

Resolution On The ASEAN Plan Of Action For Children Manila, Philippines, 2 December 1993

We, the Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, Member Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN);

BEARING IN MIND that the Declaration of ASEAN Concord signed in Bali, Indonesia in February 1976 provides that the elimination of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy is the primary concern of member countries, and that they shall therefore intensify cooperation in economic and social development;

NOTING the decision in Jakarta in June 1987 of ASEAN parliamentarians to adopt an Agenda for Action for ASEAN's Children which took into account the commitments of their respective countries to international goals for children and women;

ADHERING to the decision of the Fourth ASEAN Summit in Singapore in January 1992 to extend ASEAN functional cooperation to the development of children to realize their full potential;

GIVING DUE COGNIZANCE to the 1990 World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action for Child Survival, Protection and Development;

BELIEVING that responsible parenthood and family development are key factors in enabling children to develop to their fullest potential;

RECOGNIZING the importance of regional cooperation in improving the conditions of children in ASEAN and convinced of the urgency to respond more effectively to the needs of children in the region and to complement efforts being undertaken by individual member countries,

Hereby agree to adopt an ASEAN Plan of Action for Children as follows:

OBJECTIVE

The ASEAN Plan of Action for Children shall provide the framework for promoting regional cooperation for the survival, protection and development of the ASEAN Child. The Plan shall be an integral part of the member countries' efforts in improving the lives of the peoples of the region.

DEFINITION

For purposes of the Plan of Action, the ASEAN Child is defined as any person below the age of 18 years.

PRIORITY AREAS OF CONCERN

The Plan of Action shall address the following priority areas of concern:

- (a) Child Survival;
- (b) Child Protection; and
- (c) Child Development.

Common issues of problems under each heading have been identified, as follows:

Child Survival

1. The survival of children is constrained by poverty and the lack of access to basic needs and services such as food and nutrition, clothing, shelter, health and education.

Child Protection

The following issues relating to child protection must be addressed:

1. Child abuse, neglect and exploitation including child prostitution, child labor, street children and abandoned children.
2. Alternative family care arrangements for the victims of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.
3. Child trafficking.
4. Inter-country adoption.
5. Special needs of children with disabilities.
6. Children in conflict with the law.

Child Development

The following needs relating to child development should be met:

1. Awareness of the roles of various elements of society as these pertain to child development.
2. Moral and ethical value formation through education.
3. Total development of the child.
4. Recreational facilities.
5. Special needs of the gifted and the child with disability.
6. Parenting skills.
7. Provision for child care services.

Strategies

Specific strategies for each area of concern are the following:

Child Survival

1. Community mobilization strategies for health care and sanitation, immunization, better nutrition, and education for parents and children.
2. Advocacy for improved employment opportunities to enhance parents' capacity to care for children.

Child Protection

1. Networking with and among law enforcement agencies for the purpose of child protection.
2. Training to improve the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes on child protection.
3. Research on children in especially difficult circumstances.

Child Development

1. Advocacy and community mobilization strategies to heighten awareness on the developmental needs of children and the roles of parents.
2. Promotion of networking among child development study centres in the region.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

The priority projects for each area of concern are the following:

Child Survival

1. Introduction of ASEAN focus in National Days for Children.
2. Information sharing on the state-of-the-art programmes which provide for the basic needs of children along the lines of food and nutrition, clothing, shelter, health and education.

Child Protection

1. Collaborative research, documentation and programmes on physical and sexual abuse of children; child labor; trafficking of children; children with disabilities; and child abandonment.
2. Regional experts group meeting on crimes committed by and against children.
3. Regional exchange programme for child welfare workers.

Child Development

1. Regional training of trainers programme for child care service providers.
2. Regional training of trainers programme on parenting skills,
3. Regional workshop to facilitate networking among child development researchers in ASEAN.
4. Regional training in the promotion of responsible parenthood and family development.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

There will be a designated Desk Officer for Children who will serve as the focal point for each member country and have the following functions, consistent with the laws of the country:

1. Assist in the formulation and recommendation of policies and programmes involving children that shall be pursued at the regional level within the context of the ASEAN Plan of Action for Children in consultation with relevant national authorities;
2. Facilitate exchange of information, technical advice and programme experiences on children's issues and problems among ASEAN member countries;
3. Coordinate, monitor, review and evaluate the respective member country's implementation of ASEAN programmes of cooperation on children;
4. Prepare and submit proposals and required reports on children to the ASEAN Committee on Social Development.

The designated ASEAN Children's Desk Officers shall ensure effective linkage and coordination of the regional programmes on children with relevant bodies and committees of ASEAN involved in children's issues.

The implementation of the Plan of Action for Children requires effective coordination not only among the Desk Officers but also between the Desk Officers and other relevant ASEAN bodies, to include among others the Committee on Social Development and its sub-committees, Committee on Culture and Information and its relevant Working Groups, and ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD).

This role as focal point and counterpart for ASEAN Desk Officers shall be served by the ASEAN Secretariat through an officer at least at the Senior Officer level who will assist in coordinating the implementation of programmes for children in the absence of an institutionalized sub-committee on children.

FUNDING RESOURCES

Given the importance that ASEAN attaches to child survival, protection and development, joint and cooperative action among member countries will be undertaken. The ASEAN Secretariat, in coordination with the relevant ASEAN bodies, will mobilize support from various external sources, including the

Dialogue Partners and such traditional donor agencies as UNICEF. The ASEAN Secretariat will also undertake new initiatives to develop more funding sources.

TIME FRAME

Member countries shall endeavor to achieve the objectives of the ASEAN Plan of Action for Children by the year 2000.

Done at Manila, Philippines on the second day of December 1993.

For the Government of Brunei Darussalam:

H.E. PEHIN DATO HAJI AWANG HUSSAIN
Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports

For the Government of the Republic of Indonesia:

H.E. INTEN SOEWENO
Minister of Social Affairs

For the Government of Malaysia:

H.E. DATO' NAPSIAH BINTI OMAR
Minister of National Unity and Social Development

For the Government of the Republic of the Philippines:

H.E. CORAZON ALMA G. DE LEON
Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development

For the Government of the Republic of Singapore:

H.E. YEO CHEOW TONG
Minister for Community Development

For the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand:

H.E. SERMSAKDI KAROON
Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Welfare