

DRAFT

# Exploitation of children in prostitution

## Thematic paper

World Congress III

# Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents

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**For ECPAT International**

The logo for 'Knowing Children' is a black rectangle with the text 'Knowing Children' written in a white, cursive script font.

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The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of ECPAT International, Government of Brazil, NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, or UNICEF nor endorsement by the Central Organizing Committee of the Congress.

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As the author of the final draft I take personal responsibility for the opinions expressed in this paper as well as for any errors of omission and/or misinterpretation.

*Judith Ennew  
Bangkok, October 2008*

## Acronyms and abbreviations

CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. This acronym is not used in this paper other than in direct quotations from other sources.
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes.
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.
ILO Convention 182	ILO Convention No. 182: Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999).
ILO-IPEC	International Labour Organization/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.
MSM	The acronym MSM, meaning 'men who have sex with men' is not used in this paper other than in direct quotations from other sources.
NPA	National Plan of Action.
Optional Protocol	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000).
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
STI	Sexually-transmitted infection.
Trafficking Protocol	Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000).
UNICEF	United Nations International Fund for Children.
Violence Study	United Nations Secretary-General's Study of Violence Against Children (2006).
WHO	World Health Organization.
World Congress I	Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Stockholm, September 1996.
World Congress II	The Second World Congress on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Yokohama, Japan, December, 2001.
World Congress III	World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November, 2005.
YPP	Youth Partnerships Project for Child Survivors of Commercial Exploitation in South Asia

## Introduction: Definitions and ideologies

The exploitation of children in prostitution is only one form taken by the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Terms in common use take specific meanings when viewed through the perspectives of different explanatory frameworks and the search for agreed definitions leads very rapidly into ideological controversies. This is complicated by rapid shifts in understandings, new meanings for (or revivals of) old terminology together with newly-coined expressions. Even though the title of this theme paper attempts to establish distance from terminological debates, there is still a need to begin by clarifying key terms, not least 'child' and 'exploitation'.

The concept of childhood as a time free from political and economic responsibilities, as well as a period of sexual innocence is a recent phenomenon that can be argued to be typical only of children from wealthier families in both Global North and Global South. The child of this global ideal is distinguished by age as being less than 18 years of age, but has no specified gender, although tends to be referred to as 'he', for example in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).<sup>1</sup> The separation of ideal childhood from all sexual matters (other than in theories of psychoanalysis) is a characteristic of many human societies, as is the difficulty of speaking about sexual matters. Normative social rules make sex a difficult subject to discuss, and when discussions do occur they tend to be riddled with euphemisms, vulgar slang and profanities, mythology, taboos and ignorance, complicated by personal links to self-esteem and identity. These deep-rooted problems possibly account for some of the heated terminological debates around prostitution.

'Exploitation' likewise tends to be the topic of debate in the social sciences but, in this paper, the idea is simplified to encompass two related meanings: to make unfair profit; and to take advantage of inequalities of power and/or economic status. Used in both senses with respect to children in prostitution, exploitation can be seen to result from the actions of both customers and intermediaries.

### Prostitution

Prostitution is variously described in the literature as 'sex work'; 'violence against women', or 'slavery'. The frameworks used include trafficking, labour market participation, gender and human rights (Bindman, 1997). The root meaning of 'prostitute' implies a transaction. It follows that a prostitute performs some kind of sexual activity in exchange for money. In order to highlight the essentially economic nature of the transaction, this paper uses 'customer', meaning someone who purchases, rather than 'client', which implies longer-term, economic and power inequalities. Prostitution cannot exist without customers, who objectify – and thus dehumanize – themselves, the prostitutes, and human sexuality.

'Prostitution' does not refer to a uniform experience. Variables include employment relations, contexts, involvement of intermediaries, experience of violence, type of income (cash or kind), and degree of control (ranging from bonded labour to self employment). 'Outdoor' (street) prostitution is often distinguished from 'indoor' prostitution in which at

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<sup>1</sup> With the proviso in CRC article 1, 'unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier'.

least some of the transaction occurs in places such as brothels, bars, hotels and homes. Further variations occur in the type of transaction, from direct money purchase to longer-term relationships, so that sometimes the line between prostitution and other practices, such as forced marriage, is difficult to maintain. Moreover the purchase can include a whole variety of sex acts. What exactly is being purchased (or rented) is often hotly debated but seldom tackled empirically to see what customers think they are buying and prostitutes think they are selling. (Bernstein, 2001). The 'sex' purchased may include posing for/looking at 'pornography', touching, talking, looking, feeling (including masturbation), as well as oral, anal or vaginal penetration and 'Cybersex'. Local terminologies related to commercial sex reveal a variety of manifestations (Figure 1). Often, as in the case of long-term prostitute-customer relationships and informal sex tourism, the transaction appears to be based on a mutual exchange of dreams.

**Figure 1: Common street terms associated with commercial sex in Papua New Guinea**

**Bribe:** Offering money to impoverished children in return for sex, to ensure cooperation, implying that the child is not willing but needs the money too badly to refuse;

**Client:** Female prostitutes' term for men who buy sex;

**Boyfriend:** Man with a sexual relationship with a girl, who manipulates this to solicit for her, or to offer her for commercial sex;

**Street husband:** Male who hangs out with one or more girls acting as both pimp and bodyguard;

**Cash and carry brides:** Rural girls in East Seprik province who have been purchased by men who have earned large sums of money from cash crops.

