

A BRIEF REPORT



PANEL DISCUSSION

Needs of Children In Out-of-School
Settings - An Asian Perspective

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By: ASIA HUB

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PANEL DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

The panel discussion hosted by Coalition for Good Schools, Asia Hub in collaboration with This Life Cambodia focused on the Needs of Children In & Out of School Settings - An Asian Perspective. Here is a summary of key insights from our panellist's alongside compiled resources.

LIST OF PANELISTS:

1. Ms. Urvashi Gandhi, CEO, Samya Development Resources Private Limited as the host of the session
2. Ms. Borany Chea, Lead of Communities Section, This Life, Cambodia as the moderator.
3. Ms. Lopa Bhattacharjee, Director of Alliance Programme, Family for Every Child
4. Dr. Binayak Krishna Thapa, Assistant Professor, Development Studies at Kathmandu University's School of Arts (KUSOA)
5. Mr. Khieu Chetra, Executive Director, NGO Education Partnership (NEP)

POINTS OF DISCUSSION:

1. What are the major challenges children face outside of school, especially those without access to any form of education—both formal and informal in your country?
2. What are the strategies or initiatives that have been implemented to protect children from violence abuse, and neglect in outside-of- school settings in your country and how can these be adapted and scaled to reach more children?
3. How can families be supported to be able to protect their children from violence and abuse and how can families, local communities, governments and other stakeholders work together to create a comprehensive approach to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children?
Please share some examples?

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. The discussion highlighted the various factors contributing to their vulnerability and the impact on their overall well-being and development. Following are some key challenges faced by children outside of school that were discussed:
 - **Multidimensional Deprivation-** Children not attending school experience economic, social and developmental challenges that contribute to ongoing cycles of poverty. Lack of education leads to learning loss, impacting cognitive and socio-emotional growth and future opportunities.
 - **Inadequate Access to Basic Amenities-** These children often lack sanitation, meals, and clean water, affecting their physical health. Absence of structured social interactions delays emotional and social development, essential for mental well-being.
 - **Increased Vulnerability Due to School Dropout** - School dropout increases vulnerability to violence and exploitation, often resulting in family separation and loss of cultural identity. Schools are vital for child protection without them children lack necessary adult support.
 - **Factors Contributing to School Dropout-** Migration due to conflicts, economic pressures or climate crises disrupts education. Systemic barriers exclude vulnerable groups like refugees and children with disabilities. Sexual abuse and discrimination based on gender identity also cause school withdrawal.
2. Exploring strategies and initiatives implemented globally to protect children from violence, abuses and neglect in settings outside of school. The discussion highlighted innovative approaches and their potential for scalability to reach more children worldwide.
 - **Strategies and Innovations:** Panellist highlighted using existing mechanisms such as Parents Teacher Association (PTA's) and School Management Committees for policy advocacy and awareness campaigns. Innovations like Self-Help Groups for community schools were showcased for their localized impact and empowerment.
 - **Holistic Approach and Example:** The discussion emphasized holistic approaches including non-formal education family support programs and dedicated hotlines. Examples included

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comprehensive family packages and income generation activities to support children especially those with disabilities.

- **Case Studies and Scalability:** The webinar featured case studies from countries like Cambodia, Philippines, India, Nepal, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Guyana showcasing customized approaches to meet diverse needs in protecting children. These included annual enrolment campaigns targeting vulnerable groups and equivalency programs supporting education continuity in informal settings.
 - **Recommendations:** Recommendations included supporting family-based care like Kinship Care and implementing psychosocial care strategies such as narrative therapy. Collaboration, sustainable funding, and training were highlighted as crucial for scalability.
3. Exploring additional steps parents and local communities can take to protect children from violence and abuse outside of school settings. It highlighted collaborative efforts with stakeholders to create a comprehensive approach for ensuring the safety and well-being of all children.
- **Mobilizing Self-Help Groups for Education:** Self-help groups drive community initiatives like "Education for All to All for Education," advocating inclusive schooling and improving educational access for children.
 - **Awareness and Prevention Efforts:** Organizations like Damnok Toek conduct workshops on Child Rights, protection from violence and safe migration aiming for a all-inclusive child protection approach
 - **Empowering Families and Communities:** Encouraging families to identify risks and report to local authorities strengthens community responses. Collaborative working groups across administrative levels support effective child protection strategies.
 - **Community Initiatives in Action:** Community-based initiatives such as Peer-to-Peer Educator Clubs and Child Safe Agents groups play vital roles in protecting children. These groups operate within communities focusing on immediate protection needs through localized activities and engagement.
 - **Listening to Children and Strengthening Support Systems:** Creating a protective environment involves listening to children's voices and supporting parents in identifying risks, strengthening family structures, and ensuring access to social support and child protection systems. Emphasizing local cultural practices that promote safety and nurture children's roots and identities is crucial.
 - **The BUD Campaign and Stakeholder Engagement:** The BUD campaign engages diverse stakeholders to promote comprehensive child protection strategies across communities with specific focus on protecting boys from sexual violence. It highlights the importance of collaborative efforts among parents, local communities, NGOs and government agencies in ensuring the safety and well-being of all children.

