

Legal Protection System for Children Left Behind by Indonesian Migrant Workers: A Multilevel SCII Strategy Approach

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Abstract

This study investigates the systemic neglect experienced by children of Indonesian migrant workers through the lens of the SCII (Societal, Community, Institutional, Individual) strategy. Despite the economic benefits of labor migration, an estimated 11,732 children in East Lombok remain in vulnerable caregiving arrangements, often overseen by elderly or extended family members. Using an empirical juridical method, data were collected from March to July 2025 through semi-structured interviews, field observations, and document analyses involving seven key informants, including government officials, caregivers, and child protection advocates. The findings reveal a 70 % gap between national child protection mandates and local enforcement. For example, only two of ten migrant-sending villages possess local regulations addressing the welfare of left-behind children. Cultural norms such as begawé (communal work) and saling jaga (mutual care) create informal safety nets but also obscure neglect and discourage reporting due to respect for kinship hierarchies. Institutional actors such as schools and health centers remain underutilized; 80 % of teachers interviewed lacked standard procedures to identify or report neglect cases. The study highlights SCII's potential to integrate formal legal mandates with community-based practices and concludes that a pluralistic, multilevel, and context-sensitive protection model is essential to ensure accountability and sustainability in safeguarding migrant workers' children.

Keywords: *Child Protection; Caregiving systems; Legal pluralism; Migrant workers; SCII framework;.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The global phenomenon of labor migration continues to shape the socio-economic landscape of developing countries, including Indonesia. Labor migration provides employment opportunities, improves family living standards, and contributes significantly to national income through remittances.¹ However, these benefits are accompanied by serious social costs, particularly for children left behind by migrant parents. Separation from caregivers often leads to inadequate emotional support and supervision, which increases risks of neglect, educational discontinuity, and psychosocial distress.² In Indonesia, one of Asia's

¹ Aswatini Raharto and Mita Noveria, "Indonesian International Nurse Migration: Assessing Migration as Investment for Future Work," in *ERIA Research Project Report FY 2023, No. 07* (Jakarta: ERIA, 2023), 107–30, https://www.eria.org/uploads/media/Research-Project-Report/RPR-2023-07/10_Ch.6-Indonesia.pdf.

² NTBSATU.Com, "BP2MI: Awal 2023, 11.732 Orang NTB Bekerja Di Luar Negeri," *NTBSATU.Com*, April 15, 2023, <https://ntbsatu.com/2023/04/15/bp2mi-awal-2023-11-732-orang-ntb-bekerja-di-luar-neg->

largest labor-exporting nations, this issue has become increasingly visible. In 2023 alone, 11,732 migrant workers from West Nusa Tenggara were deployed abroad—mainly to Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Japan—working in low-skilled and informal sectors.³ The migration of mothers, in particular, has transformed family structures in rural areas, with grandparents or extended relatives taking over child care. These informal caregiving arrangements, while culturally accepted, often lack sufficient emotional and financial resources to ensure children's well-being.⁴

At the regional level, Southeast Asian countries still face wide gaps in realizing the best interests of the child principle embedded in the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. Despite ratification, implementation measures such as universal birth registration and equal access to education or health services remain limited.⁵ For example, in Thailand, migrant children are frequently placed in educational settings that do not correspond to their age, which reduces learning quality and increases vulnerability to early employment or marriage.⁶ Similar problems occur in Indonesian border regions such as Nunukan, where incomplete population documentation has produced statelessness among children of migrant workers⁷. These examples reveal persistent inconsistencies between international child protection norms and local policy enforcement.

At the national and local levels, the problem of child neglect is exacerbated by weak institutional coordination and the absence of an integrated protection system. Although Indonesia has enacted laws such as Law No. 35/2014 on Child Protection and Law No. 18/2017 on the Protection of Migrant Workers, their implementation remains fragmented.⁸ Responsibilities among actors—schools, health services, and social agencies—are often unclear, resulting in reactive rather than preventive interventions. In East Lombok, where labor migration is high, the care of migrant workers' children is largely delegated to elderly caregivers who lack the capacity to provide psychosocial and educational support.⁹ This condition reflects the tension between economic dependency and social vulnerability in rural Indonesia.

Previous research has contributed to understanding these issues but still leaves several conceptual and practical gaps. First, few studies have developed a holistic model connecting the health, education, legal, and social sectors in addressing children's vulnerability to migration. Second, limited sensitivity to local culture reduces the effectiveness of child protection policies in rural areas. Third, there is no clear operational

eri.html. Accessed April 12, 2024.

³ Megan Bradley and Merve Erdilmen, "Is the International Organization for Migration Legitimate? Rights-Talk, Protection Commitments and the Legitimation of IOM," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49, no. 9 (May 28, 2023): 2332–54, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2147489>.

⁴ A A Suwargiani et al., "The Correlation between Dental Health Status and Educational Level, Age, and Gender as Demographic Attributes of the Children of Migrant Workers," *Open Dentistry Journal* 18 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.2174/0118742106208606240628095600>

⁵ S Liu et al., "Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice toward Refractive Errors Management among Left-behind Children of Migrant Workers," *Frontiers in Public Health* 12 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2024.1373209>. attitudes and practice (KAP

⁶ H Kusmayanti et al., "The Justice for Illegitimate Children of Indonesian Women Workers Through Constitutional Court Decision No. 46/PUU-VIII/2010," *Jurnal IUS Kajian Hukum Dan Keadilan* 11, no. 2 (2023): 253–64, <https://doi.org/10.29303/ius.v11i2.1228>.

⁷ B Y Lee, "The Path to Inclusion for Undocumented Migrant Children in South Korea," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 32, no. 2 (2023): 284–313, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01171968231193384>.

⁸ M A Mahfud et al., "The Fulfillment of Rights to Citizenship for Migrant Worker Deportees in Nunukan District," *Law Reform: Jurnal Pembaharuan Hukum* 18, no. 1 (2022): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.14710/lr.v18i1.44655>.