Source: Adapted from ESCAP, 2006, 38.

## **Children and prostitution**

The clear definition of 'child prostitution' in the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000) is 'the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration' (article 2(b)). Although there has been some suggestion that paying for sex with children over the age of sexual consent can be tolerated as long as no third party profits from the income, ILO Convention 182 unequivocally classified a child as less than 18 years of age (as in the CRC) and the 'use of a child for prostitution' as a 'worst form of child labour' (article 3(b)). As both Conventions, and the Optional Protocol to the CRC, are widely ratified, it is clear that the international community will not tolerate the exploitation of children in prostitution.

Nevertheless, attempts to delineate a specific discourse for the exploitation of children in prostitution are countered by vigorous counterclaims that no distinction can be made between the prostitution of women and the prostitution of children – although it is often unclear whether 'children' is limited to 'girls'. Thus ideological debates that echo those concerning the nature and root causes of adult prostitution are added to confusions about the exploitation of children in prostitution: the meaning of the term 'prostitute', the mechanisms through which children are exploited in prostitution; and the way to conceptualize persons who exploit children in prostitution. The term 'prostituted children' implies that prostitution is something done to them and is linked in debates to the

assertion that prostitution is always due to male violence typified by female (including child) inability to consent. The alternative term – ‘child prostitute’ – implies that children have agency and can consent to sex work. This is associated with the view that prostitution for women (although not necessarily for children) is legitimate work and that to deny this is to violate the human rights of women. This opposition is an almost universal feature of current literature on both prostitution as a whole and children in prostitution in particular.

The range of persons and activities to which ‘child prostitution’ is applied is as varied as for adult prostitution, but with additional specific forms related to the status of ‘child’. For example, a study of children exploited in prostitution in six Mexican towns, identified no less than 25 categories of prostitution involving boys and girls (Table 1; Azaola, 2001). Some categories overlap, and the list does not include a number of other refinements, such as the gender of customers or the involvement of different kinds of intermediary. Further forms have been recorded in other places, including enforced early marriages and children who become economically and emotionally dependent on exploitative adult guardians (Baker, 2001, 4). Demands for sexual favours may also be made through promised rewards or threats by authority figures, such as teachers (where the reward may be a higher grade), family members, social workers and institutional staff, as well as by strangers who befriend children on the internet and offer them rewards for either webcam-recorded sexual acts or for ‘friendship meetings’ that degenerate into sexual encounters. Adolescents are increasingly reported to be engaging in various forms of consumer prostitution, in order to earn cash that will enable them to access the products and life styles of global youth culture.

Although limited information is available, transgender children selling sex are a hidden population and thus receive scant specific support or attention. A cohort study of 4,339 Swedish high-school students found 1.8 percent of boys and 1 percent of girls reporting selling sex for payment. Just over half the girls who self-identified as ‘bisexual’ had sold sex. Among boys selling sex, 10.8 percent were homosexual, 13.5 percent bisexual and 75.7 percent heterosexual (Svedin and Priebe, 2007).

With respect to mechanisms of exploitation, many researchers have claimed that ‘the image of children enslaved in brothels offers only a partial view of the phenomenon of child prostitution’ (O’Connell Davidson, 2000; Montgomery, 2001 and others). The list of manifestations described as prostitution in Table 1, together with other examples that will appear in these pages, shows the variety of children, genders, mechanisms, customers and locations that fall into this class of sexual activity. Bonded labour and locked brothels apart, few of these situations can be classified as slavery or unfreedom, except in the symbolic sense that all human beings are ‘born free yet are everywhere in chains’. To deny that the exploitation of children in prostitution is slavery does not imply acceptance, however. The 2000 updated review of the implementation of and follow-up to the 1926 Convention and 1956 Supplementary Convention,<sup>2</sup> pointed out that, although there are debates about whether or not adult prostitution should be ‘tolerated in some circumstances’ (para 53), CRC article 34 and ILO 182 denote zero tolerance of the exploitation of children in prostitution, independent of the involvement of third party intermediaries – such as traffickers, pimps, parents and brothel operators. If children seek their own sexual exploitation as a form of work, even if they control the consequent

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<sup>2</sup> UN Economic and Social Council E/CN.4/Sub.2/2000/3/Add.126 May 2000

income, the international community still regards this as an intolerable form of child labour.