Recommendations

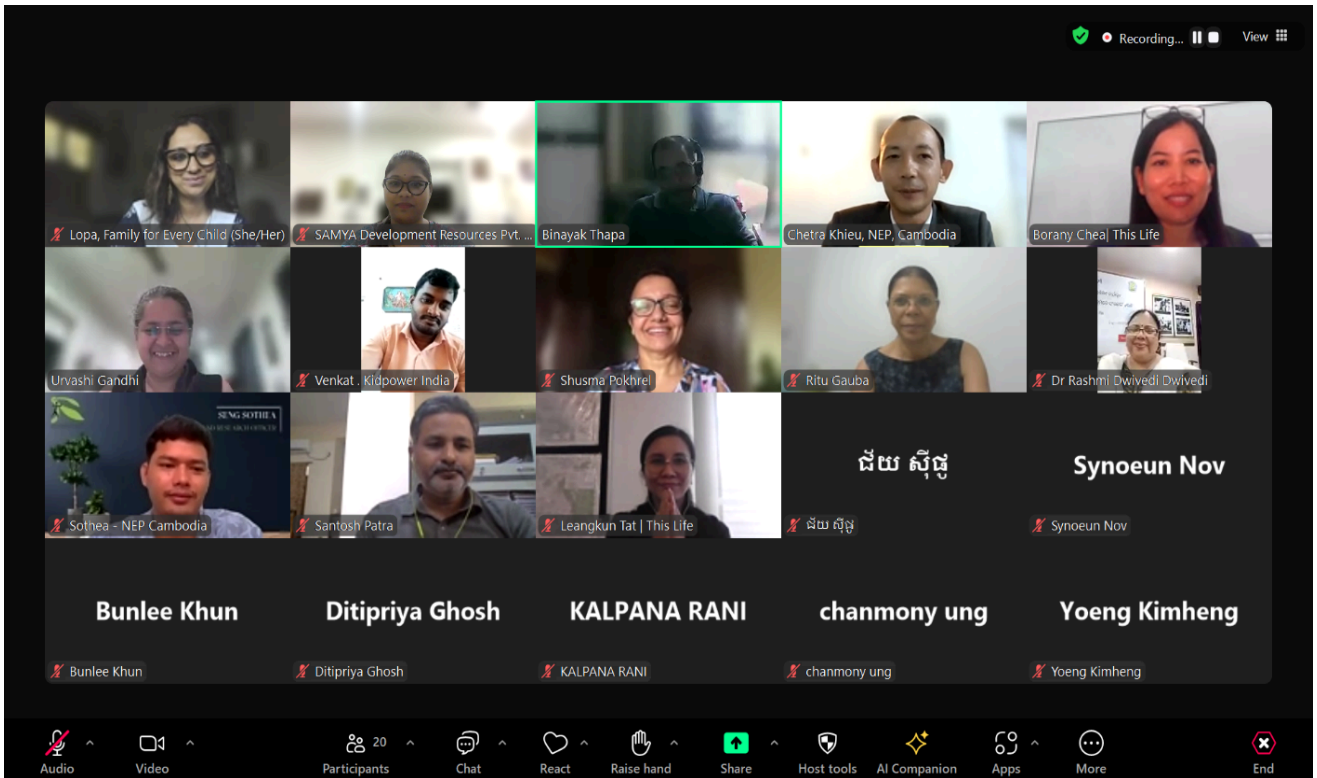
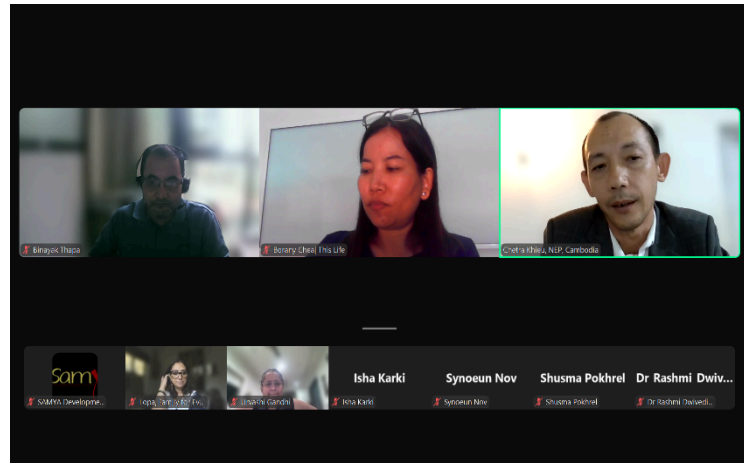
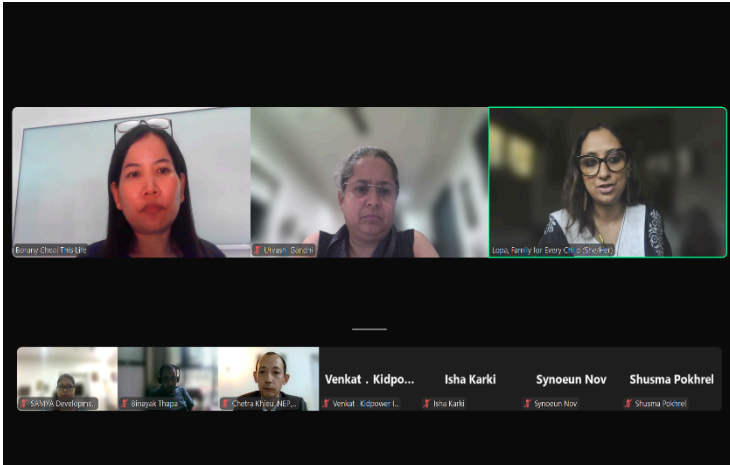
- **Inclusive Education Policies** - Ensure equitable access to quality education by improving infrastructure and enhancing teacher training.
- **Community and Family Support** - Strengthen families with support programs and empower communities through awareness-raising workshops on child rights and protection.
- **Collaborative Efforts** - Encourage collaboration among families, communities, governments, and stakeholders to ensure coordinated efforts.
- **Integrated support systems** - Implement support mechanisms like scholarships, healthcare, and income generation activities to alleviate economic pressures and support education. Raise awareness on child abuse prevention and promote parent-child dialogue to enhance protective environments.