⁹ Maruja M B Asis and Alan Feranil, "Not For Adults Only: Toward a Child Lens in Migration Policies in Asia," *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 8, no. 1 (2020): 68–82, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2331502420907375>.

mechanism to identify and manage cases of neglected children at the regional level. Finally, most existing studies are descriptive and short-term, thus unable to capture the long-term impact of parental separation on child development and welfare¹⁰. Internationally, preventive measures against child neglect often emphasize parenting education, community engagement, and school-based interventions. Mendelson and Letourneau¹¹, for instance, highlight the role of school–community partnerships, while Sahillioglu and Akman¹² demonstrate the effectiveness of parental training programs in reducing physical and emotional neglect. Nevertheless, these interventions seldom address the unique complexities of transnational parenting—where prolonged separation, legal ambiguity, and cultural expectations intersect.

To respond to these limitations, this study applies the Societal–Community–Institutional–Individual (SCII) framework, a multilevel strategy designed to integrate legal, institutional, and socio-cultural dimensions of child protection. Conceptually inspired by Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, the SCII model advances beyond it by treating institutions and communities as active mediators rather than passive environments.¹³ While ecological models emphasize how nested systems influence child development, the SCII framework situates neglect within broader power relations, institutional performance, and societal values that determine how laws and norms operate in practice. It thus bridges the gap between formal legal systems and informal cultural mechanisms.

Empirically, applications of SCII remain limited in the Indonesian context, particularly concerning children left behind by migrant workers. Existing research often focuses on psychosocial outcomes or early childhood neglect without considering the intersection of statutory protection and local cultural practice.¹⁴ The absence of integrated, context-based studies restricts the potential of child protection reforms to address the lived realities of affected communities. Therefore, this study aims to examine the implementation of the SCII framework as a legal system model to address child neglect among children of migrant workers in East Lombok.

This research employs qualitative methods—interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis—to capture the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including government officials, social workers, community caregivers, and children themselves. By operationalizing the SCII model across the societal, community, institutional, and individual levels, the study seeks to identify both risk and protective factors that shape

¹⁰ N Nawarat, “Education Obstacles and Family Separation for Children of Migrant Workers in Thailand: A Case from Chiang Mai,” *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 38, no. 4 (2018): 488–500, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2018.1530191>.

¹¹ Anikó Fehérvári and Aranka Varga, “Resilience and Inclusion. Evaluation of an Educational Support Programme,” *Educational Studies* 49, no. 1 (January 2, 2023): 147–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2020.1835614>; Bittiandra Chand Somaiah and Brenda S A Yeoh, “Grandparenting Left-behind Children in Javanese Migrant-Sending Villages: Trigenerational Care Circuits and the Negotiation of Care,” *Geoforum* 143 (2023): 103767, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2023.103767>.

¹² Marendra Hengky Irawan and Kasuwi Saiban, “Parenting Patterns of Substitute Parents for Children of Indonesian Migrant Workers: Analysis of Social Systems and Social Norms in Parenting Patterns for Children of Migrant Workers in Donomulyo District, Malang Regency,” *International Journal of Research in Social Science and Humanities (IJRSS)* ISSN: 2582-6220, DOI: 10.47505/IJRSS 5, no. 5 (2024): 8–30, <https://doi.org/10.47505/IJRSS.2024.4.2>; Maïla D H Rahiem, “COVID-19 and the Surge of Child Marriages: A Phenomenon in Nusa Tenggara Barat, Indonesia,” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 118 (2021): 105168, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105168>.

¹³ Chairun Nasirin and Andries Lionardo, “Administering the Inclusiveness of Neglected Low-Income Urban Families to Access Healthcare Services: A Qualitative Inquiry,” *Universal Journal of Public Health* 9, no. 5 (2021): 263–67, <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujph.2021.090508>.

¹⁴ Tamar Mendelson and Elizabeth J Letourneau, “Parent-Focused Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse,” *Prevention Science* 16, no. 6 (2015): 844–52, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-015-0553-z>.

neglect, as well as mechanisms to strengthen coordination between formal and informal actors.

The novelty of this study lies in its interdisciplinary and multi-scalar perspective, combining legal analysis with socio-anthropological insights. It introduces a hybrid legal-cultural model that aligns formal regulations with community norms of care, addressing the dual structure of governance in Indonesia's rural society. Theoretically, the study refines the SCII framework as an integrative child protection model. Practically, it provides policy recommendations for building an inclusive and context-sensitive protection system for children of migrant workers—offering lessons relevant to other migrant-sending countries across Southeast Asia.

The study's scope includes exploring regulatory frameworks, institutional dynamics, caregiver experiences, and child perspectives within the district of East Lombok. It addresses the central hypothesis that a multilevel, integrated legal strategy rooted in SCII principles can reduce child neglect by reinforcing accountability, enhancing caregiver capacity, and aligning cultural norms with children's rights. The study ultimately aims to inform the development of a sustainable legal infrastructure that recognizes children of migrant workers not merely as dependents of remittance economies but as rights-bearing individuals who deserve holistic and inclusive protection within the legal and social fabric of the nation.

This study adopts an empirical juridical approach to examine the implementation of the SCII (Societal, Community, Institutional, Individual) strategy as a multilevel legal framework to address child neglect among the children of Indonesian migrant workers in East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The empirical juridical method investigates the relationship between law in its textual form and law as practiced in the community, providing insight into how formal legal norms are interpreted and operationalized.¹⁵ This approach is particularly valuable in socio-legal research, which explores the gaps between legal promises and lived realities.¹⁶ By employing a descriptive-analytical and case study design, the research critically evaluates how legal, cultural, and social institutions interact to provide or fail to provide adequate child protection. East Lombok was chosen as the study site due to its high rate of labor migration and concentration of left-behind children. With over 11,000 documented migrant departures in 2023¹⁷, the district represents a critical context for understanding the implications of transnational caregiving.

Data were obtained through a combination of primary and secondary sources, ensuring both triangulation and analytical depth. Primary data collection involved semi-structured interviews, direct observation, document review, and focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted between March and July 2025. A total of seven informants were purposively selected to represent diverse perspectives across institutional, governmental, and caregiving contexts, including officials from Disnakertrans (Department of Manpower and Transmigration) and BP3MI (Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Agency), local child protection leaders, community caregivers, and one youth forum representative. Although the sample size is modest, it was intentionally limited to

¹⁵ Soerjono Soekanto, *Pengantar Penelitian Hukum*, Universitas Indonesia Press (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press, 2015), <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20439459&lokasi=lokal>.