**Table 1: Categories of girls and boys in prostitution in six Mexican cities**

1. Girls and boys who live in the streets and prostitute themselves in a regular way as a form of subsistence\$	2. Girls and boys who live in the streets and occasionally prostitute themselves when they have no other way to subsist	3. Girls and boys who live in enclosed spaces but prostitute themselves offering their services in the streets	4. Girls and boys who live in enclosed spaces and offer their services in enclosed spaces (bars, hotels, night clubs etc.)	5. Girls and boys who live with their families, who participate or implicitly accept that they are being exploited
6. Girls and boys who live with their families who do not know that they are being exploited	7. Girls and boys who do not live with their families and that are subject to sexual exploitation in one way or another	8. Girls and boys who participate in some type of sexual exploitation in exchange for money	9. Girls and boys who participate in some type of sexual exploitation in exchange for some other type of compensation (food, lodging, clothes, toys etc)	10. Girls and boys who are exploited by their partner, whether or not they recognize him as a pimp
11. Girls and boys who work in establishments where they expressly offer their sexual services (hotels, night clubs, brothels etc).	12. Girls and boys who work in establishments where they offer their sexual services in a covert way (snack bars, beer shops, massage parlours, escort agencies, beauty parlours, escort agencies, party entertainment etc)	13. Mexican girls and boys who go or are taken to other countries (principally the United States) to be sexually exploited	14. Foreign girls (principally Central American) who come or are brought into Mexico to be sexually exploited.	15. Mexican boys and girls who are sold in the country for different purposes
16 Mexican girls and boys who are sold and taken to other countries (principally the United States) for different purposes	17. Girls who are ensnared by organized crime networks, which sexually exploit them and move them from one town to another.	18. Girls who are ensnared for the sex trade under a system of debt slavery and are retained against their will.	19. Girls and boys who, once they have formed part of the sex trade, are induced to take drugs as a way of retaining them.	20. Girls and boys whose exploiters ... are Mexican
€21. Girls and boys whose exploiters are foreigners	22. Girls and boys whose clients are mainly Mexican	23 Girls and boys whose clients are mainly foreigners	24. Girls and boys whose exploiters or representatives are adult men	25 Girls and boys whose exploiters are adult women.

Source: Azaola, 2001, 149-50

Similarly there is an ideological debate about the correct terminology to use to identify customers within the discourse on the exploitation of children in prostitution. During the Latin-American consultation for WCIII, it was suggested that the term 'client', downplays the criminal exploitation committed against a child and diffuses the duty-bearing responsibilities of adults. Thus it was proposed that the alternative term 'client/exploiter' should be employed.<sup>3</sup> In other circles, acknowledging the often-confused continuum between child sexual abuse and the exploitation of children in prostitution, and recognizing the responsibility of all adults for the protection of all children, the term 'offender', or sometimes 'perpetrator', is used.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ecpat.net/WorldCongressIII/PDF/RegionalMTGs/compromisos.pdf>

## Genders and prostitutions

Within the social sciences, 'gender' initially referred to social (rather than biological) differences between male and female. Now it is increasingly recognized that there are multiple possible constructions of gender, which are themselves complex and culturally variable. In all cases, gender has two components - biology and culture. For females, the focus tends to be on both biological reproduction of children and social reproduction, through unpaid work in early child care and socialisation within the institution of 'family'. In contrast, the ascribed male gender role is to be a socio-economic provider and political actor. Fatherhood involves not only biological but also symbolic potency, because it confers adult, political status and establishes a new locus of this status within extended families and communities.

Gender roles are inscribed in childhood through socialisation, although children are specifically excluded from both sex and power aspects of gender, which simply exist as promises for the socially-acceptable human adults that children are expected to become. Paradoxically, it is exclusion from both sex and power that makes girls and boys vulnerable to adult abuse and exploitation.

As yet, there is no unitary gender viewpoint available for understanding the commercial sexual exploitation of all children. Three perspectives exist simultaneously. The currently dominant gender perspective claims that all prostitution constitutes violence against women, a view that is sometimes referred to 'neo-abolitionist' (Doezema, 1999). The proponents refuse to consider prostitution as work. Yet, by aggregating children and women, many nuances within the exploitation of children in prostitution are lost.

The second gender perspective on prostitution is sometimes accused of privileging class analysis over gender analysis (Jeffreys, 2003). In its most recent manifestation, this approach developed to a large extent through the entry of self-defined 'female sex workers' to the debate: '... the notion of the sex worker has emerged as a counterpoint to traditionally derogatory names ... The idea of the sex worker is inextricably linked to struggles for the recognition of women's work, for basic human rights and for decent working conditions' (Kempadoo, 1998, 3).

Finally, a less-controversial perspective focuses on gender bias or discrimination against females. Yet this tends to ignore prejudice against boys, and often renders the exploitation of boys, as well as of transgendered children, effectively invisible.

Including girls as 'women', combined with virtually ignoring boys acts as a barrier to knowledge and understanding of the prostitution of the full range of both pre-pubertal and adolescent children. To put it another way, insisting on the primacy of gender as the basis of analysis of prostitution is effectively a discrimination against children: 'distinctions between child and adult are blurred in all gender perspectives 'in order to encourage the view of ... victims as young and helpless' and men as perpetrators (Doezema, 1999).

These three most common gender perspectives are also somewhat deterministic. Even though individuals (boys and men, girls and women) learn and internalize norms about what it means to be men and women – including norms that promote the commoditization of sex - they can also react to and question these norms. Masculinities are constructed against the backdrop of other power hierarchies and income inequalities

that give greater power to some men (and some women), through social class, caste, wealth, education and ethnicity for example. Thus there are variations between the realities of both females and males (Moore, 1988; Kimmel, 2000; Connell, 1994). Relations of power and sexuality combine with other inequalities, including age, gender, citizenship and economic status, particularly within capitalism, to produce the cash profits of sexual exploitation (Castanha, 2008).

