



COLLECTIVE ACTION

End Child Sexual
Exploitation
and Abuse

Southeast Asia,
East Asia
and the Pacific

CONCEPT NOTE

REGIONAL WORKSHOP

4 – 7 March 2024, Bangkok, Thailand (Venue: [Pullman Bangkok King Power](#))

BACKGROUND

ECPAT International and its network have created a lot of momentum amongst the political leadership towards addressing the sexual exploitation of children in Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific. Safe Online funded the [Disrupting Harm](#) research jointly implemented by ECPAT International, INTERPOL, and UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti, a large-scale research project generating unique insights on how online child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) is manifesting in 13 countries - including Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam - and providing tailored roadmaps for countries to strengthen their prevention and response systems. The results are ground-breaking (see links below to Data Insights series and national reports) and are complemented with [conversations with survivors](#) in 12 countries, including Malaysia, Cambodia, and South Korea.

Against the backdrop, there is a positive and progressive development of protective frameworks in Asia. In November 2019, ASEAN adopted the [Declaration on the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN](#), then the [Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN](#) (RPA-COEA) which covers a period of five years commencing in 2021 until the end of 2025. Furthermore, two regional guidelines, [ASEAN Guidelines for Harmonised and Comprehensive National Legislation Against All Forms of Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#) and [ASEAN Guidelines for Provision of Protective and Support Services for All Child Victims and Children in Contact with the Law as a Result of Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#), launched at the 2nd Annual ASEAN ICT Forum on Child Online Protection on 23 November 2023, created a momentum to strengthen regional coordination to prevent and response to OCSEA in ASEAN. All of these are supported by ECPAT International, along with key partners such as UNICEF. The challenge is now to utilise all these evidence and model plans of actions to change practices and improve prevention and response to online sexual exploitation and abuse of children.



Following on some of the [Disrupting Harm's findings on access to justice and legal remedies](#) and informed by the perspectives of 61 children and caregivers who accessed justice in six of the 13 Disrupting Harm countries (including Cambodia, The Philippines and Thailand), ECPAT in 2022-2023 also facilitated series of workshops on Access to Justice Initiative for child victims of sexual exploitation in Asia aimed at further assessing the barriers and opportunities for child victims of sexual exploitation to access justice, and to advocate towards improved access to justice. The duty to provide children with effective remedies and reparations for human rights violations – such as CSEA - is a well-established obligation under international law. Identification of case studies and development of recommendations is needed for a coordinated approaches to advocacy with ASEAN and UN human rights mechanisms.

In order to follow-up on these efforts and to build upon the above-mentioned momentum, ECPAT International intends to hold a **four-day workshop** aimed at sharing experiences and lessons learned in combatting CSEA and strengthen the capacity of members in proactively identifying the best approaches on how to strategically engage with their governments and to support the global advocacy efforts to address this crime. The Bangkok regional workshop is the second of a series which started in [Nairobi](#), Kenya in May 2023, and will continue with a third such regional workshop in Dakar, Senegal in May 2023 for West and Central Africa, and in San José, Costa Rica, in June 2023 for the Americas.

PARTNERS

To achieve the abovementioned objectives, collaboration is critical. This is why ECPAT International is proud to act as a convener and values the diverse partnership therefore established to ensure a cross-sectoral reflection on the state of evidence-based advocacy and action against sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

[ECPAT International](#) is the international advocacy network who strengthens and empowers 126 NGOs members in 104 countries globally. The ECPAT International network in East and Southeast Asia, and the Pacific, working at the forefront to combat sexual exploitation and abuse of children, continues to expand its membership, expertise, and capacity to join forces and accelerate its campaign to end the sexual exploitation of children in the region. In this event, ECPAT International acts as a convener, bringing together organisations from its network and from other civil society movements working to end sexual exploitation of children facilitated by technologies to take stock at how data are used in advocacy to make changes happen.

[Safe Online](#) is the only global investment vehicle dedicated to keeping children safe in the digital world. With a focus on innovative solutions and research, Safe Online collaborates with partners to address digital threats and shape a safer digital world for all children and young people. By the end of 2023, Safe Online will have invested almost US\$100 million in over 100 projects with impact in more than 85 countries; including substantial funding in the Southeast Asia region with 20 projects for a total of over US\$ 20 million. For this effort, Safe Online provides financial support to the regional workshop and facilitates participation of its grantees from the region to foster knowledge sharing, networks expansion and cross-fertilisation of efforts across the region. Around 20 grantees are expected to contribute to the regional workshop and to join the *Safe Online Regional Network Forum* organised in parallel for 'grantees only' to capture their specific experiences and lessons learned around the

application of Disrupting Harm findings and facilitate exchange across critical areas including integration of tech solutions, safeguarding and advocacy efforts.