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Important session links and information:

S.No	Organisation Name	Name of the Website	Website Link
1.	Coalition for Good Schools	Coalition's Website	www.coalitionforgoodschools.org
2.	Learning, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Lab's website	Research website	https://like.edu.np/research-completed/
3.	Change Maker for Children's	Digital Community of Practice for practitioners to exchange knowledge all over the world facilitated by Family for Every Child	https://www.changemakersforchildren.com/munity/home
4.	Family for Every Child	Caring for Boys research - global study and national studies & the BUD campaign,	https://www.blueumbrelladay.org/research/
5.	Family For Every Child	Kinship Care Global Guidance, Family for Every Child	https://familyforeverychild.org/resources/new-guidance-out-now-lessons-learnt-from-around-the-world-on-supporting-kinship-care/
6.	Family For Every Child	Integration toolkit for practitioners to support children on the move, Family for Every Child	https://familyforeverychild.org/resources/supporting-integration-a-toolkit-for-practitioners-working-with-children-and-young-people-on-the-move/
7.	This Life Cambodia	Programs from This Life Cambodia supporting out of schools setting 's children	Vocational Training and Social Enterprise , This Life Reimagining Care , and This Life Without Bars
8.	Child Safe Movement	Child Safe Website	ChildSafe - Together, protecting children (thinkchildsafe.org)

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We extend our gratitude to our audience for attending the panel discussion.

Thank you | Team 