## **Violence against children**

Gender analysis therefore requires another dimension if it is to be used to analyse the causes of the exploitation of children in prostitution. Because prostitution is described by some as 'violence against women', it is necessary to unpack the term 'violence'. The Report of the United Nations Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children (Violence Study) drew on the World Health Organization (WHO) definition: 'the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child, by an individual or group, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity' (WHO, 2002; Pinheiro, 2006). The Violence Study acknowledged that sexual violence occurs 'in all settings', most commonly at home, and that while 'girls suffer considerably more sexual violence than boys' because of gender-based power relations, there are certain forms of violence to which boys are more vulnerable (Pinheiro, 2006, 7).

In any analysis of the exploitation of children in prostitution, age-based violence must be taken in to account alongside gender-based violence. Both are expressions of power inequalities, because power is exerted through the ability, or potential, or right to exercise force. Adults have this right with respect to children, combined with the means and the opportunity, legally in some countries, or because of custom and opportunity in others. Such violence, which includes sexual violence, is structural and endemic. Corporal punishment, especially in the family, is the clearest indication of this unequal power relationship between adults and children, reinforced through encouraging and allowing violent treatment of children (by women as well as men) that is prohibited by law for use against adult men and women (whether or not the law is implemented). Age is undoubtedly a vulnerability factor for violence: 'The power differences that exist between adults and children in all societies underlie sexual exploitation. Yet, unlike gender, caste or wealth, age hierarchies are rarely examined by policy makers' (Baker, 2001, 4). Moreover, it is often recorded that this inequality between adults and children is internalized by children, leading to further vulnerabilities. For example, research in Chiapas, Mexico, revealed a high degree of acceptance on the part of children exploited in prostitution regarding the right of adults to beat or control them (Azaola, 2001). Corporal punishment is a potent symbol of the low status of children and facilitates their exploitation in prostitution and other abuses.<sup>4</sup>

## **Gender and generation**

Thus, to recognize that gender relations are relationships of unequal power is not the full story. The aspect lacking in all three gender perspectives is a correct understanding of what is usually termed 'patriarchy'. This should not be equated with gender alone, as is often the case, but can be understood using a simple matrix of gender and generation; in which male dominates female and older dominate younger (Figure 2). Patriarchy is the

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<sup>4</sup> [www.endcorporalpunishmentofchildren.org](http://www.endcorporalpunishmentofchildren.org)

basis of all social relations, a family-based power structure through which the nature of all power relations is learned and reinforced daily, and on which all other power relations, such as wealth, ethnicity, race, caste and class, are superimposed: 'Prostitution thus exploits the immaturity and helplessness of children' (Lim, 1998, 174). Age-based analysis also makes it essential to distinguish between pre-pubertal children, adolescents and adults in the commercial sex market (Faleiros, 2008).

**Figure 2: The intersecting power relations of gender and generation**  
 [Darker shading indicates higher degrees of power differential]

	Male	Female
Old		
Young		

If patriarchal analysis is combined with understanding of other inequalities, the result is a theoretical framework that 'allows explanations to focus on systemic causes rather than 'root causes', resulting in the realization that 'campaigns ... need to be simultaneously campaigns against "Third World" debt, sexism, racism and the gender and social ideologies' (O'Connell Davidson, 2005, 70).

### **Women, children and informed consent**

The literature on adult female prostitution now includes studies suggesting that, in many cases, these women have considerable power over both their own bodies and those of their customers (Hart, 1998). The contention of childhood studies that children are active agents in their own lives challenges the conventional view of children in prostitution as passive victims (James et al, 1998). This is not to deny that there are many circumstances in which the exploitation of children in prostitution cannot be described as a 'voluntary' choice on the part of any child. Nevertheless, the existence of 'sex slavery' in some instances should not be allowed to obscure the complex realities and varieties of other mechanisms for the exploitation of children in prostitution.

Legal ages for 'sexual consent' vary widely between countries, but all imply that there is a point in life at which consent is possible. However, the operation of such legal categories in bringing adult exploiters to justice can be complicated by inability to prove a child's chronological age because of the absence of a birth certificate.

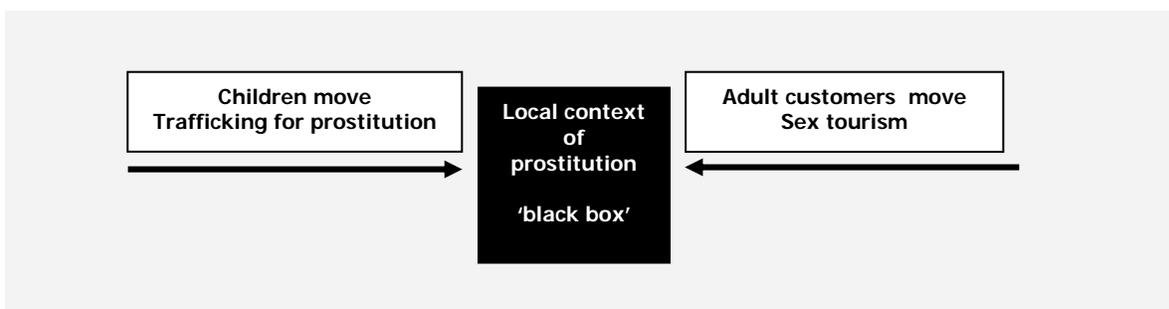
Research from both Global North and Global South indicates that some child prostitutes, particularly those working on urban streets, have tried other work before turning to prostitution, and that selling sex may be a part-time or occasional economic activity (see for example Lalor, 1999; Pederssen and Hegna, 2003). Other research has shown children seeking customers and even acting as pimps (for example, Baker, 2007, Duong, 2002, Montgomery, 2001). Clearly children are making active choices, but they are not choosing on the basis of full information about consequences and alternatives. There are no viable arguments that young children can give informed (and thus truly