¹⁶ Reza Banakar and Max Travers, *Introduction to Theory and Method in Socio-Legal Research* (November 22, 2005). *Theory And Method in Social-Legal Research*, R. Banakar, M. Travers, Eds. (Oxford, Hart: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005), <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1511112>.

¹⁷ NTBSATU.Com, "BP2MI: Awal 2023, 11.732 Orang NTB Bekerja Di Luar Negeri."

ensure depth rather than breadth of inquiry, consistent with qualitative research design principles. The selection prioritized participants with direct experience and policy relevance, enabling detailed exploration of institutional processes and lived caregiving practices. Data saturation—the point at which no new insights emerged—was reached after the seventh interview, justifying the adequacy of the sample.

Interviews were guided by a semi-structured protocol aligned with the Societal–Community–Institutional–Individual (SCII) framework, focusing on four key thematic areas: Policy implementation and coordination mechanisms for migrant worker protection; Cultural caregiving norms and local interpretations of parental absence; Institutional procedures and challenges in child welfare services; and Individual caregiving experiences and coping strategies within migrant families. Field observations were conducted in three high-migration villages—Jerowaru, Sakra Timur, and Pringgabaya—to contextualize the interview findings. Observations focused on household caregiving dynamics, children’s access to education and health services, and community-level child protection initiatives. All observations were documented through detailed field notes, which were later cross-checked with interview data for consistency.

To uphold ethical integrity, the study received formal approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Mataram (Approval No. 47/UN18.12/ETIK/2023). All participants were provided with information sheets detailing the purpose, scope, and voluntary nature of their participation. Written informed consent was obtained before interviews and FGDs, and pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity. For minor participants involved indirectly through community discussions, parental or guardian consent and child assent were secured. Data were stored securely on password-protected devices accessible only to the research team. The analysis followed the six-phase thematic analysis approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) familiarization with data through repeated reading of transcripts; (2) generation of initial codes to capture significant meanings; (3) grouping of codes into preliminary themes; (4) reviewing and refining themes for internal coherence; (5) defining and naming final themes; and (6) producing a narrative synthesis supported by direct quotations.¹⁸

To enhance analytic rigor and transparency, all transcripts and field notes were managed using NVivo 12 Plus software. The software facilitated systematic coding, theme retrieval, and visualization of relationships between societal, institutional, and individual dimensions of the SCII framework. Intercoder reliability was ensured through collaborative coding among two researchers, and discrepancies were resolved through iterative discussion.¹⁹ Data triangulation across interviews, observations²⁰, and document reviews strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of findings.²¹

This study is therefore driven by the urgency to bridge the gap between legal mandates and social realities. It examines how the SCII (Societal, Community, Institutional,

¹⁸ Younas and Gutman, “Unpacking Parenting Intervention Content for Child Maltreatment: A Systematic Review Examining Core Components”; Leigh E Ridings, Lana O Beasley, and Jane F Silovsky, “Consideration of Risk and Protective Factors for Families at Risk for Child Maltreatment: An Intervention Approach,” *Journal of Family Violence* 32, no. 2 (2017): 179–88, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-016-9826-y>.

¹⁹ Filene et al., “Components Associated with Home Visiting Program Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis.”

²⁰ Getnet Tesfaw Demise, “Are Children Safe? The Impact of COVID-19 on the Psychosocial Experiences of Children Left Behind Due to Parental Migration in Southern Wollo, Ethiopia: Implications for Intervention BT - Migration and Displacement in the IGAD Region: Human Mobility in T,” ed. Michael Omondi Owiso, Fekadu Adugna Tufa, and Abdi Mohamud Hersi (Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2025), 63–78, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-6611-6_5.

²¹ H G Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (Sheed and Ward Ltd., Trans.), New York, NY, 1975, https://web.mit.edu/kaclark/www/gadamer_truth_and_method.pdf.

Individual) strategy can be operationalized as a multilevel legal system to respond to the multifaceted risks of child neglect in migration-affected areas. By situating the analysis within the socio-cultural context of East Lombok, the research emphasizes the necessity of integrating statutory protections with local norms and institutional capacities. The objective is to critique existing policy frameworks and offer an evidence-based, context-sensitive legal model that enhances accountability, coordination, and participatory engagement at all levels. Through this approach, the study contributes to reimagining child protection as a dynamic system that is both legally grounded and socially embedded.

2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a refined analysis of the implementation of the SCII (Societal, Community, Institutional, Individual) strategy as a multilevel legal system for protecting children of Indonesian migrant workers in East Lombok. While empirical data confirm the persistent gap between legal mandates and lived realities, this section also moves beyond descriptive repetition by assessing the framework's strengths, limitations, and comparative relevance across regional contexts.

2.1. Societal Level: Legal Density and Structural Fragmentation

Indonesia's legal architecture on child protection—anchored in Law No. 35 of 2014 and Law No. 18 of 2017—reflects a strong normative commitment to children's rights. Yet, the findings show that this commitment remains largely rhetorical in migration-prone regions. Officials acknowledged that “internalization of national law into village policy is limited and largely symbolic” (Interview, April 28 2025). This situation exemplifies what Younas and Gutman call the “implementation gap” between policy and operational enforcement.

However, unlike previous studies that treat this gap as administrative failure alone, the present analysis situates it within structural and fiscal constraints. Decentralization reforms have devolved responsibilities without ensuring adequate budgets or trained personnel. Consequently, agencies such as Disnakertrans, the Department of Social Affairs, and BP3MI often work in silos. While the SCII framework effectively identifies these vertical and horizontal disconnections, it underestimates the political economy of governance—namely, that coordination requires not just clarity of roles but also resource redistribution and sustained political will.

A comparative perspective underscores this limitation. In Thailand, despite similar fragmentation, the One Stop Crisis Center model demonstrates how integrated reporting mechanisms can bridge national mandates and local action. Meanwhile, South Korea's Family Support Centers institutionalize inter-agency collaboration, offering psychosocial and legal assistance to children of migrant parents. These models show that Indonesia's challenge is not a lack of legislation but the absence of cross-sectoral operationalization—a point the SCII framework could further develop through explicit fiscal and accountability mechanisms. This disconnect reinforces the claim by Rezaul Islam²² that child protection laws often fail to account for the structural constraints of implementation in resource-poor and culturally complex regions.

²² Islam, “Child Protection in South Asia: Assessing the Current Status, Progress, and Obstacles of the Legal Framework.”

