Statement on the UPR Pre-session on Thailand

of The Coalition of CSOs for Children's SOGIESC Rights Thailand

25 August 2026, Geneva

My name is Koony. I speak on behalf of Save the Children Thailand and the Coalition of CSOs for Children's SOGIESC Rights.

I also speak for children and youth with diverse SOGIESC in Thailand.

Consultations were conducted with a group of children and youth, and a youth-led UPR survey nationwide.

Today, I will talk about the challenges we still face, and our recommendations.

During the last UPR cycle, Thailand received and accepted four specific recommendations on the rights of children with diverse SOGIESC. These covered violence, discrimination, and education.

We welcome two important changes since then.

First, the landmark passage of Marriage Equality. Second, Thailand banned corporal and psychological punishment of children at home, in schools, and in other settings. Both changes came into effect in 2025.

However, children and youth with diverse SOGIESC still face violence and discrimination.

Mental health research from 2022 found that more than 70% had symptoms of depression or anxiety. More than half had thought about suicide. Transgender children and youth faced the highest risk.

Nearly half of children and youth had also experienced attempts to change or "fix" their sexual orientation or gender identity. Most of these attempts came from family members.

Family support is very important. But our youth-led UPR survey found that almost 60% of children and youth with diverse SOGIESC do not have a supportive family environment.

Parents need to have positive parenting skills that accept diverse SOGIESC because every child deserves to be accepted and protected.

We recommend the Thai government to

1. Establish dedicated, affirming mental health services, with professionals trained in SOGIESC-competent, accessible through schools and community settings.
2. Implement a national positive parenting program that promotes acceptance of diverse SOGIESC, supported by public awareness-raising and community outreach.

In the big picture, Thailand still does not have legal gender recognition. This means transgender and nonbinary children cannot have their gender identity recognised in official documents.

Thailand has The Student Uniform Act, and many schools have strict rules about uniforms and hairstyles that force children to follow only the binary “male” or “female” ways. This makes it difficult for children to express who they are and feel comfortable at school. It may seem like a small issue, but it can have a real impact on children’s wellbeing.

In November 2022, a 14-year-old transgender student took her own life after being ordered by a teacher to cut her hair. She also faced bullying from other students because of her gender expression.

This is not an isolated case. This shows that these rules are not just about uniforms or hair. They can have a serious impact on children’s lives.

We therefore make three recommendations to the Thai government:

1. Enact a gender recognition act based on self-determination that is inclusive of children, in consultation with children.
2. Amend laws and policies at both national and school levels, including uniform and hairstyle regulations, to guarantee all students the right to express their gender identity.
3. Implement a mandatory teacher training programme on diverse SOGIESC and child rights, ensuring that all teachers complete the training within two years, with regular monitoring

Children have the right to be heard. And we hope the Royal Government of Thailand will take these recommendations forward, so that every child can grow up safe, accepted, and protected.

Thank you.