voluntary) consent to sexual acts with adults, as David Finkelhor demonstrated in a masterly essay three decades ago (Finkelhor, 1979). On the other hand, it can be argued that many adult decisions (not only in the sexual arena) are not fully informed and thus amount to something like ‘It seemed like a good idea at the time’. To a certain extent, the CRC, with its emphasis on ‘evolving capacities’, can be helpful in discussions about informed consent (Lansdown, 2005). Perhaps one of the most ignored areas in this context, which is also important for preventing the exploitation of children in prostitution, is adults’ duty (under CRC articles 12 and 17) to provide adequate and appropriate information and decision-making skills for children of any age to take, or contribute to, decisions about any area of their own lives.

### Increasingly obscured

The discourses of the commercial sexual exploitation of children have changed since WCI. Sexual abuse and exploitation now occupy a different place on the global child-protection agenda, attracting more attention and often considerably more donor funding than physical abuse, child labour and other child-protection issues. But ‘the exploitation of children in prostitution’ has not achieved the status of a distinct discourse and is now obscured by two more influential discourses’, each of which concentrates on a specific migration flow – child migration through trafficking on the one hand and customer migration in sex tourism on the other (Figure 3). Both contribute to the complex realities of the exploitation of children in prostitution, but the combined effect of their increasingly visible presence in public debate is to reduce information about what actually happens in the encounter between adult customer and exploited child – the ‘black box’ in Figure 3. Largely absent from both data and analysis are the contexts of local prostitution mechanisms, economies and power relations. This has led to a widespread tendency to equate the exploitation of children in prostitution with trafficking and sex tourism. The result is that a strong, holistic discourse focusing on the exploitation of children in prostitution has failed to develop.

**Figure 3: Focus on trafficking and sex tourism obscures the mechanisms of the exploitation of children in prostitution in local contexts**



### The ‘global sex trade’

The dominant discourses of trafficking and sex tourism also obscure local mechanisms and transactions in the exploitation of children in prostitution. The ‘child sex industry’ is often asserted to be a lucrative transnational business (UNICEF EAPRO, 2005; Lim, 1998), Yet the global spread of the sex industry, and the two undoubted migration flows, do not necessary entail transnational enterprises. The exploitation of children in prostitution is better described as a set of business transaction taking place in most (if

not all) countries. In these transactions some players may be transnational and many different types of economic activity may be involved. There is no evidence that 'the sex trade' is either unitary or primarily controlled by transnational companies. While it is possible to say that 'The commercial sex industry is a multimillion dollar global market which includes strip clubs, massage brothels, phone sex, adult and child pornography, street, brothel and escort prostitution' (Farley and Kelly, 2000, 58). Yet even a superficial consideration of this list (which appears in a review of literature of prostitution in general) reveals that children are involved in different ways and often represent only a very small proportion of the overall value of the transactions.

Even if the trade were worth billions of dollars, this would simply represent the value passing through billions of transactions between customers and prostitutes and the intermediaries involved. Study after study reveals that such intermediaries are taxi-drivers, waiters, local brothel owners, tour guides, and so forth, for many of whom the income is a welcome supplement to very low earnings. Nothing in the extensive literature review carried out for this paper indicates that the exploitation of children in prostitution is organized by multi-million-dollar transnational enterprises. The fact that cross-border trafficking can result in large profits for some illegal enterprises, and that some trafficked persons are trafficked for commercial sex, and that some of those trafficked are less than 18 years of age, should not be permitted to dominate – and thus obscure - the discourse on the exploitation of children in prostitution.

### **'Pedophiles'**

The so-called global child sex industry is often referred to as being financed by an ever increasing demand for more and younger children, by 'pedophile' customers who are willing and able to pay ever-larger sums of money. Once again, terminology is misused and obscures the picture. 'Pedophile' is frequently used to refer to *all* customers of *all* human beings less than 18 years of age who are exploited in prostitution. Yet 'pedophilia' is a clinical term used by psychiatrists in the Global North 'to refer to an adult who has a personality disorder which involves a specific and focused sexual interest in pre-pubertal children' (O'Connell Davidson, 2000, 55). The definition refers to sexual fantasies and sexual activities of a group of people over the age of 16 years, about pre-pubertal children who are generally less than 13 years old. As the word indicates pedophiles 'love children'. Their desire (and delusion) is thus to go beyond a simple market transaction between customer and vendor to achieve emotional attachment with a particular child (O'Connell Davidson, 2005).