The role of the East Lombok Regency government is a symbol of this disconnection. Although the local government is formally responsible for translating national laws into actionable programs, its efforts remain fragmented across departments, with no dedicated budget line for child protection services specific to children of migrant workers. Coordination between agencies such as the Department of Social Affairs, the Department of Manpower, and the Child Protection Agency remains weak. This confirms previous findings by Nasirin and Lionardo²³ who emphasize that decentralization in Indonesia has not always led to more effective service delivery, particularly when mandates are unclear or unsupported by inter-agency collaboration.

At the societal level, a strong normative framework in Indonesia, including the 1945 Constitution (Article 28B), Child Protection Law No. 35 of 2014, and Migrant Worker Protection Law No. 18 of 2017, suggests a formal commitment to child welfare and human rights. However, as articulated by Banakar and Travers²⁴, legal instruments alone do not guarantee legal efficacy. Law must be internalized into local governance structures and supported by implementation mechanisms. The failure of local governments in East Lombok to develop specific regulations addressing the protection of children of migrant workers illustrates what Younas and Gutman²⁵ describe as the “implementation gap” between national policy and local enforcement. This disconnect results in weak policy integration and the absence of dedicated funding and human resources for child protection at the subnational level.

Furthermore, decentralization while intended to increase administrative responsiveness has in many cases led to fragmented service provision and ambiguity in institutional mandates.²⁶ This aligns with the findings of Rezaul Islam,²⁷ who argues that effective child protection requires not just legal frameworks, but synchronized operational capacities across levels of government. The absence of integrated systems for tracking and supporting children of migrant workers, such as centralized databases, monitoring protocols, and referral mechanisms, demonstrates the need for coordinated policy instruments that translate legal obligations into actionable and measurable outcomes.

2.2. Community Level: Cultural Solidarity and Social Blind Spots

At the community level, the Sasak cultural ethos of *begawé* (communal work) and *saling jaga* (mutual care) provides informal safety nets for left-behind children. Field data indicate that these norms foster empathy and collective responsibility; yet, they also conceal neglect. Community members hesitate to report suspected mistreatment out of respect for kinship hierarchies. This ambivalence mirrors Jayarathna and

²³ Nasirin and Lionardo, “Administering the Inclusiveness of Neglected Low-Income Urban Families to Access Healthcare Services: A Qualitative Inquiry.”

²⁴ Banakar and Travers, *Introduction to Theory and Method in Socio-Legal Research* (November 22, 2005). *Theory And Method in Social-Legal Research*, R. Banakar, M. Travers, Eds.

²⁵ Younas and Gutman, “Unpacking Parenting Intervention Content for Child Maltreatment: A Systematic Review Examining Core Components.” including parental emotional regulation (micro-individual level

²⁶ Nasirin and Lionardo, “Administering the Inclusiveness of Neglected Low-Income Urban Families to Access Healthcare Services: A Qualitative Inquiry.”

²⁷ Islam, “Child Protection in South Asia: Assessing the Current Status, Progress, and Obstacles of the Legal Framework.”

Sumadanasa's finding that informal caregiving, while rooted in solidarity, may lack procedural accountability.²⁸

Children's narratives reveal both the strength and the strain of these arrangements. One adolescent explained, "We all help each other here, but sometimes no one really sees what we feel." Another expressed fear of illness when parents were abroad: "I'm afraid when I'm sick; I don't want to worry grandma." Such voices demonstrate that emotional neglect can coexist with communal cohesion.²⁹ The SCII framework recognizes the community as a key protection layer, but its practical application risks romanticizing local norms without addressing their power asymmetries. To operationalize SCII effectively, community-based systems must be complemented by rights-based community education and trained child protection volunteers. Without these, the framework risks reproducing existing inequalities under the guise of cultural respect.

However, as highlighted by Abdullah³⁰, informal caregiving arrangements often lack transparency, legal accountability, and monitoring, which can mask neglect or abuse. This paradox is consistent with Jack³¹, who emphasizes that social capital can mitigate child vulnerability but must be linked to formal protection systems to ensure consistency and legality. The findings from East Lombok reinforce this duality. On one hand, extended families and neighbors step in to care for children when parents migrate, demonstrating resilience and cultural cohesion. On the other hand, the lack of legal guidance and institutional oversight allows for a normalization of emotional neglect, educational discontinuity, and, in some cases, psychological trauma. Community-based actors, such as RT/RW leaders and village forums, operate without formal mandates or training in child protection, making their roles highly dependent on individual initiative rather than institutional obligation. This reflects what Kim³² describes as "voluntary caregiving," which, while ethically commendable, remains insufficient without systemic support.

2.3. Institutional Level: Underutilized Frontline Actors

Schools and health centers emerge as critical yet underleveraged actors. Teachers observed behavioral changes among children of migrant workers but lacked standardized procedures for referral or psychosocial support. Similarly, health workers focused on physical care while overlooking mental well-being. A teacher explained, "We notice when a child withdraws, but unless it becomes serious, there is no system for response." (Interview, April 20 2025) This supports Berens and Nelson's³³ argument that educational institutions must go beyond academic instruction and serve as early detection systems for child vulnerability.

²⁸ DMNM Jayarathna and Darshana Sumanadasa, "Protection of Migrant Workers: Moving towards a Responsibility-Based Approach from the Rights-Based Approach," in *Colombo University Annual Research Symposium 2024*, 2024, 143–143, <https://cmb.ac.lk/ars>.

²⁹ Sara Honn Qualls, "Caregiving Families within the Long-Term Services and Support System for Older Adults.," *American Psychologist* 71, no. 4 (2016): 283, <https://psycnet.apa.org/buy/2016-21979-004>.

³⁰ Alhassan Abdullah and Clifton R Emery, "Caregivers' Perceptions of Informal Social Control Practices to Reduce Child Neglect: A Qualitative Study in Ghana," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 133 (2022): 105848, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105848>.

³¹ Gordon Jack and Bill Jordan, "Social Capital and Child Welfare," *Children & Society* 13, no. 4 (1999): 242–56, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/CHI565>.

³² Kim, "Group-Based Parenting Education Programs and Their Influence on Protective Factors for Child Abuse and Neglect."

