

What Happened

at the
East Asia
Pacific
Regional
Consultation
on Violence Against
Children?

East Asia Pacific Regional Consultation
on Violence Against Children
14-16 June 2005

The photographs in this booklet show Under 18 Delegates and Adult Delegates taking part in the East Asia Pacific Regional Consultation for the UN Study on Violence Against Children on 14-16 June 2005.

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The Regional Consultation on Violence against Children

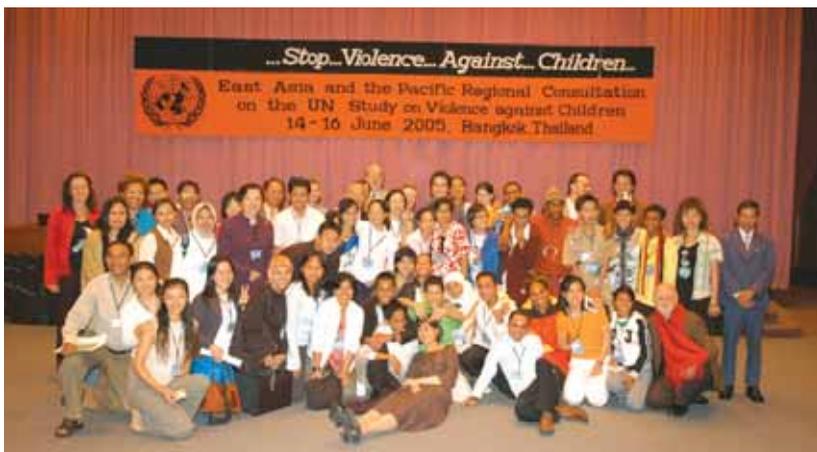
This booklet has been written for children aged 12 -18. It reports on what happened at the East Asia Pacific Regional Consultation on Violence against Children held from 14-16 June 2005 in Bangkok, Thailand.

The information is in three parts:

Facts about the Regional Consultation

What the Under 18 Delegates did

What was agreed at the Regional Consultation



Before reading this booklet you may like to know the way it uses some words.

Children-friendly: For places such as schools, cities or offices, children-friendly means they are re-organised so that the space, equipment, practices and behaviour makes children feel comfortable. For reports or documents, children-friendly means that the way the report is presented and the language used make the information easy for children to understand.

Cyberspace and the online environment: Space that exists within computer networks where each computer around the world is connected through telephone systems. (Cyberspace activities include the Internet – email, websites, chat rooms as well as mobile phones.)

Corporal Punishment: When someone hurts another person as a punishment by hitting them or hurting them in a way that is shameful. Punishment might be physical or emotional and is used to try to control, educate or discipline a child.

Institution: This is a place where children have to live together because they do not have parents or families who can take care of them. Children can also be sent to special institutions (called penal institutions) when they have broken the law.

Marginalised children: Children who are treated like they are unimportant, they have no voice to ask for their rights or do not dare to do so as they think that they do not belong. Marginalised people often come from another country or from a small tribe or are people who live on the streets.

Monitoring and evaluation: Checking and then looking carefully to see whether something is really working properly. Laws and policy can be monitored and evaluated to make sure they are helping to stop violence.

Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO): This is an organisation that is not part of a government and is not for profit. Many NGOs exist to help people who have some sort of problem (such as poverty or disability) or to protect something (such as animals or plants).

Participation: Children's participation is about being involved in something or being able to influence decisions. It is having your voice heard and being taken seriously – usually when decisions are being taken about something.

Policy: Statements that explain what should or should not happen (in this case, to help stop violence). They are often agreed by organisations or governments.

Region: Our region is called 'East Asia and Pacific'. It includes Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, The Pacific Islands (including 14 different islands), The Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

Research: Careful study and investigation to discover and explain new knowledge.

Recommendations: Suggestions or advice on what to do.

Rights: All human beings have the same rights – to be treated fairly, to have food, drink and shelter, healthcare, education and protection from being hurt. Everyone also has the right to be involved in decisions made about their lives. One important right is protection from violence.

Services: Activities to help people, this might be a telephone hotline for children, or giving out free food, or a training course on mending bicycles.

Sexual abuse: When someone forces or tricks another person into having sex or having a sexual relationship with them. A sexual relationship might include kissing, touching or having sex. In most countries it is strictly forbidden for adults to have a sexual relationship with a child.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: This is document, agreed by the United Nations, which explains exactly what rights children have, it is also an agreement between countries to obey the same laws about children. Nearly all the governments in the world have agreed to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and have agreed to make sure all children get all their rights.

UN Study: An international project that looks at violence committed against children across the world and what can be done about it. The Study will be finished in 2006. It will help the United Nations (UN), governments, communities, parents, children and organisations working with and for children to learn and better understand:

- what violence is faced by children around the world;
- how violence affects children;
- what needs to be done to prevent all types of violence against children;
- how best to help children who have faced violence;
- what children can do to protect themselves from violence;
- what are the causes of violence against children.

