions of the work undertaken by YPP teams in respective countries. The venue was decorated with pictures, poems, publications and other materials demonstrating youth initiatives in the fight against CSEC and trafficking.

With the arrival of the Chief Guest, Foreign Minister Ms. Sahana Pradhan, the Advocacy Day program began. The Master of Ceremonies was a YPP Nepal youth member. All participating youth carried out their individual responsibilities for the day with dedication and care, resulting in great success. Another YPP youth from Nepal delivered the welcome speech and the program then moved towards the presentation of final recommendations by the youth participants. The final thirteen recommendations were presented by YPP youth from Nepal, India and Bangladesh in their native languages. A short drama was performed following the presentation of the



recommendations, highlighting several of the key issues raised.

A short speech was then delivered by Mr. Ritu Raj Bhandari, Under Secretary of the Nepali Ministry of Women, Children & Social Welfare. Mr. Bhandari expressed his commitment to join hands with the youth and other relevant agencies (both governmental and non-governmental) in the fight against CSEC and trafficking. Following Mr. Bhandari's speech, Foreign Minister Sahana Pradhan delivered her speech, during which she guaranteed, on behalf of the government, to work to implement the youth recommendations. The Executive Director of ECPAT International, Ms. Carmen Madrinan then gave a brief presentation on behalf of ECPAT International. Mr. Mark Capaldi, ECPAT's Deputy Director of Programmes, along with YPP youth representatives from India, Bangladesh and Nepal then thanked all participants on behalf of ECPAT International and the YPP partners. Ms. Anuradha Koirala concluded the Advocacy Session expressing her thanks to all stakeholders, government representatives, participants, YPP partners and donor agencies on behalf of the host organization, Maiti Nepal.



The day concluded with a youth Press Conference that was held in an

adjacent room. Eight youth from the YPP three countries who had worked with the YPP team for several days in advance preparation participated in the Press Conference. Approximately 25 media representatives from various national and international electronic and print media outlets were present. The youth did an excellent job of clearly expressing their views and explaining their positions during the Press Conference, which resulted in positive interaction between the media and the participating youth. The youth were able to clearly, precisely and confidently respond to the questions posed by the media representatives and discuss the recommendations presented, as well as YPP good practices and their experiences working with young CSEC survivors during the first phase of the project. A large number of the major Nepali newspapers in both English and Nepali carried the story the following day.



Conclusion:

The YPP Regional Consultation brought together 74 participants from India, Bangladesh and Nepal for five days, during which participating youth worked together to draft regional



policy recommendations for protecting children against CSEC and trafficking. The primary outcome of this Regional Consultation, the final set of regional youth policy recommendations, is impressive evidence of the ability of young people to take action on issues that directly impact their lives. The Regional Consultation youth workshop and Advocacy Day were characterized at all times by meaningful participation of youth, empowerment and the strong conviction of these

determined young people that they can have a positive impact on the world they live in by improving the protection of children from commercial sexual exploitation. The consultation was also a successful advocacy initiative, with key messages carried to the highest levels of government, as well as through the media, donor and NGO community. The Regional Consultation provided an excellent opportunity for YPP youth to experience taking the lead in an international advocacy initiative and inspired many of these young people to continue their work into the future.

Annex 1

Youth Feedback on the Regional Consultation from Nepal, India & Bangladesh

1) Did you feel that the YPP Regional Consultation met our overall objective of influencing policy and practice among key stakeholders across the region and beyond?

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- In my opinion, the YPP Regional Consultation met our overall objectives. On the Advocacy Day, the participating stakeholders responded positively to our recommendations. But we must plan to continue to follow up to maintain their support and encourage implementation of the youth policy suggestions. It would be helpful if government representatives and media from India and Bangladesh could have also been involved in the Advocacy Day in Kathmandu.
- Yes, RC met the objectives. We, all youth from three countries, were able to present thirteen recommendations to the policymakers and relevant government authorities and worked very hard together to effectively accomplish this.
- The youth recommendations were positively received by all the invitees and the government representatives. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal have expressed their commitment to include the recommendations in the government policy, which I think is a big achievement.
- Yes, the RC met overall objectives. The government officials promised to incorporate the youth recommendations into the existing policy and it is now our responsibility to ensure that this actually takes place in the region.
- We have been successful in influencing policymakers and stakeholders through various programs by presenting our policy recommendations, as well as organizing an effective press conference. I am very proud to say the RC objectives have been met.
- Yes, we accomplished our objectives and this is demonstrated by the fact that the government representatives gave their commitment to address our recommendations.
- Yes, the RC met our overall objectives and influenced policymakers and media. We clearly demonstrated our work through our recommendations and had an opportunity to suggest policy changes required to uphold the rights of CSEC survivors and vulnerable groups.
- The RC was successful in generating common consensus in addressing the issue of CSEC and trafficking among stakeholders but this will require ongoing follow-up as I am not sure that a single consultation can bring about all of the necessary change required.
- I feel that the youth participants committed themselves and have done everything they can to bring about change through this consultation. They presented their recommendations to a broad audience including the media and Foreign Minister and Prime Minister of Nepal, as well as the public.
- The youth Advocacy Day had a major impact in raising awareness among key stakeholders and other people with authority, as we had an opportunity to interact and present our views to them personally.