³³ Anne E Berens and Charles A Nelson, "The Science of Early Adversity: Is There a Role for Large Institutions in the Care of Vulnerable Children?," *The Lancet* 386, no. 9991 (July 25, 2015): 388–98, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)61131-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61131-4).

Furthermore, children recognized the economic necessity of their parents' migration and expressed deep emotional needs. One child, identified only as HL, recalled, "*We know they left for us, but it hurts not to see them. I'm afraid when I'm sick*" (Interview, April 20, 2025) This kind of psychological ambivalence is well-documented in the child development literature and underscores the need for institutional responses that are not merely reactive but also preventive and therapeutic.

Interviews at the Migrant Worker Protection Center (BP3MI) NTB indicated that institutional awareness is emerging. Officials explained that prospective migrant parents are now encouraged to disclose caregiving arrangements before departure, though not required. This measure is aligned with international best practices for labor migration governance³⁴ but remains voluntary and lacks enforcement. There is no monitoring system to track whether children named in these arrangements receive adequate care. Furthermore, BP3MI's efforts are limited to the pre-departure phase and do not extend into the long-term welfare of children. As Filene³⁵ has argued, protection systems must follow through across the entire migration cycle to be genuinely effective.

At the institutional level, schools and healthcare centers represent underutilized assets in child protection. The literature highlights the potential of these institutions to serve as early warning systems for child neglect and abuse³⁶. Yet, the field data reveal that neither schools nor health facilities in East Lombok are structurally equipped to respond to the vulnerabilities of children of migrant workers. Teachers, for instance, often observe behavioral changes in students but lack formal training, institutional protocols, or reporting mechanisms to act upon these signs. Similarly, health workers in local community health centers attend to children's physical health but are generally unaware of psychosocial risks related to parental absence.

These findings resonate with Turhan's (2024) study in Turkey³⁷, and Lee's (2023) research in South Korea³⁸, both of which emphasize the need for multi-agency cooperation in early detection. Indonesia could adapt these models by embedding child protection indicators into the education and health sectors, transforming routine services into preventive mechanisms.

Nevertheless, the SCII framework's institutional dimension remains **aspirational** rather than operational. It outlines coordination goals but lacks detailed pathways for implementation—such as data-sharing protocols, accountability structures, or intersectoral budgeting. This limitation highlights the need for a *SCII-Plus* approach that integrates monitoring technologies and performance-based incentives for local institutions.

2.4. Individual Level: Caregiver Vulnerability and Children's Agency

At the individual level, substitute caregivers—mostly elderly grandparents—play indispensable yet precarious roles. Interviews revealed exhaustion, limited knowledge

³⁴ Bradley and Erdilmen, "Is the International Organization for Migration Legitimate? Rights-Talk, Protection Commitments and the Legitimation of IOM."

³⁵ Filene et al., "Components Associated with Home Visiting Program Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis."

³⁶ Schinke, Brounstein, and Gardner, "Science-Based Prevention Programs and Principles, 2002"; Mendelson and Letourneau, "Parent-Focused Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse."

³⁷ Turhan, Demir, and Karadağ, "Perspectives and Experiences of Preschool Teachers in Preventing and Intervening Child Abuse and Neglect."

³⁸ Irawan and Saiban, "Parenting Patterns of Substitute Parents for Children of Indonesian Migrant Workers: Analysis of Social Systems and Social Norms in Parenting Patterns for Children of Migrant Workers in Donomulyo District, Malang Regency."

of child development, and social isolation. One caregiver noted, “I try my best, but I cannot replace their parents.” This aligns with Kelley et al. (2021), who emphasize the emotional strain faced by older caregivers.³⁹ Meanwhile, children’s voices, though sporadically acknowledged in policy discourse, reflect both awareness and constraint. Many children articulated gratitude for their parents’ sacrifices yet expressed feelings of abandonment and self-reliance. Youth forums such as Forum Anak Jerowaru provide spaces for expression, but participants admitted they have “no authority to change village policy.” Their insights highlight that participation remains symbolic unless structurally linked to governance.

The SCII model, while promoting inclusion, must ensure that children’s agency is institutionalized through participatory budgeting, village development planning, and school-based advocacy programs. The regional secretary, BMW, noted, “The Children’s Forum is a good idea, but without real authority, it remains largely symbolic” (Interview, April 28, 2025). This critique mirrors Sahillioglu and Akman’s⁴⁰ findings that child empowerment initiatives often fail without sustained policy, training, and funding support.

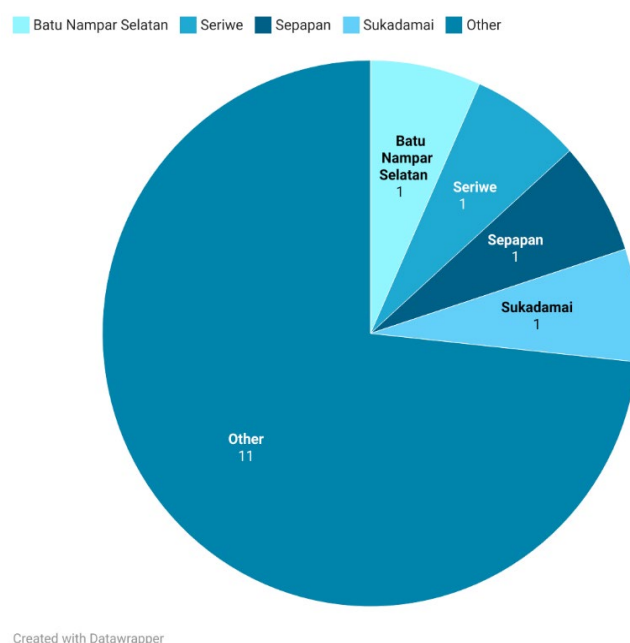


Figure 1. Number of Children’s Forums in Jerowaru District, East Lombok Regency

Figure 1 illustrates the involvement of 15 Children’s Forums across Jerowaru District, East Lombok Regency. Each village in the district has a Children’s Forum, which serves as a platform for children to voice their aspirations, develop a sense of responsibility, and encourage their involvement in village development issues. Data shows that the most significant number of children participating in these forums come from Batu Nampar Selatan, Seriwe, Sepapan, and Sukadamai villages. Meanwhile, the other 11 villages only accommodate between 3 and 5 children from migrant worker families, reflecting

³⁹ Susan J Kelley et al., “The Mental Health Well-Being of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis,” *Marriage & Family Review* 57, no. 4 (May 19, 2021): 329–45, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01494929.2020.1861163>.

