

2021 WORLD CONGRESS ON JUSTICE WITH CHILDREN

15-20 November 2021

“Ensuring access to justice for all children: towards non-discriminatory and inclusive child justice systems”

Workshop Programme

Strategic Litigation and Enhanced Public Governance to Address Systemic Injustices Against Children Facing Poverty and Marginalization

Date	Thursday, 18th November 2021			
Timing	13:00 - 14:30 Geneva	17:45 - 19:15 Kathmandu	19:00 - 20:30 Bangkok	21:00 - 22:30 Tokyo
Organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Legal Foundation • OECD • UNICEF 			
Type of Workshop	Panel Discussion			
Region	Asia			
Language	English			

Abstract

In Asia and around the world, racial, ethnic, religious, and gender disparities pervade child justice systems. This means that children and young people from poor and otherwise marginalized communities come into contact with the justice system at disproportionately high rates. Due to lack of resources and increased vulnerability to a range of challenges, including abuse and neglect in the home, food and housing insecurity, sexual and gender-based violence and trauma, mental health diagnoses, substance abuse issues, and school problems among others, these children and young people are more likely to be arrested and then subjected to disproportionately harsh treatment and punishment. They are also more likely to come into contact with the criminal justice system as victims or witnesses. Unfortunately, justice systems are unprepared to meet the specific needs of children and young people in contact with the law.

In order to ensure access to justice and positive outcomes for children and young people, we must address the underlying problems that they face through a holistic, integrated approach to legal aid—addressing their social, economic, legal, and other unmet needs. This panel session will bring together experts in legal aid provision, social services, and child protection who are actively working to reform and build child-friendly justice systems in Asia. The panel will probe key drivers of contact with the justice system for poor and marginalized children and young people, and share practical strategies to improve public governance, fill service gaps, and fight in the courtroom to tackle injustices.

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Key take-aways of the session

- Examples of the impact of the criminalization of poverty and marginalization on children.
- The critical importance of an integrated approach to child-friendly justice.
- Successful strategies to build and reform child-friendly justice systems.

Expected outcome

Workshop participants understand practical strategies for breaking down silos and taking an integrated approach to achieve meaningful access to justice for children and young people.

Speakers

- **Moderator: Joshua Dohan, Senior Fellow, The International Legal Foundation (ILF)**
Joshua Dohan is a Senior Fellow with the ILF. Previously, he was Director of the Youth Advocacy Division (YAD), the juvenile defender branch of the Massachusetts statewide public defender agency, the Committee for Public Counsel Services. Josh became a public defender in 1988 and joined the Youth Advocacy Project (predecessor to YAD) in 1992 as its first staff attorney. Using a Positive Youth Development Approach, Josh worked with children and youth in the Massachusetts juvenile justice system to advance their legal and human rights, promote their healthy development, and help them achieve their legal and life goals. Josh was also Founder, President, and CEO of the Youth Advocacy Foundation.
- **Chat Moderator: Leah Conklin, Advocacy & Communications Director, ILF**
Leah Conklin is the Advocacy & Communications Director at the ILF, where she drives efforts to strengthen legal aid access at the international, regional, and national levels. Previously, she led communications for campaigns to protect workers’ rights, increase minimum wage, and hold corporations and politicians accountable to good governance standards. She earned her B.A. in Communications from Pace University and is currently an M.A. candidate in Refugee Protection and Forced Migrations Studies with the University of London.

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- **Panelists**

- 1. Shikha Pandey, Program Director, ILF Myanmar**

Currently serving as the ILF’s Program Director in Myanmar, Shikha Pandey initially volunteered as an ILF International Fellow facilitating a multi-week training for Afghan defense lawyers held in New Delhi in 2019. Prior, she was the David W. Leebron Human Rights Fellow hosted by the Jagdalpur Legal Aid Group in India, where she provided legal representation to the indigenous Adivasi community in conflict-affected areas and researched the operation of anti-terrorism courts in southern Chhattisgarh. As a criminal lawyer, she has represented clients before the trial courts, high courts, and the Supreme Court of India.

- 2. Ajay Shankar Jha Rupesh, Executive Director, Public Defender Society of Nepal**

Ajay Shankar Jha Rupesh is the Executive Director of the Public Defender Society of Nepal (PDS-Nepal). He joined the ILF in Nepal in 2008 after working for eight years as a private advocate. Besides providing direct legal representation, he is actively involved in defense lawyers and advocating for expanded access to justice. As a legal expert, Mr. Jha provided input for the UNODC handbook on Early access to legal aid in criminal justice processes as well as UNODC’s draft Model Law on Legal Aid in the Criminal Justice System. He has served as the Chairman of the Janakpur Youth Club and was a founding member of the Mithila People Service Council.

- 3. Noriko Izumi, Chief, Child Protection, UNICEF Myanmar**

Noriko Izumi is Chief of Child Protection with UNICEF Myanmar. She has joined the UNICEF Myanmar Country Office in Yangon since November 2017. She has over 20 years of professional experience with child protection programme management for UNICEF, in both development and humanitarian contexts. She has worked for eight different field-based offices in various regions (from Asia to Middle East to Africa). She has an M.A. degree in Sociology from the University of Toronto, Canada.

- 4. Chloé Lelievre, OECD Justice Programme Lead, Public Governance Directorate**

Chloé Lelievre leads the OECD Justice Programme at the Public Governance Directorate. She was a Council of State Judge-Assessor at the French National Court of Asylum and an Associate Legal Officer to a judge at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. She holds a Master’s degree in Civil, Common and International Law from the University Paris - Nanterre – La Defense.