- I felt that RC met our overall objective in influencing policymakers because the government officials expressed their commitment to support youth in the region to fight against CSEC and trafficking.
- The YPP Regional Consultation was successful because it has mobilized the youth, who united together to raise awareness about the problems of CSEC and trafficking in front of government and stakeholders.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- Yes, I think the RC fulfilled its objectives, as the representation from the Government of Nepal was very good on the 17th.
- The meeting with the Prime Minister was very encouraging as he said that he will follow up on the youth recommendations with his counterparts in Bangladesh and India. If this happens, our recommendations will meet the objective of strengthening the protection of children from trafficking and CSEC in the region.
- The presence of a large number of NGOs and INGOs on the Advocacy Day proved that they are interested in the YPP and after the presentations of the recommendations many were impressed. If they all commit to implementing the recommendations, this will be a real achievement.
- The RC was clearly successful in reaching out to policymakers – this was evident from the presence of the Foreign Minister of Nepal and a number of high level dignitaries.
- Before the India team received permission to travel, SANLAAP had a series of meetings with the Social Welfare Department, where the Director was quite impressed with the concept of the Regional Consultation and committed his full support for the team to travel to Nepal.
- The RC was successful in bringing together youth from three countries affected by trafficking and CSEC, they are one of the most important stakeholders in the fight against such social problems and have the potential to bring about change.
- Yes, I think that the RC was successful in what it set to do. The 13 Recommendations are very good, should be taken up seriously and shared with the media and Government. Commitment should be sought from them to uphold the Recommendations. Then only will the RC objectives be truly fulfilled.
- The presence of ECPAT and representative of Christian Aid will ensure that the RC and its outcomes are shared outside the South Asia region as well.
- A journalist from England participated in the RC, who interviewed YPP youth for articles to be published in youth journals in U.K. This will help ensure that the RC messages also reach stakeholders outside of the three project countries.
- A lot of people participated in the Advocacy Day, including NGOs, INGOs, schools authorities, etc. and all of them responded positively to the work that YPP is doing and the recommendations presented.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

We feel that the YPP Regional Consultation played a significant role meeting our objective of influencing policy and practice among key stakeholders across the region and beyond. People from many levels of society attended the Regional Consultation, including journalists, students from different schools, chief of different national and international NGOs and the Foreign Minister of Nepal. We think it is an achievement to have all the people on the same platform. Not only that, the

Prime Minister of Nepal received our recommendations very positively and assured us that he would talk to the governments of India and Bangladesh about YPP issues.

2) Do you feel that the RC met the objective of:

→ Generating media coverage to highlight key YPP issues?

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- Media coverage of the RC was good but the media did not always ask the questions that we expected. If they had, maybe we could have given more information about the YPP and how it works with children and youth in participatory ways. But this was a good opportunity for the YPP youth to meet with the media.
- The RC Press Conference went very well and policymakers and the public will also have an opportunity to get information through the media in this way.
- In my opinion, we were hesitant to deal with media and did not interact as openly as we could have.
- Youth from all three countries attended the Press Conference and shared their experiences and highlighted the issues well.
- There was not sufficient media coverage in RC to disseminate information related to CSEC and YPP.
- It may have made more of an impact if media personnel from all of three participating countries could have been present on the last day of the RC.
- As we had very good media coverage during the Media Preparatory Workshop, RC Inauguration Ceremony and the Press Conference on the Advocacy Day, the objectives of generating media coverage were well met.
- The YPP youth successfully delivered their message against CSEC and trafficking to a broad audience and other youth groups will also have an opportunity to learn about the YPP and CSEC issues through the media coverage of the RC.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- The idea of a preparatory workshop with the press in Nepal was a very good way to prepare the media on the YPP issues beforehand.
- The media presence on "Advocacy Day" was satisfactory and increased their exposure to issues of trafficking, CSEC, HIV/AIDS and the impact these have on children, which is important.
- I have given press interviews and participated in press conferences before and found the media in Nepal to be very considerate, not aggressive at all. They also had some knowledge of the issues, which was positive.
- The media representatives did not have very much understanding of child and youth participation.

- The Press Conference on Advocacy Day focused primarily on the YPP, its methods, objectives, etc. We also managed share a regional perspective of the issues that the YPP addresses.
- A large number of newspapers published coverage of the Advocacy Day. Some of the reports described not only the process or the recommendations, but also talked about the YPP and the need for adequate protection of children from abuse and exploitation.
- I liked that the RC was covered in newspapers in Nepal. It proves that they give importance to the issues that we are talking about. It would have been good if we had Indian media representatives present as well, or some coverage in Indian newspapers.
- It would be good to have media from Bangladesh and India too.
- There was a lot of media present on the Advocacy Day, which shows that the RC was successful in generating media interest in the YPP.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

The media is like a mirror of society and can play an important role in influencing people and developing the country. This is also true for YPP issues. We think the YPP issues and messages reached people in every corner of Nepal through newspapers and media. We had a Press Conference session with the press there which also helped to disseminate YPP issues to the public. We hope to invite and ensure the attendance of the Bangladeshi press next time.

→ Influencing government policymakers to support youth recommendations?