⁴⁰ Sahillioglu and Akman, “The Effects of the Training Program for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ParentsCAN) on the Awareness and Understanding Levels of Parents.”

variations in child participation influenced by population density, migration dynamics, and institutional support at the village level.

The individual level is the most immediate yet often overlooked aspect of child protection. Substitute caregivers, such as grandparents or aunts, are at the frontline of daily care for children left behind. Their emotional labor and moral commitment are invaluable, but the findings show they are often overwhelmed, under-resourced, and untrained. Many lack basic knowledge about child development, mental health, or the rights of the child. This supports the argument that caregivers, especially older ones, require emotional support and practical training to fulfill their roles effectively.⁴¹

Additionally, children themselves remain excluded mainly from legal and policy discourse. Although initiatives like the Forum Anak have created platforms for youth participation, their limited functionality and lack of authority render them symbolic rather than substantive. This is consistent with the critique by BMW and JJ in the field findings, who noted that child forums are often treated as ceremonial rather than active governance components. Child participation cannot fulfill its transformative potential without adequate training, institutional support, and integration into formal decision-making structures. This echoes Blanco's⁴², who argues that participatory mechanisms require institutional anchoring to be effective.

Table 1 summarizes the existing legal instruments relevant to the protection of children of migrant workers. It demonstrates the presence of a robust normative framework but highlights the lack of integration and specificity in addressing the unique needs of left-behind children.

Table 1. Legal and Policy Instruments on Child Protection and Migrant Workers in Indonesia

Regulation	Article(s)	Key Provisions	Substantive Focus
1945 Constitution, Article 28B(2)	1 article	Right to life, growth and development; protection from violence and discrimination	Constitutional foundation for child protection
Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection (amendment to Law No. 23/2002)	93 articles	Children's rights, special protection, state obligations, and public roles	The state is obligated to protect children's rights, including for those in special circumstances such as being left behind by migrant parents

⁴¹ Duffy, Davidson, and Kavanagh, "Applying the Recovery Approach to the Interface between Mental Health and Child Protection Services"; Kelley et al., "The Mental Health Well-Being of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis."

⁴² Ismael Blanco, Vivien Lowndes, and Yunailis Salazar, "Understanding Institutional Dynamics in Participatory Governance: How Rules, Practices and Narratives Combine to Produce Stability or Diverge to Create Conditions for Change," *Critical Policy Studies* 16, no. 2 (May 2, 2022): 204–23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2021.1984265>.

Law No. 6 of 2012 on the Ratification of the 1990 UN International Convention	1 article	Ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families	Indonesia recognizes the rights of migrant workers' children to education, health, and family life, in accordance with international human rights principles
Law No. 35 of 2014	Several articles	Right to life, growth and development; legal aid; social rehabilitation; protection from violence	Comprehensive regulation of children's rights and victim protection
Law No. 11 of 2012	Article 3	Rights of children in the criminal justice system	Special treatment of children within the criminal justice framework
Law No. 18 of 2017	Articles 1(3), 41	Protection of children within migrant worker families	Legal basis for protecting migrant workers' families, including children
Government Regulation No. 59 of 2021 on the Implementation of Migrant Worker Protection	59 articles	Technical implementation of migrant worker protection, including strengthening the roles of local governments and communities	Mandates the establishment of Productive Migrant Villages (Desmigratif) and strengthens social services, including for left-behind children
Ministerial Regulation of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP) No. 18 of 2019	Articles 2, 5	Role of child forums	Strengthening child forums as protection instruments
Government Regulation No. 59 of 2021	Articles 65, 78, 92	Role of local and village governments in migrant worker protection	Decentralization of child protection for children of migrant workers
Presidential Regulation No. 59 of 2015	Articles 2, 3, 15, 16	Tasks of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP)	Institutionalization of child protection under MoWECP

Ministry of Man-power Regulation No. 2 of 2019 on Empowerment of Migrant Worker Communities in Desmigratif	26 articles	Empowerment of migrant worker families and communities through village programs	Promotes community participation in the protection of migrant workers' children through economic, social, and advocacy-based programs
BP2MI Regulation No. 7 of 2022	General	Rights of migrant workers and their families before, during, and after employment	Does not explicitly regulate protection for children of migrant workers
Law No. 18 of 2017 on the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers	109 articles	Protection of migrant workers before, during, and after overseas employment, including family protection	The state guarantees protection of children as part of broader migrant worker family responsibilities
Law No. 39 of 2004 on Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers Abroad	109 articles	Mechanisms for placement, protection, and supervision of migrant workers	Provides administrative and sectoral protection, but lacks explicit focus on children; superseded by Law No. 18 of 2017

The comprehensive legal framework outlined in Table 1 reveals that Indonesia has enacted a wide range of regulatory instruments intended to safeguard children's rights, including those of children left behind by migrant workers. At the constitutional level, Article 28B(2) of the 1945 Constitution affirms every child's right to survival, growth, and protection from violence and discrimination, establishing a foundational principle that mandates state responsibility in all child-related issues. This constitutional guarantee is echoed and elaborated in statutory laws, particularly Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, which stipulates state obligations, the roles of communities, and the provision of special protection for children in vulnerable situations, including those impacted by parental migration.

However, the analysis shows that despite this normative density, there is a critical gap between regulation and implementation. Previous studies have identified this phenomenon as a characteristic of legal fragmentation and institutional inertia in Indonesia's child protection regime.⁴³ Although Law No. 18 of 2017 includes provisions on family protection within the context of migrant worker regulation, it lacks operational detail specific to children left behind. Similarly, Government Regulation No. 59 of 2021 provides for the establishment of Productive Migrant Villages (Desmigratif) and

⁴³ Nasirin and Lionardo, "Administering the Inclusiveness of Neglected Low-Income Urban Families to Access Healthcare Services: A Qualitative Inquiry."

mandates regional roles, yet, in practice, child-specific programs under this initiative remain either underfunded or inconsistently executed.⁴⁴

Moreover, regulations such as Permen PPPA No. 18 of 2019 and Presidential Regulation No. 59 of 2015 recognize the importance of child forums and institutionalize child protection under the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP). Nevertheless, the research findings reveal that such forums often function symbolically rather than substantively, with limited integration into village governance or local social services. This aligns with the findings of Collins⁴⁵, who argues that participatory child rights mechanisms are unlikely to achieve meaningful impact without strong administrative support and community linkage.