One globalized phenomenon recently reported by both media and child-welfare organizations is the increasing presence of Northern pedophiles in Southern countries, where their activities are less rigorously monitored, detected and punished than they are in their home nations.<sup>5</sup> These routes are believed to focus on countries where media and other reports indicate that a large number of pre-pubertal children are available for sex. Kevin Lalor claims that there is a market in the Global South for pre-pubertal or early pubertal sex fuelled by pedophiles from the Global North, taking for granted that pedophilia is a Northern phenomenon (Lalor, 1999). But an NGO report on street-based prostitution in Cambodia counteracts the media story that 'pedophiles' are all foreigners and/or sex tourists, by reporting that both local men and resident foreigners are involved (Renault, 2006). Similarly, a report on the exploitation of children in prostitution in

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/eapro/activities\\_3757.html](http://www.unicef.org/eapro/activities_3757.html)

Guatemala found customers of girls in prostitution to be local men aged between 15 and 60 years (ECPAT International et al, 2002). Although a North-South movement of pedophiles is news headlines, these conceal the existence of regional movements of customers. In Southeast Asia foreign customers are largely from within the region (BIDE, 1998). Recent research confirms other intra-regional movements, for example Brazilians and Argentineans traveling to Bolivia<sup>6</sup> and South Koreans to Southeast Asia and the Pacific.<sup>7</sup> The trajectories of international tourism – whether for sex or other purposes – tend to be from rich countries to cheaper ('poorer') destinations.

The term sometimes used for these customers is 'pedophiles who travel abroad'. But, as Julia O'Connell Davidson argues, 'the idea that child prostitution is sustained solely by demand from pedophiles is untenable' (O'Connell Davidson, 2000, 58). It is also unlikely that 'preferential child abusers' do not exist in the Global South, comprising a local demand and local market (Baker, 2001).

### **A rights-based approach**

In the early twenty-first century, most international – and some national – aid and welfare agencies claim to be 'rights-based', or are grappling with the concept. In the past two decades, it has become increasingly difficult for any agency working with or on behalf of children to ignore the CRC, although many do not fully understand its basis in human rights, and there is a recent tendency for notions of children's wellbeing to replace children's rights as the framework of programming for children. In this paper, 'rights-based' means:

- Based on the fundamental touchstones of human rights – dignity, equality, non-discrimination and participation;
- Including the additional rights of children to provision and protection;
- Using the specific rights of intergovernmental human-rights law to construct a holistic framework for research, advocacy and action.

In the case of the exploitation of children in prostitution, this framework contextualises the child prostitute/adult customer relationship beyond the narrow range of CRC Article 34 and the Optional Protocol to include rights relating to family, poverty, abuse and violence as well as to social services, culture, ethnicity, education and civil registration. Grouping rights provisions around a key article (such as CRC 34), provides avenues through which to seek data so that the exploitation of children in prostitution can be measured and monitored, avoiding the difficulties of simply counting 'child prostitutes' or 'prostituted children' – indeed totally avoiding the debate about what they should be called (Figure 4).

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<sup>6</sup> Trafico de niños, niñas y adolescentes en Bolivia (2003), Viceministerio de la Juventud, Niñez y Tercera Edad, [http://www.iin.oea.org/proy\\_trafico\\_ninos\\_internet/iintpi/trafico.bolivia.pdf](http://www.iin.oea.org/proy_trafico_ninos_internet/iintpi/trafico.bolivia.pdf),

<sup>7</sup> Global Monitoring Report – South Korea (2005), ECPAT International, [http://www.ecpat.net/eng/A4A\\_2005/login.asp](http://www.ecpat.net/eng/A4A_2005/login.asp)

**Figure 4: The exploitation of children in prostitution: A rights-based framework**  
Using the CRC and Optional Protocol only

Key human rights	Ideas
CRC 1, 16	Children, childhood, children's dignity, privacy
CRC 34, OP	Exploitation of children in prostitution
CRC 2, 30	Non discrimination
CRC 12 (13, 15)	Participation, consent, power and evolving capacity
CRC 37 (19, 28)	Non violence (corporal punishment)
Linked articles relating to prevention and provision	
7, 8	Civil registration
CRC 3,4	Reasonable expectations from duty bearers
5, 8, 19, 22	Family
22, 25, 28, 29,	State obligation of support and alternative family care
32, 35, 36	Protection from child labour, trafficking and exploitation
28, 29, 17	Education and information, including sexual education and teacher training
24, 35, 39	Physical and mental health, health education and rehabilitation, including protection and rehabilitation from substance abuse.
40 (12)	Juvenile justice (non criminalization of child prostitutes), processing and sentencing of offenders, child witnesses, children-friendly courts

Sources: Adapted from Ennew et al, 1996, Ennew, 1997 and Baker, 2001

## Summary

Gender analysis is insufficient for either describing or explaining the exploitation of children in prostitution.

- Focus on prostitution as violence against women, ignores violence against children in general, especially against boys, obscuring the violence and exploitation practised by women against children;
- Focus on the rights of women as sex workers, ignores the fact that child sex work is universally condemned as a 'worst form of child labour' (ILO Convention 182), whether the child is a boy or a girl, pre-pubertal or post pubertal;
- Gender-bias approaches seem to ignore bias against boys in favour of blaming males.

Violence is the key that links the prostitution of women to the exploitation of boys and girls in prostitution, while the combination of generation and gender in patriarchy provides a basis for understanding the structural bases of violence as well as the inequalities of power through which all forms of exploitation – including prostitution – can be analysed.