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- It is hard to say now whether this objective has been met because although the policymakers have positively received our recommendations, it may take a long time to bring things into practice by the government. We will need to continue to monitor and put pressure on the government in this regard.
- Yes, we influenced the government policymakers. We presented our recommendations to the Foreign Minister and she agreed to support us.
- After the program, the invited guests expressed their appreciation for our work and this helped me realize that we have been successful in influencing government policymakers and the public through our advocacy work.
- The government may not be fully influenced yet; we will need to organize additional follow-up programmes in the future to ensure the impact of our messages.
- The presentation of the final youth recommendations to the Nepali Foreign Minister certainly had an impact upon the concerned stakeholders. I am sure the commitment expressed by the Minister will also help strengthen our advocacy position.
- It might have made more of an impact and there may have been more commitment if policymakers from all three participating countries were present on the Advocacy Day.
- I think this objective has been met, as we heard the people in high government positions promising to support the youth recommendations.

- The youth recommendations presented during RC were effectively conveyed to policymakers and will hopefully have a regional impact beyond Nepal.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- The youth recommendations were presented to the Prime Minister of Nepal. This was a big achievement of the RC in terms of reaching out to the highest level of government.
- The Foreign Minister was very supportive of the recommendations and gave her commitment to support them.
- The Foreign Minister in her speech said that these recommendations can be shared with SAARC - if this happens, the recommendations will have a significant impact
- After returning to India, we shared the recommendations within SANLAAP, where they have become not only YPP Youth Recommendations, but also organizational recommendations. Every department and programme in SANLAAP has been encouraged to work towards the fulfilment of the Recommendations. We also shared the Recommendations with the government Department of Social Welfare at the State and Central levels.
- More follow-up work needs to be done on the recommendations so that the RC is not an event but represents a continuous advocacy process.
- In order to influence policymakers, serious follow-up work and programmes will need to be promoted within YPP activities.
- Our recommendations were highly appreciated.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

We think that the Regional Consultation will have an influence on government policymakers. The Nepali Foreign Minister, as well as other government officials, attended the Regional Consultation and delivered speeches regarding YPP issues. The Prime Minister of Nepal also received our recommendations very positively and assured us that he would talk to the governments of India and Bangladesh about YPP issues.

→ Expressing congratulations to YPP youth and partners?

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- This objective was definitely met and was done in a wonderful way by providing certificates and souvenirs to the youth participants.
- Certificates provided to the youth and partner representatives were very important and recognize our participation. The YPP youth and partners have been certainly congratulated in a well-organized manner.
- The idea of congratulating youth with certificates and a souvenir was impressive, we felt that our work is appreciated.
- Youth and partners have been congratulated by each of the RC speakers during the consultation and it was really good to hear these positive words from them.

- Youth have been congratulated for their skills and ideas. They have been admired and thanked by the adults, which was great.
- This aspect was carried out perfectly.
- This objective was also met because all the people who came to know about YPP youth and partners were impressed by their work and we heard the Advocacy Day speakers congratulating the YPP youth members and the partners.
- This helped to build the confidence of the YPP youth.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- The youth were congratulated in a variety of ways and means throughout the RC.
- I liked that certificates and t-shirts were given to all participants.
- The RC facilitators, staff and ECPAT staff all were very gracious and appreciated our abilities and skills during the entire consultation.
- Congratulating and showing appreciation helps boost up our confidence and also helps us to move forward in our work.
- I liked the way the certificates were given out.
- I felt that the cultural programmes were a way of showing appreciation and encouragement to the other country teams. We could also showcase our YPP work to everyone, which made us feel good and proud.
- The speakers at the Advocacy Day congratulated the efforts of the youth.
- I really treasure my certificate that was given to me during the RC.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

The Regional Consultation guests congratulated the YPP teams from the three countries and expressed their hope that YPP would continue in the future. Distribution of certificates among the youth to acknowledge their contribution to YPP was positive. In future consultations, it would be better if the certificate giving ceremony could be arranged at the middle of the program.

→ Ensuring protection of all participating youth?

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- The protection of all of the youth participants was well organized and carried out carefully. None of the youth or adult participants had any complaints and none of us faced any problems. Minor issues were resolved mutually and in a positive way.
- The protection of all youth was fully ensured during the RC. None of us got sick or faced any problem. Everyone enjoyed their stay during Regional Consultation.
- Everything was perfect in regard to the protection of youth during the RC and we felt that we had adults and friends to take care and look after us.

- The whole program was well organized and nothing troubled us. The chaperones took good care of us.
- The full time presence of the nurse, availability of medicines and the complaint box helped to ensure the protection of youth during the RC, which was well organized.
- Every youth participant was under the protection of a responsible adult and all the facilities have been provided for their comfort.
- This objective was completely achieved. All the members of YPP team, host organization, partner agencies and donor agencies were committed to ensuring the protection of youth during the consultation.
- I think that this objective was met as everyone really enjoyed the consultation and made friends in a healthy environment.
- The protection of all participating youth was well organized. We were provided with medical support, proper lodging and healthy food.
- The protection of youth during the RC was managed in a wonderful way.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- The protection aspect of the RC was given a lot of importance. Preparatory youth workshops were organized before the RC, consent forms signed and RC guidelines were distributed. During the RC, protection was the first session held on the evening of Day One, where complaint and protection mechanisms were shared.
- There were no problems in this regard.
- The facilities provided, the staff, the chaperones were supportive.
- The medical help was well planned and the presence of a nurse was very helpful for me, as I required medicines from her.
- The needs of the youth were always kept in mind. For example when we had problems with a particular type of food, it was changed the next day.
- Recreational activities and cultural programmes were also included so that we could have fun as well during the RC.
- The accompanying adults took very good care of us.
- The protection aspect was well explained both before and during the RC.
- The protection of the RC participants were organized well.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

There were no problems with the protection facilities for the participating youth. The adults were always with us to ensure our safety. Moreover, the host organization and hotel authorities were very alert and took care with regard to the protection of the youth participants.