The [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\)](#) has the mandate to support Member States in preventing and responding to crime and violence and strengthening their justice systems, including by ensuring that children are better served and protected by justice systems. In January 2023, the General Assembly adopted the resolution [A/RES/77/233](#) which specifically requested UNODC to assist Member States in their efforts to preventing and responding to child sexual exploitation and abuse. In June 2023, UNODC organized a comprehensive Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Removal of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) from the Internet, bringing together governments, civil society organisations, development banks as well as the private sector to foster cooperation and public private partnerships to proactively remove and combat child sexual exploitation and abuse online. The event led to the adoption of the [Call to Action Statement](#) for Removing child sexual exploitation and abuse materials, which has been signed by 73 Member States. In November 2023, the Office launched its new [Strategy to End Violence against Children](#) 2023-2030 jointly developed with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children which focuses on four contexts where children are often exposed to crime and violence: insecurity, justice systems, cyberspace and children on the move.

[Kindernothilfe](#) (KNH), German for “Supporting children in need,” has grown dramatically since 1959. Beginning with just five child sponsorships in India, its work now reaches more than 2.1 million children and youth in 609 projects in 32 countries on four continents. Ninety percent of Kindernothilfe’s funds are provided by tens of thousands of donors. KNH see its work as part of the global ecumenical development collaboration. Kindernothilfe, headquartered in Germany, cooperates with Kindernothilfe organisations in Austria, Luxembourg and Switzerland.

The [Down to Zero Alliance](#) is stepping up the fight against child sexual exploitation. The Alliance is committed to protecting children and preventing sexual exploitation in twelve countries in Asia and Latin America. Terre des Hommes (leader), Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia), Conexión, Defense for Children - Ecpat, Free A Girl and Plan International work in the Down to Zero Alliance together with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to combat the sexual exploitation of children to deal with. Down to Zero implements the program ***Step Up the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation of Children (SUFASEC)***, which empowers children and young people to defend their rights, support communities to become safer and protect their children from sexual exploitation, and help governments improve and implement relevant policies, laws and regulations.

STRATEGIES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

EXPECTED RESULTS:

The goal of this regional workshop is to strengthen partnership and empower civil societies networks across sectors, including ECPAT members, Safe Online grantees, UNODC, the Down to Zero Alliance, Kinder Not Hilfe’s (KNH) implementing partners, and other civil society organisations in East and Southeast and the Pacific to make a greater difference in the evidence-based advocacy against sexual exploitation and abuse of children. The specific objectives of the workshop are:

- To take stock of national and regional evidence-based advocacy outcomes so far in the six countries where *Disrupting Harm* was piloted in Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam), to analyse learning and results, and to strategise on how to continue pushing for the implementation of the recommendations from the national reports;
- To engage with ECPAT members, Safe Online grantees, KNH and Down to Zero's partners and civil society organisations from neighbouring countries where no *Disrupting Harm* study has been conducted in order to share the learnings and findings, and support extrapolation of advocacy approaches and key messages to nurture their extended ownership of the research and follow-up;
- To distil a regional analysis about common trends, challenges, opportunities and lessons learned in enhancing their accountability to children and their views, and see how the voice of children, including young survivors, can feed into the regional advocacy strategies;
- To ensure strategies against sexual exploitation and abuse of children remain up-to-date and relevant by harvesting analysis from across sectors, civil society and convening the CSO movements to engage latest developments, trends, challenges, and recommendations for the region.
- To support civil society organisations in their ability to strengthen their culture of safeguarding to proactively ensure that children at least are not harmed by their actions (this may be an ECPAT-only part of the agenda).

It is hoped that the participating stakeholders, including ECPAT members in East and Southeast Asia and the Pacific, Safe Online grantees, KNH implementing partners as well as guest experts will leave the workshop with an increased understanding of and opportunities for more coordinated, better developed and supported regional advocacy plan/activities that can be effective in achieving a range of goals linked to the recommendations from the *Disrupting Harm* study, Perspectives of Survivors and Access to Justice initiative.

AGENDA

Day 1 (*this may be for ECPAT members and by-invitation only*)

Focus: harvesting analysis from civil society movements regarding latest developments, trends and challenges on sexual exploitation of children in the regions.