Although the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children is increasingly recognized, the exploitation of children in prostitution is increasingly obscured. The discourses of both sex tourism and trafficking need to be deconstructed so that a distinct discourse on the exploitation of children in prostitution can emerge. This would illuminate the exploitative transactions involved rather than the migration patterns of tourism and trafficking, which only involve some (possibly a minority) of children exploited in

prostitution. A further obscuring factor is the incorrect use of the clinical term 'pedophile' to refer to all customers of children exploited in prostitution.

While the exploitation of children in prostitution' is awkward to use and results in some clumsy sentences throughout this paper, it seems to be the only way in which the topic can be referred to without appearing to champion one perspective or another. It is discouraging to find that adult word games are played out on the bodies and minds of vulnerable and exploited children (Stephens, 1995). The irony is that there is no need to transfer ideological debates on adult prostitution to discussions of the exploitation of children in prostitution, since this is regarded as a zero-tolerance practice by the international community. Concentration on definitional or ideological debates creates an immeasurable distance between duty-bearers and the realities experienced by children.

## Recent information on the exploitation of children in prostitution

An undoubted effect of World Congresses I and II was an exponential growth in literature related to the exploitation of children in prostitution. Unfortunately this has not always been marked by improvements in quality. Ronald Weitzer's conclusion, to a review of three research publications on prostitution of women, that 'the procedures used severely impaired the quality of the findings and the larger arguments made' (Weitzer, 2005), can be extended to include much of the literature on the exploitation of children in prostitution. One contributing factor is that the discourse often appears to be disconnected from social science developments in studies of children, childhood and children's rights.

Current investigations of the exploitation of children in prostitution tend to be damaged by one or more of the following:

- Conceptual inadequacy
  - Anecdotes 'routinely presented as definitive evidence';
  - Ignoring data and discussions that do not fit the 'researcher's' perspective;
  - Lack of cultural context, especially of ideas about children and childhood, gender and sexuality, which tend to remain stubbornly Northern in the research analysis, even when researchers are local;
  - Uncritical use of unsubstantiated estimates as the basis of research on incidence;
  - Short time frame research – lack of longitudinal and cohort studies;
  - Absence of baseline data in evaluation and causal analysis;
  - Few comparative studies that are scientifically satisfactory;
  - Broad generalizations about root causes, especially 'family breakdown' and poverty'.
- Method and design faults
  - No information about ethical strategies;
  - Insufficient (or no) information on the tools used for data collection;
  - Use of methods unsuitable for vulnerable children and sensitive subjects;
  - No control (comparison) groups;
  - Lack of discernable logic in the selection of informants;
  - Failure to describe how contact with research subjects was made.
- Unscientific sampling:
  - Pitifully small samples presented as percentages and generalizations (Table 2);
  - Reliance on project-based samples with no recognition of the bias this involves;
  - Unrepresentative samples;
  - Lack of information about sampling techniques or discussion of any potential biases.
- Analytical failures:
  - Spurious use of emotive language;

- Inflation of figures by including domestic violence with violence against prostitutes, and child prostitutes (including boys) in numbers of women;
- Reporting raw numbers without showing how they relate to general populations;
- Use of worst-case scenarios to develop stereotypes and ‘prove’ arguments. (Weitzer, 2005; see also Montgomery, 2007, Baker, 2001)

**Table 2: Five recent examples from various countries of small samples used for percentages in research reports**

Reference in bibliography	Country	Sample size from which percentages are derived
ECPAT Philippines and UNICEF Manila, 2007	Philippines	14
ILO/IPEC South America, 2006	Colombia	60 (including 24 beneficiaries)
ILO/IPEC and SENAME, 2004	Chile	56
Paicabi, 2005	Chile	43 (NGO beneficiaries)
Akula, 2006	India	60

Use of small samples is, of course, often due to the difficulties of access. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with small samples. If sensitively used with a variety of methods they can produce illuminating results. However, the tendency is to use single methods (such as interviews and questionnaires), which are not appropriate in investigations of topics that are difficult to talk about, and to push the small amount of data through numerical hoops that produce misleading results. One typical error is to use percentages to report results from a sample of less (often *much* less) than 100. Misleading percentages of a very small, unrepresentative sample may be used by policy makers to design inappropriate programmes.

A not untypical, example of a situation analysis of the sex trade in Boracay Island in the Philippines, carried out in 2006 illustrates this tendency. The 14 prostitutes encountered and briefly interviewed are not representative in the scientific sense. The sample is opportunistic (in itself not a problem if potential effects of this on ‘findings’ are reported transparently). Most of the report refers to the 14 cases as ‘girls’; it is not until over halfway through the text that it becomes clear that three cases were ‘boys’. It then appears that these ‘children’ are all post-pubertal and nearly all are adults, five being parents. The conclusion of the report, that the study ‘confirms the presence of minors who are new victims of commercial sexual exploitation’, seems to be based on respondents’ accounts of the age at which they starting prostitution, which is not verified by any other method (ECPAT Philippines and UNICEF Manila, 2007, 26). Although all 11 ‘girls’ and three ‘boy’s in the study described themselves as ‘freelancers’, the researchers stated that, ‘based on actual observation, they also work with pimps. The researchers may have encountered the only 14 prostitutes who would describe themselves as ‘freelance’ (indeed the freelancers would probably be the most likely for researchers to meet easily) and it is not clear if observations of prostitutes and pimps involved the same 14 people or others (ibid).