3) What did you like most about the Regional Consultation?

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- What I liked most about the Regional Consultation was that we were able to successfully achieve our primary goal and influence stakeholders and the concerned people by presenting our policy recommendations.
- I liked the teamwork between youth from the three different countries and the opportunity to submit our policy recommendations to the Prime Minister of Nepal.
- I liked the learning and sharing of experiences between all three country groups.
- The final RC Advocacy Day was great and felt superb as we were able to raise awareness about CSEC and trafficking among the government, stakeholders and local organizations.
- All of the activities were led by youth through their active participation and that is what I liked the most about the RC.
- What I liked most about the RC is that the youth groups from three countries were able to identify problems and solutions in order to develop policy recommendations to protect children from CSEC and trafficking.
- The cultural night performances by youth were wonderful and what I liked the most.
- The presentations made by youth in their own languages were very interesting and what I liked the most.
- The best aspect of RC is its concept of bringing all youth from across the region together to develop a common set of recommendations based on their experiences working in the YPP.
- The active and lively youth participation.
- The dedication, patience and the interest shown by youth was really wonderful and what I liked the most.
- The thing I liked the most was the way the youth interacted with each other and how the whole consultation was very transparent and based on real and lively discussions through which the youth were able to develop their recommendations.
- I liked the interaction and sharing between youth representatives from the three different countries.
- The teamwork of youth from the three countries in groups during the preparation of recommendations was very nice and what I liked the most.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- What I liked the most was that youth from the three YPP countries who have been working towards the same objective for the last three years had an opportunity to meet each other and work together.
- The RC brought together viewpoints and ideas from youth representative groups from India, Bangladesh and Nepal. We were able to work together and develop 13 common regional policy recommendations, which was the best part.
- We got to travel to another country, make new friends and learn a lot of things from this experience.

- I felt proud to participate in the Advocacy Day and that we were able to accomplish what we set out to do.
- The RC was very participatory in both the way the sessions were conducted and that youth themselves presented their recommendations to government officials, stakeholders and even to the Prime Minister of Nepal.
- The cultural evenings were very enjoyable and we also had a chance to share our YPP work.
- The friendships and feelings of camaraderie that were established during the RC were great.
- The workshops were lively and the debates/discussions were intense, which showed that the youth had an in-depth understanding of the issues. Through these discussions and debates, we were able to develop a set of common recommendations.
- Though we met each other for the first time at the RC, we were able to work together as a team and produce something really constructive, which we can be proud of.
- We were able to influence stakeholders and policymakers to protect children from trafficking and CSEC in the region.
- We were able to talk to the media, who can reach out to more people and raise their awareness of the YPP and its issues.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

There were many positive aspects of the Regional Consultation. These included:

- ◆ The Regional Consultation was a great opportunity for YPP youth from the three project countries to get together;
- ◆ The RC helped us build effective relationships with the youth of Nepal & India, as we had an opportunity to exchange views & share experiences;
- ◆ It was exciting to have the opportunity to participate in the Advocacy Day program organized and led by YPP youth on 17 December 2007;
- ◆ The presence of the Foreign Minister of Nepal at the Regional Consultation and meeting the Prime Minister of Nepal was very encouraging;
- ◆ We appreciated the Regional Consultation because it gave us the opportunity to share our progress in YPP activities with the youth of two other countries.

4) What would you do differently the next time?

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- I'd like to publish all the RC activities and the achievements in brochure or magazine so that other people can learn about in our work and help us to move forward.
- I would like to invite celebrities and create more public awareness of our project in next consultation.
- Next time, I would like to learn their language (Bengali) and teach ours (Nepali) too. Then at the end of the program, we can try writing and reading in each other languages.
- More energizers and recreational activities could be included next time.

- I would like to organize community awareness programmes during the Regional Consultation led by youth representatives of all countries.
- Next time, I would not only submit policy recommendations to the government but also develop action plans for them to implement practically.
- I would like to have an activities sharing session between all three countries to explore new ideas and good practices.
- I will like to hire professional translators can understand all three languages of the simultaneously and translate them accordingly.
- I am sure that we all learnt a lot of lessons and may do certain things differently, but I feel that under the circumstances the RC was conducted smoothly and all the major aspects were covered.
- I will like to invite selected journalists who write on social issues and other social activists to participate from the beginning of the workshop to help them understand the issues and generate additional media coverage.
- I would add another day to the program so that at the end we could interact socially with everyone.
- I would like to invite other youth groups from South Asia to participate in YPP Regional Consultation.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- Next time we could incorporate additional follow-up activities in our own countries to ensure that the outcomes and outputs are shared with all stakeholders.
- Awareness activities around the outcomes of such consultations can organized.
- The government officials and representatives can be called into interactive sessions with the youth in future programmes. Like on the Advocacy Day, at the end of the presentation, the audience could have been engaged in a discussion.
- If there was more time to talk to each other, as we were meeting for the first time it would have been good. After the workshops and the cultural evenings, we had very little time to meet and talk and share our experiences of the YPP with youth from the other two countries.
- There were no boys in our team, I think next time there must be more boy participants as they are partners in the project as well.
- More time for practice for the presentations.
- Government and media representatives from India should be involved.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