Facts about the Regional Consultation

What? The East Asia Pacific Regional Consultation for the UN Study on Violence against Children was one of nine regional meetings across the world. All took place from 14 -16 June 2005.

In the consultations people discussed violence against children in their region and expressed their opinions and recommendations on how to stop it. The information from these consultations will be included in the UN Study.

Who? In the East Asia Pacific Regional Consultation, 284 people participated. The participants came from 24 different countries in the region.

Twenty six of the participants were children. They were chosen to go by adults and children from their countries because they knew about violence against children. They were called 'Under 18 Delegates'.

The other participants came from governments and organisations working with children in the region.



How? During the Regional Consultation, the issue of violence against children was discussed by looking at it in seven different areas:

Violence against children...

1. in the home
2. in schools
3. in institutions
4. in workplaces
5. in the community and on the street
6. in conflict with the law
7. in cyberspace



What the Under 18 Delegates did

Before the Regional Consultation there was a Children's Forum where Under 18 Delegates met for two days to prepare themselves for the Regional Consultation.

- They talked about violence that they have seen or heard about.
- They were trained for some of the tasks they were asked to take on (such as how to do interviews with journalists).
- They agreed on what they thought should happen to stop violence and wrote their recommendations.

The recommendations written by the Under 18 Delegates at the Children's Forum are included in another booklet also provided in this folder.



At the Regional Consultation Under 18 Delegates did a lot of different things:

On the first day of the Consultation they made a speech to everyone which explained their opinions and their recommendations on violence against children.

During the Regional Consultation they asked questions, made presentations or speeches and gave their opinions in small discussion groups. They helped to write recommendations from these discussion groups.

The Under 18 Delegates also talked at meetings with journalists and had interviews. In these interviews, the children talked about their own work and their interest in violence against children.

One Under 18 Delegate was chosen to be on the drafting committee. This was the group of people who wrote the Outcome Statement which explained the recommendations that had been made by both the children and adults at the Regional Consultation.

On the last day the Under 18 Delegates put on a performance about the need for unity in the future.



What was agreed at the Regional Consultation

Outcome Statement: During the Regional Consultation, a drafting committee, (which included one Under 18 Delegate), wrote about what was discussed at the Consultation. The statement explained what the participants had agreed was important to know about violence against children and what should happen to help stop it.



The following is a children-friendly version of the Outcome Statement written at the Regional Consultation.

Outcome Statement of the East Asia and Pacific Regional Consultation on Violence against Children

We the adult and child delegates from governments of the East Asia and Pacific region; from regional and national non-government organisations; from international organisations and from United Nations organisations are committed to end violence against children. After discussing violence against children at the East Asia and Pacific Regional Consultation, held in Bangkok from June 14 to 16, 2005 we want to say the following:

- Violence affects the lives of children in the home, at schools, at work, in institutions, in conflict with the law and in the street and the community;
- We recommend that we work together in similar ways to take action on violence against children. Important areas to look at are:
 - marginalised children (children who are treated as unimportant);
 - plans to tell people about violence;
 - plans to strengthen organisations that help children;
 - looking at and writing suitable laws, policy and guidelines on violence;
 - setting up good organisations and activities for children affected by violence.It is also important that we make sure all these activities are monitored and improved;
- We feel it is important that children are involved in research on violence against children. This research should be used to improve policy and services for children;
- Parents need help to understand the effects of violence against children; they should learn non-violent ways to bring up children;

- We will try to end all types of corporal punishment in every area (home, school, workplace) where it happens;
- We need to look at how the media plays down violence. We need to look at how this makes people in our communities allow violence to happen and at how this makes children violent to other children;
- We need to look at new types of violence such as violence against children through new technologies (the Internet and mobile phones) and we need to persuade people to take action to stop this type of violence;
- The Regional Consultation showed how children can take part in all kinds of activities to stop violence against children; children's participation was well planned and was taken very seriously. We ask all countries to set up ways to involve children in all decisions that affect them and to plan all activities with children well;
- The cycle of violence can only be broken by making a peaceful way of life and by improving how children, adults, communities, countries, governments and international agencies work together;
- Activities in our countries to stop violence against children need practical help, advice and materials; and finally,
- We repeat our commitment to the work of the United Nations Study on Violence against Children and to activities in countries, regions and across the world that will make sure recommendations are turned into action.

To end this statement, we state that violence against children and violence in the world as a whole can be changed, it is wrong and unfair and can be ended by understanding that peace is a human right.

This job belongs to everyone!

