

Excellency's, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to address this very important conference and on a very important topic. I would like to thank the organizers for hosting such an important and timely initiative.

Let me also express my gratitude to the people who have been working hard to help the children and vulnerable group of human being, not only to survive and live, but to become a healthy and use full citizen of our countries and our world.

This work is very easy to talk about it, but quite difficult and challenging to do it, in the mean time it is also quite interesting and rewarding. It require strong personality commitment and sacrifice to deal with children who are traumatized, or with disabilities and different behavior.

South Asia is an important part of the world. The share population of the region, the diversity of economy, geography and people make the region a very strategic part of the world. Unfortunately, the region has been plagued and engulfed in a trend of instability, political dispute, ongoing conflict and widespread poverty which put the majority of the people in a very difficult situation to live with dignity and rights.

The situation which cause a lot of children to not have the pleasure to live with their biological parents and family, and forced to live in Orphanages and alternatives structures.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am going to talk about the causes which forced the children to live in alternative places such as orphanages:

A- Poverty :

Poverty is a serious issue in this part of the world , poverty is not only lack of food and necessary commodities of life, but lack of freedom , dignity and human rights in the region.

As we all know poverty dose have direct impact on the level of education, health and violence in the family , community and the countries.

Unfortunately the fact is that the poor families always in all of our countries have more children and they are more vulnerable to different kind of disease such as HIV AIDS and other epidemic which cause of the death and casualties, and increase the number of the children who in need and require care and to live in this institutional structures.

Poor people are also more vulnerable to natural disasters, because they are living in low standard housing and shelters, when it is flood they are the one who lose their lives or if it is an earth quake, these people lose their life and livelihoods. Most probably our region has the biggest population of poor people in the world.

The poverty and problem related to poverty leave behind a lot of children in early age or youth with no parents or care taker in our community and societies.

Poverty is a cause of a lot of human rights violation and cause a lot of risk for children.

We need to empower people , citizens by granting them guaranteeing , protecting and promoting their freedom , human rights and dignities, all these can not be done unless we fight against poverty.

B-Conflict and war:

It is quite clear that poverty is one of the main reason of the conflict and continued wars in our countries and our region. Conflict kills people, destroy their livelihood and forced them to leave their home and villages. Displacement either become an IDP or Refugees naturally put women and children in a very vulnerable

to violence and risk including trafficking , forced prostitutions , joining the criminal groups and even using the children on trafficking of the drugs.

The clear example is the situation in Afghanistan, the number of the people who are killed and become disabled during the conflict is more than million, and the number of children who lose their guardians and bread winner every day is much high. Unfortunately we do not have the exact database for this in the country.

The children who are not in these institution most of the time are used as slaves by their relatives, the girl child are face more vulnerability and abuses such as forced marriage and child marriage to people who has four time more age than these girls. .

In the IDP and Refugee structures the women access to contraception and reproductive health care is limited , which itself put women in very difficult situation, unwanted pregnancies, high mortality rate for the mothers, which increase the number of the children with out any one to take care of them, leaving no choice to them not to live in this institutions. I could argue that the lucky ones are in better situation and some of them stay

on the street which make more vulnerable to every kind of abuses.

C-Lack of awareness about their rights and about family planning:

Lack of education about their basic human rights and family planning is one of the well-known reason for the increase of the population in our region, unfortunately the majority of illiterate people are women. They do not know about their bodies and have no information to enable them to chose the number of their children. Needless to say that high population and the negative impact on the socio, economical and political situation in our countries are huge and increase the insecurity and peace.

Some of the negative culture and tradition, preferring boys to the girls in south Asia region also a cause to push women to bring more children in order to have boys or commit unsafe abortions and put their own life in danger, the connection between the level of education and practicing these harm-full cultures are very clear.

In all of our countries in order to have more boys , they produce more girl childe which are not well not well comed to the family .

The girl child is more vulnerable to abuses and sexual misuse, that is why we have more boys in orphanages then the girls, because they can be use as commodity , could be bought an d sold in the community and there is a demannnd in the market for them.

D- Lack of social security and lack of political will:

Unfortunately due to the lack of political will in our leaderships in the region, not enough attention are paid to improve the people's life. Most of our countries are spending the majority of the national budget on militarization of the country and in conflict, instead of spending the money to improve the level of provision of basic social services such as education, health care and job opportunities to the men and women, and promote a peace full environment.

The provision of social security is not existing in most of our countries, which put the people in a condition of insecurity and no clear plan for their retirement, and etc

that is why they try to have more children particularly the boys to reduce their insecurity in their old age.

The insecurity and ethnic tensions in some of our countries push people and families to increase the production of children and particularly the male child, they could be used to protect them in case of conflict and give them economical security.

We need to acknowledge that we have people in our countries who do not have an identity. These means that our government do not know exactly how much is our population to make their socio – economical policy to improve the lives of every one to live with dignity and rights.

E-Corruption and lack of accountability:

Unfortunately we all have a widespread corruption in our countries, which is one of the main cause of the human rights violation including more female mortality rate and increase on children who lose their parents and care takers. Corruption reduce the provision of basic social services and lower the quality of the education, health services and the services in the orphanages.