- ◆ We want to organize the next Regional Consultation in Bangladesh;

- ◆ We also want to invite and ensure the attendance of different government officials, chief of different national & international NGOs, CBO, youth, print & electronics media from all three countries to the Regional Consultation;
- ◆ We want the governments of all three countries to implement our recommendations;
- ◆ We want to invite the Bangladeshi print and electronic media to travel with us while attending any program abroad.

5) Please share any other feedback that you would like to offer about your experience during the Regional Consultation:

Feedback from Nepali Youth:

- During the RC we had an opportunity to learn about other cultures and languages too.
- The youth policy recommendations to government will need to be consistently followed up on in order to meet our objectives.
- Unless we speak out and share our experiences, no change will occur. We should raise our hands and ask for more information / clarification on issues which we do not understand.
- The performances during cultural nights, including the documentary and puppet show were good as they also helped us learn about each other's culture and the key YPP issues.
- During RC, we met with many high profile individuals and the media. We interacted with them and expressed our opinions and feelings. These kinds of opportunities help to develop our self-confidence.
- In my opinion, to make events like the RC even more successful they should be organized in close coordination with the government and INGOs.

Feedback from Indian Youth:

- It was indeed a great experience and opportunity for us, I learnt a lot about other cultures.
- The behavior of one staff member that we witnessed in one occasion was not good from a partner country, we shared this in our feedback meeting with the Youth Motivators.
- My experience during the RC was very good, I will remember it throughout my life.
- I feel confident and proud from my experience of the RC.

Feedback from Bangladeshi Youth:

- ◆ The use of three languages at the time of reading out the recommendations was very helpful to all;
- ◆ The adult members from other NGOs were very cordial;
- ◆ It would be better if the youth got the opportunity to conduct the three days (13-16 December) preparatory workshop on YPP recommendations;
- ◆ The Regional Consultation should ensure equal participation of media from three countries;
- ◆ It would be helpful if lawyers and ambassadors could attend the Regional Consultation;
- ◆ The next Regional Consultation should concentrate on ensuring the attendance of more government policymakers and officials;
- ◆ The number of participants can be increased in the next Regional Consultation;
- ◆ The cultural function on 17 December'07 might be more attractive;
- ◆ Preparation of Regional Consultation needed enough time;

- ◆ We had a little problem with our food habit, as we were not always used to eating the type of food that was served;
- ◆ No youth from partner countries participated to the main proclamation at the Advocacy day which undermining children's participation as well as lessen confidence of the youth;
- ◆ The large banners recommendations of each country didn't not create any impact because they were big but not as attractive, readable and readers friendly as they could be.
- ◆ It would be nice if Wahida and Indrani got the opportunity to speak a few minutes on the final Advocacy Day;
- ◆ RC T-shirt was excellent but after returning from Katmandu when we washed the T-shirts, the color washed away;
- ◆ The RC sticker was not so attractive but the cloth bag was good;
- ◆ Financial supports to the participants including support for acquiring passports, warm clothes and organizing preparatory workshops were excellent;
- ◆ The two preparatory days were excellent and very productive.

Annex 2: Media Coverage of YPP Regional Consultation

Source: The Kathmandu Post (newspaper). Tuesday 18 December 2007. Page 3.

Children Demand Better Protection

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, DEC 17

Youth representing Bangladesh, India and Nepal on Monday urged their respective governments to safeguard children from trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

Following a three-day regional consultation of Youth Partnership Project South Asia (YPP), children and survivors of trafficking made recommendations to their respective governments amid a program here in the capital.

Their recommendations include implementation of existing laws on trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, punishment to perpetrators, speedy resolutions to cases, and provision of appropriate vocational training and employment opportunities for vulnerable youth as well as survivors of exploitation and trafficking.

They also recommended identity cards to such children to ensure them citizenship rights, and tripartite agreement among governments of Nepal, India and Bangladesh to help repatriation of trafficking survivors and those facing commercial sexual exploitation within six months of rescue.

Similarly, they recommended curricula with information about issues including commercial sexual exploitation of children, trafficking and HIV/AIDS, and also media's partnership with youth groups to raise mass awareness and ensure sensitive and positive coverage of cases.

Speaking at the program organized by Maiti Nepal, Foreign Minister Sahama Pradhan assured the recommendations would be followed, and a common policy would be adapted by all SAARC countries.

Asian Youth Demand Action on Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

Agency Reporter, 28 Dec 2007

Young people, including survivors of trafficking, from Nepal, Bangladesh and India have gathered in Kathmandu to call on their governments to better protect children from commercial sexual exploitation [CSE] and trafficking.

Following a three-day meeting early this month (December 2007), vulnerable children presented their own recommendations to Nepal's Prime Minister, Mr Girija Prasad Koirala.