Another critical observation is the absence of explicit, enforceable mandates in specific policies, such as the BP2MI Regulation No. 7 of 2022, which do not mention the protection of children of migrant workers, despite BP2MI's role in overseeing pre-departure and reintegration processes. This omission reflects what Younas and Gutman⁴⁶ describe as "normative invisibility," where vulnerable subgroups, particularly children in transnational families, are not explicitly acknowledged in governance instruments. This is particularly problematic in Indonesia, where customary caregiving practices in rural areas are prevalent, and state services are either weakly present or poorly adapted to these realities.⁴⁷

In contrast, some legal instruments show promise in bridging national mandates with local execution. For instance, the Ministry of Manpower Regulation No. 2 of 2019 emphasizes community empowerment through *Desmigratif* and recognizes the role of community-based advocacy in protecting children. However, as pointed out in field findings and supported by Ridings⁴⁸ and Evans⁴⁹, this regulation remains inadequately linked to institutional mechanisms for monitoring child neglect or emotional distress, thus limiting its preventive capacity.

The analysis confirms that while Indonesia has developed a comprehensive legal corpus, the failure to specify mechanisms for identifying, monitoring, and protecting children of migrant workers results in inconsistent enforcement and fragmented interventions. The findings of this study reinforce the call made by Filene⁵⁰ for integrated, multi-agency systems that connect legal norms with frontline service delivery. Applying the SCII strategy, which emphasizes coordination across societal, community, institutional, and individual levels, this study advocates for transforming these regulations from symbolic

⁴⁴ Irawan and Saiban, "Parenting Patterns of Substitute Parents for Children of Indonesian Migrant Workers: Analysis of Social Systems and Social Norms in Parenting Patterns for Children of Migrant Workers in Donomulyo District, Malang Regency."

⁴⁵ Tara M Collins, "A Child's Right to Participate: Implications for International Child Protection," *The International Journal of Human Rights* 21, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 14–46, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2016.1248122>.

⁴⁶ Younas and Gutman, "Unpacking Parenting Intervention Content for Child Maltreatment: A Systematic Review Examining Core Components," including parental emotional regulation (micro-individual level

⁴⁷ Yulina Eva Riany, Pamela Meredith, and Monica Cuskelly, "Understanding the Influence of Traditional Cultural Values on Indonesian Parenting," *Marriage & Family Review* 53, no. 3 (April 3, 2017): 207–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01494929.2016.1157561>; Agustina Hendriati and Ayu Okvitawanli, "Challenges of Parenting in an Urban Setting," *Psychological Research on Urban Society* 2, no. 1 (2019): 12, <https://doi.org/10.7454/proust.v2i1.43>.

⁴⁸ Ridings, Beasley, and Silovsky, "Consideration of Risk and Protective Factors for Families at Risk for Child Maltreatment: An Intervention Approach."

⁴⁹ Roy Evans, Philip Garner, and Alice S Honig, "Prevention of Violence, Abuse and Neglect in Early Childhood: A Review of the Literature on Research, Policy and Practice," *Early Child Development and Care* 184, no. 9–10 (October 3, 2014): 1295–1335, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2014.910327>.

⁵⁰ Filene et al., "Components Associated with Home Visiting Program Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis."

commitments into enforceable, context-sensitive protections that reach the children most at risk.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the neglect experienced by children of migrant workers in East Lombok is not the result of legal absence, but rather legal fragmentation, institutional inertia, and socio-cultural resistance. The SCII strategy provides a conceptual and practical framework to address this multidimensional challenge by linking legal mandates with grassroots realities. However, successful implementation requires coordinated efforts across government levels, sustained community engagement, institutional reforms, and direct support for families and caregivers. Without such an integrated and multilevel approach, the rights of these children will remain aspirations enshrined in law but unmet in their lived experiences.

Together, these findings validate the SCII strategy as a valuable framework for structuring legal and policy interventions and expose the urgent need for operationalization. At the societal level, policy must be translated into clear mandates, funded programs, and measurable outcomes. Traditional caregiving must be supported and regulated at the community level through culturally sensitive legal instruments. At the institutional level, schools and health centers must be empowered as key actors in detection and prevention. And at the individual level, caregivers and children must be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and platforms necessary to claim and fulfill their rights.

What emerges is the need for an integrated, pluralistic, and multilevel legal system, one that combines statutory law with cultural practices, institutional functions with grassroots knowledge, and top-down policies with bottom-up empowerment. Such a system requires sustained political will, intersectoral coordination, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. As the literature consistently emphasizes,⁵¹ child protection is not the responsibility of one sector or institution, but a shared obligation that must be reflected in law, policy, and everyday practice⁵².

Thus, the findings of this study confirm that child neglect among children of migrant workers is a structural issue requiring a systemic legal response. The SCII strategy provides a conceptual map and a practical blueprint for this response, but its effectiveness depends on its institutionalization within Indonesia's legal and social architecture. A more equitable, responsive, and sustainable child protection framework can be realized by placing children at the center of the legal system, empowering caregivers, strengthening institutions, and mobilizing communities⁵³.

The implementation of this study's findings has the potential to significantly reshape the child protection landscape for children of Indonesian migrant workers, particularly in rural and migration-prone regions such as East Lombok. By operationalizing the SCII (Societal, Community, Institutional, Individual) strategy as a legal system, the research promotes a more integrated, multilevel response to child neglect that aligns statutory obligations with grassroots realities. At the societal level, the study advocates for

⁵¹ Mrazek, P. J., & Haggerty, *Reducing Risks for Mental Disorders: Frontiers for Preventive Intervention Research*; Filene et al., "Components Associated with Home Visiting Program Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis."

⁵² Sohaimi, N. S., Ismail, N. S. A., Makhroja, M. N., Sahib, N., & Zuhairi, A. (2025). Exploring women's housing challenges: Legal and policy solutions for women's access to adequate housing. *Jurnal IUS Kajian Hukum dan Keadilan*, 13(1), 20–37.