Important Recommendations

1. Violence against Children in the Home and Family

Set up ways to make sure **children take part in decisions** in the home and family. Also, that children are involved in activities and in checking that these activities are working properly.

Make sure that laws, policy and activities are based on good research and a **good understanding** of the real situation. Make sure that these laws, policy and activities take place and that they are looked at carefully and checked so that we know they are really helping children.

Make sure that good **quality services** for families are set up. This can be done by making sure that organisations looking after children are made stronger and all work together. Also, that these organisations treat children as important people.

It is important to start activities that **change people's way of thinking** about violence. In particular activities that educate parents and stop corporal punishment.

2. Violence against Children in School

Write **guidelines for schools** so that they can stop violence before it happens. For example: schools should include lessons



for children on how to stop arguments and fighting at school, on human and children's rights or on the differences between girls and boys.

Write laws to **forbid all types of corporal punishment** in schools. The laws should include ways to check schools are obeying the law.

Start **training courses** for head masters, teachers and peer counsellors (students who are trained to help other students) at pre-school and primary schools on child rights, child psychology (the emotional and mental behaviour of children) and how to make learning more children-friendly.

Improve people's understanding of **children's rights** so that schools can become violence free and children-friendly.

3. Violence against Children in Institutions

Find ways to tell people about:

- **children's rights;**
- how to stop children from being **sent to live in an institution** when they don't really need to be there;
- how to stop **corporal punishment** from happening in institutions;
- how to stop children being **treated badly** by others just because they live in an institution.

Make sure that **corporal punishment is banned** in institutions (through laws, policies and guidelines). If there are no laws, policies or guidelines on these issues, write new ones. Make sure that children in institutions can be involved in all decisions made about how they are looked after.

Set up good **quality services** for children who live in institutions. Services should try to stop children being put in institutions.

Start using **guidelines for governments** to check that all institutions are monitored – which means that they are running properly. These guidelines should include training for the people that will be monitoring institutions. These guidelines should involve local people and the institutions themselves in monitoring their own work.

4. Violence against Children in Workplaces

Violence against children can be found in **any place of work**.

Activities to **protect children** should be available for all child workers, be available in all parts of a country, and be easy to use.

Violence against children when they are working is often worse if the children are **not easy to reach**, are hidden, are not allowed to go outside, are kept far away from other people, or cannot meet other people easily.

5. Violence against Children in the Community and on the Street

Encourage and support **children's participation** in all activities to help stop violence against children on the street and in the community.

Write **laws that explain clearly** what violence is and what discrimination is (when a group of people are treated worse or better than others). These laws should include ways to protect children from violence in the community and on the street.

Take action on the **mistaken beliefs** people have about street children and marginalised children – beliefs that make them think badly of these children and treat them badly.

Make **services available** for children and their communities that help to stop violence from happening to children. Services should

also be available to help **children who have suffered violence** so that they can go back to a normal life. It is important to provide these services for marginalised children such as street children, children from different tribes, areas or religions. Also, for children who have moved from other parts of the country or from another country (some children's families want to move, some children's families are forced to move).

6. Violence against Children in Conflict with the Law

If people think that a child has broken the law (committed a crime), children should **not always be put in prison**. Ways should be found to respond to the crime which try to repair the harm caused by the crime.

Improve laws so that all laws about children who need to go to court follow international guidelines.

There are **international guidelines** on when and how children can be taken by the police and locked up – these guidelines need to be used. Detention of children (when a child is locked up) should be the last choice and it should be for the shortest time possible. When there is no other choice but for a child to be locked up, there should be time limits for how long a child can be in detention. Children should be **well looked after when they are locked up**, they should have someone they can speak to if they have a problem. Children should be put in separate places from adults.

Children should be **involved in all decisions** that affect them before they go to court and afterwards.

7. Violence against Children in Cyberspace

People should be taught **how to use** new technologies (like computers, the Internet, mobile phones) safely and in a responsible way. They should understand what happens to photographs in

cyberspace – what happens immediately and what might happen in the future.

Policies to protect children should be used for all new technologies. Telephone and Internet companies and all TV and radio stations and newspapers should **actively protect children**. This includes setting up and paying for hotlines for anybody including children to report any violence or finding ways to check that Internet cafes are running properly.

Find ways to **help children who have suffered violence** through new technologies to understand what happened to them and how they can carry on with their future lives in a happier way. Find ways to help them cope with the different types of violence they might see or be involved in through new technologies.

Set up activities with young people to **find solutions** for stopping violence and to **take action** on violence against children in cyberspace, for example through children's forums.

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Do you want to know more?

To find out more about what is happening in your country contact your UNICEF Country Office or the National Focal Agency for your country.

The official UN website for the UN Study on Violence Against Children:

<http://www.violencestudy.org>

To find out more about the UN Study:

<http://www.crin.org/violence>



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