As well as calling on the government to ensure that existing laws on trafficking are upheld and those who break them are punished, the young delegates asked for new legislation and called upon religious leaders from all faiths to work with them on the issue.

The children are members of the Youth Partnership Project South Asia [YPP], a unique initiative in which young people who are at-risk or who have experience of CSE, take the lead in supporting one another, offering help to children in dangerous red-light and border areas, organising awareness campaigns and advocating for changes to the law to prevent these forms of abuse. So far the YPP has reached out to over 50,000 children.

The project is implemented by MAITI Nepal in Kathmandu, Aparajeyo-Bangladesh in Dhaka and SANLAAP in Kolkata, managed by ECPAT [End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes]. They are funded by Comic Relief and Christian Aid in the UK, among others.

Shompa Perveen, a 15-year-old YPP member from Bangladesh, said: "We have been discussing these recommendations for a long time and we feel we are experts on these issues. We want the people in power in all three countries [Bangladesh, Nepal and India] to listen – but more importantly – act on what we say."

Research suggests that the number of children and young people who are trafficked and exploited for sexual and commercial purposes is growing, with estimates as high as 350,000 in India, 40,000 in Nepal and 29,000 in Bangladesh.

ECPAT's director Carmen Madriñán said: "Every child has the right to live free from trafficking for sexual purposes and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. The YPP demonstrates that young people can effectively reach out to other child survivors and youth who are at risk. And not only that, today's meeting with government, NGOs and media, shows that young people are uniquely placed to lead the fight against commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking."

The YPP delegates also highlighted the vital need for survivors of trafficking to be given legal identity cards, and called on SAARC [the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation] and the United Nations to suspend the membership of countries which fail to uphold existing agreements to protect children from these abuses.

YPP representatives from Bangladesh and India are making the same recommendations to government ministers upon their return to Dhaka and Kolkata.

Source: The Himalayan Times

<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=aFanata0vcqzpb6Qa3sa.axamal&folder=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate>

Regional Meet Ends with Call to End Child Trafficking

THT Online

Kathmandu, December 18

Members of the Youth Partnership Project (YPP) on Monday handed over a 13-point charter of recommendations to Prime Minister Giraja Prasad Koirala and Foreign Minister Sahana Pradhan to combat trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children and youths.

The recommendations were drawn by a five-day regional consultation on the Youth Partnership Project in South Asia.

Youth and children participants from Nepal, India and Bangladesh prepared the recommendations, which ask their respective governments to speed up actions, implement existing laws, and introduce new legislation to combat trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and youths which is rampant in the region.

The recommendations also suggest the governments to observe a regional anti-trafficking day and allocate budget for youth development.

The recommendations stress on upholding the existing international agreements to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation.

The recommendations also underscore the need to establish tripartite agreements or treaties and cooperate with NGOs to facilitate rehabilitation and/or repatriation of the sexually exploited children and trafficking survivors within six months of rescue. Addressing the concluding day of the consultation, Foreign Minister Pradhan said, "The conference of SAARC foreign ministers has already agreed to adopt common policy for youth development in the region and hopefully the 15th SAARC conference will adopt it."

Mark Capaldi, deputy director of the End Child Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purpose (ECPAT), said the charter of recommendations is very practical and genuine to prevent child trafficking and it deserved special attention of the governments concerned.

Strict Law to Punish Traffickers Sought

Staff Reporter
Kathmandu, Dec. 17

Youth participants from Nepal, India and Bangladesh Monday shared their experiences at the four-day-long Youth Partnership Project on Empowering Youth to Fight Trafficking and the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

They also represented recommendation to governments of their countries on combating sexual exploitation of children for commercial purposes.

Their recommendations include strict enforcement of the existing laws regarding punishment of perpetrators of trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). The recommendation also stresses on the need for introducing new legislation to protect children if needed.

The participants asked the government for the provision of appropriate vocational training and employment opportunities for vulnerable youth and survivors of CSEC and trafficking. They also asked for budget for the youth's participation in regional anti-trafficking day.

The governments should provide the survivors of CSEC and trafficking legal identity cards to ensure their citizenship rights. "The governments of the three countries should enter into tripartite agreements and work with NGOs to facilitate repatriation of CSEC and trafficking survivors within six months of their rescue.

Commenting on the recommendation of the youths, Minister for Foreign Affairs Sahana Pradhan said the Social Chapter of all the SAARC countries share the same problem like trafficking of women and children, over population and corruption. A common policy is going to be adopted on the 15th SAARC Summit in Sri Lanka this year, she said.

She said around 160,000 women were engaged in commercial sex works in India alone and out of which 20 per cent are children. She urged for developing a joint mechanism to share information, rescue the victims and punish culprits.

She added the government and non-government agencies should work together to rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate the victims of the societal anomaly and sustainable provision should be made granting legal advice, counseling, job training and healthcare facilities.

Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of Women and Children Ritu Raj Bhandari said the government was all set to finalise the legal frameworks against trafficking of women and children and proposed to come up with separate law for women and children.

Carmen Melania Madrinan, executive director of ECPAT, an international network of NGO that works against exploitation of children all over the world, said the laws and legal framework were very

important to ensure the rights of the child. She further said that such laws should be implemented to prevent trafficking and sexual exploitation of children.