Methodology: a series of thematic tables in working groups sessions and cross fertilisation of experiences between civil society organisations and national contexts

Day 2

Focus: taking stock at national and regional advocacy outcomes so far in the six countries where *Disrupting Harm* was piloted in Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam), to analyse learning and results, and strategise on how to continue pushing for the implementation of the recommendations from the report; and engaging with key actors and civil society organisations from neighbouring countries where no *Disrupting Harm* study has not been conducted in order to share the learnings and findings, and support extrapolation of advocacy approaches and key messages to nurture their extended ownership of the research and follow-up.

Methodology: working groups with leaderships from *Disrupting Harm* countries, with significant time for engagement and discussion on where we stand a year after, distilling learning and seeing how this can inspire civil society movements to generate change based on evidence

Day 3

Focus: To distil a regional analysis about common trends, challenges, opportunities and lessons learned in what children, including young survivors of child sexual exploitation, are telling us regarding the prevention and responses services designed for (with?) them and see how this can feed into the regional advocacy strategies.

Methodology: engage in working sessions on bottlenecks specific to the experience of child survivors of sexual exploitation in accessing services, capitalising on evidence that include the voices of survivors, to identify advocacy opportunities and promising practices that make a difference in the life of children.

World cafés

At the end of Day 2 and Day 3, the last hour of each of these two working days will be devoted to a World Café. Participants will be invited to “reserve” a table on one of these two days if they wish to present an emerging practice they have experienced in their country. Organisations wishing to present something should plan to make their table as attractive and interactive as possible, bringing material, showing videos or facilitating a short activity at their table. Other participants will be invited to circulate and interact with those presenting something they are curious to learn from. More information about the world café and reservation process will be circulated in February.

Day 4 (this may be for ECPAT members and by-invitation only)

Focus: To strengthen civil society organisations' ability, including building their culture of child safeguarding and proactively ensure that children at least are not harmed by their actions; and to plan all the learning and commendable practices identified in this workshop can be emulated and integrated in their own settings, paving the way to engage colleagues to enhance their approach for the way forward.

Methodology: results from recent safeguarding mapping are presented, activities to debate about the difference between culture of safeguarding and the simple existence of a policy on the matter, discussions on strategies on how to improve safeguarding culture and advance policy advocacy for the regions. Also, each leader of a civil society organisation will synthesise their take-aways into action points, and have a chance to discuss it between civil society movement, to ease the transition to action and encourage regional collaboration for the way forward.

PARTICIPANTS

The Regional Workshop will bring together the following organisations for **stronger policy advocacy** to fight CSEA:

- ECPAT's members from Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific. The list includes Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan (two members), Malaysia (three members), Mongolia, New Zealand, The Philippines, Samoa, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. Collaborating partners in Australia, China, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Singapore and Timor Leste will also be invited. Participants from the target countries will be Executive Director, to facilitate strategic engagement in the discussion. ECPAT members from Nepal and Pakistan may also be invited because of their leadership role in Access to justice.
- Selected experts and civil society representatives invited to discuss and share knowledge on access to services for children's victims of sexual exploitation and abuse and online child sexual exploitation; the list include experts from UN, UNICEF, Interpol, key child protection agencies and international organisations, the United National Office on Drugs and Crime, and some of the local partners of Kinder Not Hilfe and the Down to Zero Alliance.
- Over 20 grantees of Safe Online actively working in the region across Safe Online three main areas of investment: 1. *Strengthen systems* via creating incentives for action through norms change, policies and advanced regulation; 2. *Generate actionable research* to inform the design of digital platforms and government services; and, 3. *Design technology tools* that protect children and disrupt harmful behaviours and offending.

CONTACT

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RELEVANT RESOURCES

<i>Disrupting Harm</i>	
Cambodia	Country report (English and Khmer) Advocacy briefing (English and Khmer)
Indonesia	Country report (English and Bahasa) Advocacy briefing (English and Bahasa)
Malaysia	Country report (English and Malay) Advocacy briefing (English and Malay)
Thailand	Country report (English and Thai) Advocacy briefing (English and Thai)
The Philippines	Country report (Country report) Advocacy briefing (Advocacy briefing)
Viet Nam	Country report (English and Vietnamese) Advocacy briefing (English and Vietnamese)
Data insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children's experiences of online sexual exploitation and abuseChildren's disclosures of online sexual exploitation and abuseAccess to justice and legal remedies for children subjected to online sexual exploitation and abuseLegislation addressing online child sexual exploitation and abusePromising Government interventions addressing online child sexual exploitation and abuseRelationship between online and in-person CSEAThe Role of social media in facilitating online CSEAWho perpetrates online CSEA?The Role of caregivers in preventing online risks and harms for childrenLaw enforcement capacity in online CSEA cases

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