We do not see a strong political will to fight against corruption and promotion of accountability and justice in the SARAC countries , the level of corruption might be different , but the truth is that we all suffer from corruption.

Ladies and Gentalmen:

The above mentioned reason are producing a lot of young human being to use the alternative institutions such as orphanages. These children do not chose to be burn and do not have the capacity to chose to live in these institutions.

The protection of the citizens is the un-conditional state responsibility, unfortunately most of the time these institutions are not able to provide all the necessary care to the children living in the state run institutions. Due to the lack of budget and lack of capacity and of course lack of committed people who are working there.

Some of these institutions also run by the NGO,s and charity organizations , but who ever run these structures should have the right people and right policy to full fill the needs of these

children's . Most of these children are traumatized , difficult behavior , and different kind and level of disabilities. They need special attention and every possible means should be used as to facilitate smooth life for them, in my personal view no excuse should be used to not treat these children humanly, with dignity and rights.

Their access to quality education and health care, quality of food and shelters and etc should be very convenient to their situations.

But unfortunately we also witnessed the misuse of these children politically and socially in our country. We have state run orphanage in Afghanistan , during the puppet regime in late 70's and 80's , they were trained to be supportive of the regime and they were send to USSR for further training to support the brutal regime in Kabul and brain wash them.

On the other side we also saw that these children were used and are still used as terrorist and being trained and brainwashed by the extremist group.

The children coming from different ethnic group, different language, religion, different culture and with different

disabilities and gone through enough trauma , all the program and policy should be based on the need and help them and pulling them out of terrible situation there in to it.

The vulnerability of the girl child is much more then the boys and, particularly they face more sexual and gender based violence then the bys , their need is particularly special when they reached at adolescent age.

The children with different disability is require attention , particularly the children with mental health problem. It might be difficult to put them with the other children who can discriminate then verbally or physically.

The people who are the caretaker of these children should have the following criteria:

- 1- The people who want to work in these institutions should chose to take the responsibility of these vulnerable children. Not because they could not find any other job , they are forced to work in these centers to make a living.
- 2- These people should be healthy and do not suffer from any sicknesses which has an impact on their behavior and

abilities, and particularly from infectious disease such as hepatitis etc.

3- These people should not have economical and domestic problem , for example if a women suffers every day from domestic violence and come to work in these institutions , she might take violent action against these children out of frustrations, not even intentionally.

4- The people who has discriminatory attitude , regarding the gender or ethnicity or religion , they might be abusive and discriminate against the minorities. Putting these kind of people will not help to reduce the tension and the trauma of the these group of people

5- Have policy and regulation based on equality and human rights are really a need in these kind of institutions, in some condition their might good policies, but these policies should be implemented with out any exceptions.

While making policy and plan for these institutions , the children should be included , and be part of the plan implement and even evaluation.

6- Monitoring and evaluation of the activates of the care taker is important, every one should be accountable for their

action. Promotion and demotion policy should be in place for the people working in these institutions.

7- The qualification of the training of the care taker is important, particularly if they have training and ability to help the children with physiological problem.

8- Finally the socio, political situation in all of our countries are close, but not same , we can not have one prescription policy for all of our countries , but we can diffenety can learn from each others experiences .

That is why we should have flexibility and our plan should be based on the need and requirement of the children we work with.

These children are the future of our countries, we all should treat them with dignity and full rights, the environment they live should be peace full and full of love and care to make these people a responsible citizens for saving the humanity.

Distinguished participant:

My recommendation to the governments of south Asia would be the fallowing:

1- The issue of these children should be one of the priority of our states and enough budget should be allocated to

these institutions. These institutions should not be treated as sixth finger of our policies in the Ministeries of our Social Affairs. These vulnerable group is not a burden on the government, it is a sole responsibility of state institution to provide protection and promote their rights and dignity.

- 2- Regular monitoring and evaluation should be done to improve the condition of their living standards and educational standard.
- 3- The culture of accountability and justice should applied strongly , zero tolerance for corruption and violation of human rights policy should be the priority for the leadership in these institutions.
- 4- The educational program for the children also should design regarding their interest and choice. It might be very use full to send them to the public schools and structures, to not be isolated from the community. program and skill training to build their self confidence and prepare them for the transition is a need for their integration in the communities. Beside the inclusion of the children in policy and program, all these program

should be gender sensitized, because the need of the girl child and the boy is different.

5- Policy and program for reduction of poverty reduction and elimination can not be achieved unless the government facilitate women access to the reproductive health and contraception , family planning and policy is a key for development and empowerment of half of the population.

6- Awareness program in every level of educational and social program by government, NGO's and charity foundation in coordinate way will be very use full. These effort should focus on the obligation of the state institution, peoples responsibilities as citizen and human rights.

Coordination and cooperation between people who reun these institution will be use full to improve the condition of these structures.

7- These children who are forced to live in institutions, and live with dignity and rights , and it is a moral responsibilities of all of us to help these children an enable them to not only an important citizen of our countries , but also a use full person in our communities.