Source: The Kathmandu Post (newspaper). Tuesday 18 December 2007. Page 3.

End to Child Trafficking in Region Urged

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

KATHMANDU: Members of the Youth Partnership Project (YPP) on Monday handed over a 13-point charter of recommendations to Prime Minister Giraja Prasad Koirala and Foreign Minister Sahana Pradhan to combat trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children and youths.

The recommendations were drawn by a five-day regional consultation on the Youth Partnership Project in South Asia.

Youth and children participants from Nepal, India and Bangladesh prepared the recommendations, which ask their respective governments to speed up actions, implement existing laws, and introduce new legislation to combat trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and youths which is rampant in the region.

The recommendations also suggest the governments to observe a regional anti-trafficking day and allocate budget for youth development.

The recommendations stress on upholding the existing international agreements to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation.

The recommendations also underscore the need to establish tripartite agreements or treaties and cooperate with NGOs to facilitate rehabilitation and/or repatriation of the sexually exploited children and trafficking survivors within six months of rescue. Addressing the concluding day of the consultation, Foreign Minister Pradhan said, "The conference of SAARC foreign ministers has already agreed to adopt common policy for youth development in the region and hopefully the 15th SAARC conference will adopt it."

Mark Capaldi, deputy director of the End Child Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purpose (ECPAT), said the charter of recommendations is very practical and genuine to prevent child trafficking and it deserved special attention of the governments concerned.

Source: THE HIMALAYAN TIMES (newspaper).
Monday 10 December 2007. Page 3.

7,000 Nepali Girls, Women Trafficked Annually: Study

Himalayan News Service
Kathmandu, December 9

Maiti Nepal – a transition home for victimized girl child and women – said today that around 7,000 Nepali girls and women are annually trafficked from Nepal to India and the Gulf countries.

Citing its study, Maiti Nepal said girls ranging from 7 to 24 years are being trafficked to India and the Gulf countries. Forty per cent of girls being trafficked are below 18 years and most of them are trafficked to force them into flesh trade, Biswo Ram Khadka of the Maiti Nepal said. He added that some 200,000 prostitutes in India are Nepalis and 20 percent of them are under 16 years of age.

Presenting a paper on the South Asian scenario of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) at a media workshop organized today by the Youth Partnership Project (YPP) of Maiti Nepal and ECPAT International, Khadka said child prostitution is a growing problem in Nepal and media can help address it.

Experts, presenting papers at the workshop on the Role of Media Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), drew a pathetic picture of the CSEC and sought active role of the media to discourage the activities that force children into flesh trade.

Journalist Puskar Mathema asked journalists to be sensitive while reporting on such issues as they could further damage the image of the victims.

Journalists said campaigns should be launched against CSEC.

Annex 3:

Speech by Nepali Foreign Minister Ms. Sahana Pradhan

Respected Chairperson, distinguished guests, participants, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to be here with you and listen to your experiences. I appreciate the efforts of ECPAT International and Maiti Nepal to protect children of South Asian countries from trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. I would also like to express my best wishes to the young people who have involved themselves in eradicating trafficking and sexual abuse of the children.

Human trafficking, especially trafficking in women and children, has become an alarming problem in South Asia. Only in India, thousands of children from Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan are being trafficked every year. It is said approximately 160,000 Nepali women are in Indian brothels and nearly 20 percent are children.

Cross-national trafficking in children has been increasing rapidly as a result of growing urbanization, unequal distribution of resources and unfair and exploitative labor relations. The trafficking of children and their exploitation through prostitution has increased serious social, legal and health related problems.

To prevent such immoral practices, the governments of South Asian Countries should work in close cooperation. The governments should develop a joint mechanism to share information, rescue the victims and punish culprits. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation is pushing member countries in this direction through the adoption of SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating the Trafficking in Women and Children and SAARC Convention on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia.

Allow me to express the common expression that "prevention is better than cure". It is evident that massive initiatives are required to prevent trafficking in women and children. NGOs can play a significant role in mobilizing the social sector and civil society to raise public awareness against human trafficking. Both government and non-governmental agencies should work in conjunction to rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate the victims into society. Establishment of protective shelters for rehabilitation of the victims is essential. Suitable provisions should be made for granting legal advice, counseling, job training and health care facilities to the victims.

Nepal is a signatory to the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Woman and the Convention on Rights of Child. In line with these conventions, the government of Nepal has been making efforts through various legal and institutional arrangements to protect the rights of the woman and children. However, efforts still need to be significantly enhanced to curb the problem of trafficking in women and children.

South Asia has witnessed vibrant economic growth in recent years, making vast number of people well off in economic terms. But myriad of social problems have overshadowed our economic achievements. Time has come to redouble our efforts to alleviate these social problems and remove stigmas from our region. Youth should be given the opportunity to play role a vital and sustained role in this effort.

Consultation programs such as this one provide an opportunity for youth from various countries to share their experiences and enrich their determination to fight against such social crimes against humanity. I wish all the success in your work in the coming days.

Thank you.

Annex 4:

Speech by Carmen Madriñán

Executive Director of ECPAT International

Every child has the right to live free from trafficking for sexual purposes and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Yet, as reported in ECPAT's recently published Agenda for Action reports on South Asia, large numbers of children are trafficked annually in South Asia. These children and young people are subjected to the harshest forms of suffering and abuse.

