

ASSESSING CHILD PROTECTION IN BUDDHIST COMMUNITIES INCLUDING MONASTIC AND DHAMMA SCHOOLS IN CAMBODIA, LAOS, MYANMAR, THAILAND, AND VIETNAM

International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB)



BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) was established in Thailand in 1989 by Sulak Sivaraksa and a group of Buddhist and non-Buddhist thinkers and social activists. The network has expanded to include members, both individuals and organizations, from more than 25 countries across Asia, Europe, North America and Australia. From this diversity, an understanding of socially engaged Buddhism has emerged which integrates the practice of Buddhism with social action for a healthy, just, and peaceful world.

Through engaged, constructive dialogue with international experts and representatives of secular organizations working in the field of child rights, the Asian Network of Buddhists for Child Protection (ABC) was formed. ABC aims to promote and protect the rights of all children and help to prevent all forms of violence against children. Further reporting and data gathering of the child protection assessment in religious settings is essential to establish a database. Together ABC Network and INEB will build upon the work by existing Buddhists organizations to conduct a research study on Child Protection in Buddhist communities, including monastic and Dhamma schools in Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand.

Arigatou International is providing financial support for the research project.. The assessment will be carried out by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), with the technical assistance and guidance of Arigatou International and UNICEF ESARO.



WE WILL NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO:

- Identify key informants (beneficiaries and stakeholders) for interviews
- Join focus group discussion as key partners
- Coordinate with relevant local partners, key experts and Buddhist leaders
- Provide instruction and advice to country consultant and team
- Review the country report

**Please note that an interview and focus group discussion will be conducted in local languages per requested.*

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

To carry out an assessment of the situation of the child's rights that protects children from all forms of violence, in Buddhist communities, including in Monastic and Dhamma schools in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

PROJECT TIMELINE : May 2021 - February 2022

THE RESEARCH HAS THREE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- To explore the current situation of violence against children through conducting literature review of the five countries. Synthesize this broad picture with what is known about specific Buddhist communities.
- To Identify the promising practices and mechanisms from Buddhist organisations to prevent and respond to violence against children.
- To identify strategies and recommendations for Buddhist leaders and members of the Asian Network of Buddhist for Child Protection (ABC) to prevent and respond to all forms of Violence against Children (VAC) in their communities.

OUTCOMES

- ABC members gained comprehensive knowledge and information they need to develop and implement their plan of action for ending violence against children in Buddhist communities.
- ABC and INEB are invited to become a member of the GNRC to contribute to implementing the Panama Commitments on Ending Violence against Children.

RESEARCH UPTAKE & DISSEMINATION

- The research findings will be presented at the public launch of the Asian Network of Buddhists for Child Protection (ABC) in April-May 2022, in Hanoi, Vietnam, as well as to key partners at other relevant events and opportunities.
- The findings and recommendations will be used as a baseline study and guiding reference to develop ABC plan of action for ending violence against children in Buddhist communities.

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"Religious leaders and communities can be powerful allies in protecting children and should be included as partners. They could do even more for children if they were to embrace and become empowered by the CRC."

- Global study, Faith and Children's Rights: A Multi-religious Study on the Convention on the Rights of the Child -