⁵³ N. Aprilianda, F. Maharani, N. A. Kadir, A. Ferdian, and S. Solehuddin, "Re-conceptualizing Child Victim Rights: A Normative and Comparative Analysis of Victim Impact Statement in Indonesia's Juvenile Justice System," *Jambura Law Review* 7, no. 2 (2025): 442–467.

localizing national legal mandates through binding regional regulations and allocating targeted budgets for child welfare. At the community level, it suggests institutionalizing traditional caregiving practices within a rights-based framework, thereby transforming informal support into legally accountable caregiving structures. Institutional actors such as schools, health services, and child forums can be reoriented as early detection and intervention mechanisms⁵⁴. In contrast, caregivers and children are empowered through legal education, psychosocial support, and structured participation⁵⁵. If adopted, these measures could reduce the invisibility of children in migration-affected households and foster systemic, sustainable protection mechanisms.

Despite its contributions, the study is subject to several limitations. First, its geographic focus on East Lombok, though justified by its high rate of labor migration, limits the generalizability of findings to other provinces or regions with different socio-cultural contexts and governance structures. Second, the number of participants seven key informants while adequate for a qualitative case study, may not capture the full diversity of experiences among caregivers, children, and local institutions. Third, the study's reliance on self-reported data through interviews and FGDs presents potential biases related to social desirability, selective memory, or institutional defensiveness. Additionally, while the research successfully triangulates legal texts with empirical observations, it does not include direct longitudinal tracking of child development outcomes, which would be essential for assessing the long-term impact of caregiving conditions. Lastly, although the SCII framework is presented as a scalable model, the study does not thoroughly test its applicability in settings with stronger institutional capacity or different migration patterns. These limitations point to the need for further research with broader samples, comparative case studies, and longitudinal methodologies to deepen and validate the findings.

2.5. Critiquing and Contextualizing the SCII Framework

The SCII framework provides a useful structure for understanding multilevel protection dynamics; however, empirical findings from East Lombok reveal several context-specific limitations. First, the framework presumes a functional and coordinated state apparatus. In practice, child-protection teams at village and subdistrict levels often operate with minimal personnel, limited documentation capacity, and weak inter-agency communication. These constraints were evident when village officials were unable to act on reported neglect cases due to unclear referral pathways that relied more on personal networks than on formal mechanisms.

Second, SCII assumes cultural openness to institutional intervention. Field data show, however, that informal caregiving norms continue to dominate the care arrangements of migrant workers' children. Grandparents or extended kin frequently act as substitute caregivers but are reluctant to engage with formal institutions due to concerns over stigma, social conflict, or perceived threats to familial autonomy. This tension highlights that integration within SCII is not only structural but also culturally negotiated. Third, the absence of operational indicators within the SCII model becomes apparent in frontline practice. Village-level child-protection teams lack tools to assess

⁵⁴ A. B. Warman, D. Alfander, A. Fadhli, and W. Nabilah, "From Communal to Individual: Shifting Authorities of Family Dispute Resolution in Minangkabau Society," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam dan Kemanusiaan* 23, no. 2 (2023): 161–183.

⁵⁵ A. S. Muniri, A. Hadi, and A. Ghofur, "Child Marriage in Indonesia: Are Parents' Protection and Responsibilities Involved?" *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum dan Syar'iah* 15, no. 2 (2023): 301–313.

risk levels, monitor children's emotional well-being, or track psychosocial changes over time. Consequently, interventions tend to be reactive rather than preventive. These empirical gaps echo findings from Nepal and South Asia, where multilevel frameworks succeed only when supported by decentralized resources, measurable indicators, and clear accountability mechanisms.

Thus, the critique of SCII is grounded not in theoretical abstraction but in observable mismatches between the model's assumptions and local realities. To be effective in rural Indonesian contexts, SCII requires governance realism—explicit mandates, monitoring systems, and institutionalized mechanisms for meaningful child participation.

2.6. Toward a Comparative and Reflexive Understanding

Interpreting the findings within a regional context provides further insight into Indonesia's challenges. Like Thailand and the Philippines, Indonesia struggles to translate global child-protection commitments into consistent local practice due to uneven frontline capacity and fragmented coordination. However, unlike more centralized systems such as South Korea, Indonesia's sociocultural heterogeneity introduces additional complexities. Legal authority frequently overlaps with customary norms, and community leaders possess significant informal influence over family decision-making processes.

These dynamics are visible in East Lombok, where cases of child neglect are commonly mediated through customary deliberation involving elders. Formal institutions are often consulted only after consensus is reached, a pattern not anticipated by SCII's linear depiction of multilevel roles. This underscores the importance of legal pluralism in understanding how protection actually unfolds on the ground. Reflexively, the data demonstrate that child neglect among migrant workers' families stems not from the absence of law but from disconnections across four domains: legal mandates, cultural expectations, institutional capacity, and individual agency. While SCII offers an integrative conceptual structure, its practical effectiveness depends on adaptive harmonization between these domains. Most importantly, children's voices—expressing emotional distress, role overload, and unmet support needs—must be treated as central diagnostic evidence rather than supplementary narratives. Embedding children's perspectives at each SCII level transforms the framework from a theoretical model into a context-sensitive system capable of informing real reforms.

3. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that child neglect among the children of Indonesian migrant workers is a structural and systemic problem rooted in legal fragmentation, institutional inertia, and the persistence of informal caregiving norms. The empirical findings from East Lombok reveal that while Indonesia possesses a comprehensive legal corpus on child and migrant protection, its implementation remains inconsistent, particularly at the local level. The SCII (Societal, Community, Institutional, Individual) strategy provides a valuable framework for integrating legal mandates, institutional roles, and community-based practices. Yet, to transform it from a conceptual framework into a practical legal system, concrete operational steps are required. Operationalizing the SCII framework requires a phased, multi-actor roadmap: (1) legal integration and data systems at the national level; (2) cross-sectoral coordination and professional training at

the institutional level; (3) culturally grounded participation at the community level; and (4) continuous psychosocial and material support at the household level. Through these steps, the SCII strategy can evolve from a theoretical model into a governance instrument that bridges statutory law with everyday care practices. Achieving this vision demands sustained political commitment, inter-sectoral collaboration, and the active inclusion of children's voices—not as beneficiaries but as agents of change within Indonesia's evolving child protection landscape.

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