Over the past three years, youth involved in ECPAT's Youth Partnership Project South Asia have been leading peer support programmes, community awareness campaigns and public advocacy to prevent trafficking and raise public awareness about CSEC. This unique initiative endeavours to have a positive psychosocial impact and improve the lives of children by building their capacity to have a direct impact on social issues that affect their communities.

The theme of the project and this consultation is "Empowering Youth to Fight Trafficking & the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children". Today, you will have an opportunity to hear key youth recommendations for government, NGOs and funding agencies based on lessons learned and outcomes of the project, focusing on innovative strategies and methodologies for involving children and youth in efforts to impact issues that directly affect their lives.

This consultation represents a unique opportunity for youth to take the lead in organizing a regional advocacy event to share their accomplishments and showcase the groundbreaking contributions they have made in combating CSEC. Fifty youth representatives from India, Bangladesh and Nepal have come together over the past four days to work to consolidate their recommendations for to present to you today. Lessons learned from their experience can be shared globally in an effort to provide greater opportunities for young people to become directly involved in the movement against CSEC as agents of change.

Through direct advocacy and peer support work in shelters, high-risk border communities and red light areas, the young people involved in this project have developed an in depth understanding of issues related to trafficking and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation in South Asia. The youth recommendations presented today include specific suggestions for strengthening the implementation of existing legislation to protect children from CSEC and trafficking, the importance of ensuring that all children and youth have legal identity documents, incorporating information about CSEC and trafficking in school curricula and working in partnership with media to raise public awareness around these issues. YPP youth also highlight the importance of regional coordination to combat trafficking, emphasizing the role of SAARC and the UN to encourage member governments to uphold existing agreements to protect children. Recommendations for involving youth to ensure minimum standards of care and protection are upheld in shelters for CSEC survivors, as well as the importance of partnerships between youth, local government and border security forces to prevent cross-border trafficking are also included.

I'd now like to hand the floor over to the YPP youth so that they themselves can tell you more about their work and present their recommendations. However, I would first like to thank our YPP partners for their dedication to this innovative project over the past three years. The YPP is coordinated at the regional level by ECPAT International, implemented by partner organizations Maiti Nepal, SANLAAP India and Aparajeyo Bangladesh and funded by Comic Relief and Christian Aid. I would also like to extend a very special thank you to the young people in India, Bangladesh and Nepal who have made this project possible. They have shown great courage and determination to show the world the impact that youth can make when given the opportunity. ECPAT sincerely hopes that other organizations and agencies will be able to learn from the success of this project and use similar strategies to engage young people at all levels of their work.

Annex 5: Speech by Anuradha Koirala Founder & Chairperson of Maiti Nepal

Namaste, good afternoon and a warm welcome to all. Honorable Foreign Minister, Honorable former Speaker of the Parliament, Under Secretary of Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, the Executive Director of the ECPAT international, Deputy Director of Programmes of ECPAT International, Executive Director of Sanlaap India, Director of Programmes of Aparajeyo Bangladesh.

We feel privileged to be the host of the first ever Regional Consultation for the Youth Partnership Project in South Asia and hope that you have had a productive and pleasant stay in Nepal. The children have been very much involved and have worked hard to develop these recommendations that I hope are put into practice.

In the last three years, the YPP has made many contributions towards improving the self confidence and capacities of children who have been affected by CSEC and trafficking, through its innovative and participatory activities.

YPP groups have made a huge impact in all the countries and have worked hard to raise awareness, help other young children like themselves, motivate adults and spread their messages from the grassroots to the policy-making level.

The Youth Partnership Project (YPP) is a regional initiative to combat commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. Children and young people have played key roles in all stages of the project from its design to implementation and decision-making.

This project is unique in the way that young people, especially youth who have been sexually exploited who come from marginalized sectors of society, are involved in developing trans-national protection mechanisms to prevent young people from being trafficked and facilitate the rehabilitation of those who have already been victims of abuse and exploitation.

I would like to take this chance to thank all the children, YPP Coordinators, Facilitators and Chairpersons for coming all the way to Nepal to attend the Regional Consultation.

I would also like to thank ECPAT International, Christian Aid, Comic Relief, Aparajeyo Bangladesh and Sanlaap for all the support they provided to the YPP over the years. We would not be where we are today without all of your generous help and guidance.

I would also like to take this chance to thank the members of the media, representations of the government, various NGOs, and INGOs for accepting our invitation to attend today's programme and listening patiently to the children. It now becomes our joint responsibility as adults to take their recommendations into account and work with them for a better world to grow up in. I believe that Government, NGOs and civil society will recognize the work that young people have done and I have full faith the recommendations would be put to use.

On behalf of Maiti Nepal, I would like to apologize for any inconvenience you may have faced during your stay and would like to extend an invitation to you all to come back Nepal when the weather is warmer.

Let us now join hands and promise to continue to support the YPP in the years to come for a better tomorrow.

Thank you.

Annex 6: Abbreviations

CSEC: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

ECPAT: End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT)

RC: Regional Consultation

ToR: Terms of Reference

UN: United Nations

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

YPP: Youth Partnership Project