The bulk of research on the exploitation of children in prostitution since 2000 has been undertaken outside peer-reviewed academic circles, and is therefore not subjected to quality checks. Added to this, academics pay relatively little attention to research on

child-protection issues in the Global South, so that scant research finds its way into scientific journals. One consistent finding of ECPAT International's global monitoring series has been that that 'many countries lacked up-to-date data and information in areas relevant to the report' (Foreword, ECPAT International 2006-2008). Another major resource on the commercial sexual exploitation of children is the series of rapid assessments commissioned by, and using the guidelines of, The International Labour Organization International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC: for example, Duong, 2002, Dunn, 2001, Gonza et al, 2001, ILO/IPEC South America, 2006, ILO/IPEC and SENAME, 2004). Both series are valuable contributions to the record, but focus on the entire field of the commercial sexual exploitation of children. They can be regarded as precursors of scientific work on the exploitation of children in prostitution.

### **Research challenges of the exploitation of children in prostitution**

Researchers on the exploitation of children almost always refer to difficulties of access to children, customers and intermediaries, as well as to the places where sex is transacted, because of the illegal or stigmatized nature of prostitution. 'Indoor prostitution' in brothels is described as 'invisible', although a considerable amount of prostitution takes place in indoor facilities that are open to the public, such as bars and massage parlours. The over representation of street prostitution in the research record is one result, but researchers' own accounts of data collection, frequently give the impression of nervous, inexperienced researchers, standing out as outsiders, while doing rapid interviews with strangers as part of a short-time-frame research process.

It is often stated that children cannot be accessed because they are controlled by brothel owners or pimps (see for example Azaola, 2001), with the result that a tendency of research with children in prostitution is to make contact through services offered – justice, health, shelters, social workers,. However, under these circumstances children are restrained by the presence of staff, and the information is likely to be equally tainted. Children in shelters and other services are also likely to be unrepresentative of the entire range of children in prostitution.

A significant proportion of current studies of children in prostitution tend to be based on samples from facilities for rehabilitation, while studies of customers may rely on offenders in penal institutions. In both cases it can be argue that the sample is biased. Specific narratives of rescue and redemption result from closed environments, from the influence of religious perspectives, of media, of HIV/AIDS programmes, with the additional pressures of current emphases on trafficking and sex tourism from the donor community. Heather Montgomery's reflections on bias in research with child prostitutes contain an interesting comment about interactions between children and journalists investigating 'child sex slavery':

When asked which country most of their clients were from, with great skill and intelligence, the children would find out what country the journalist was from and then say the majority of clients were from that particular country despite the fact that they had only one word for a white foreigner – *farang* - and had no idea of the differences between the different countries (Montgomery, 2007, 421).

One unusual study of customers of prostitutes, carried out in Lima, Peru, illustrates some of the ethical and technical dilemmas involved in the study of human sexuality.

The researchers invented a fictitious sex magazine and interviewed 85 men at length about their attitudes towards sex with minors, while they were under the impression they were being considered for employment. Female researchers also posed as job seekers for sex work. These subterfuges produced similar findings to those carried out by legitimate methods (Villaviencio, 2005).

Of course there are difficulties involved in research on any illegal activity, but this does not make such research impossible. Results are likely to be skewed by large attrition rates, or by samples drawn from closed communities, such as imprisoned sex offenders. But a few researchers have succeeded in providing interesting information and presenting the results in a responsible manner (see for example Mansson, 2001, Monto, 2000; O'Connell Davidson, 1998; Pedersen and Hegna, 2003).

Contrary to the views expressed by some researchers that it is not possible to approach children at their places of work because they are 'under control' other researchers have spent considerable amounts of time with children in their places of work and where they live. Time, experience of the locations and people being researched, together with appropriate methods, remove most of the challenges of research in this field, as many in-depth social science studies of hard-to-reach populations have demonstrated (Byrne, 2004, Beazley, 2002, Hart, 1998, Hecht, 1998, Kempadoo, 2001, Montgomery, 2001, for example).

A greater challenge than access is researchers' lack of experience or understanding of the lives and world views of the research subjects. It is unlikely that even a local person from the same ethnic and language group as the exploited children, and/or those who exploit them, will have much insight into their values and motivations. This may be compounded if the researcher is a foreigner, although foreign researchers are often able to identify factors that local researchers take for granted. Yet the absolute values of the international community, which defines the exploitation of children in prostitution as a 'worst form' and advocate zero tolerance, can ignore information that does not match assumptions. Consequent research is likely to be poor quality in design, execution and analysis, as well as to violate the rights of the research subjects by failing to respect their perspectives. Research produced through a prism of prejudice will produce repetitive results that are not necessarily a useful basis for public education, policy or planning.

### **Trends in recent data on the exploitation of children in prostitution**

Current research on the exploitation of children in prostitution tends to occur within more general research reports on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, or trafficking or sex tourism. Generally speaking only relatively small-scale research focuses on children in prostitution and their exploiters, and these studies are fairly repetitive in design, methods and results, including the misleading use of percentages for small samples. Three research studies carried out in South America serve as examples. In the first of these, in Colombia, research was carried out in three regions but with a total of only 60 children, '40 percent' of whom were 'in care centres' – in itself a factor causing bias unless there was separate analysis of the information provided by the 24 children involved. 'Most' of the children said they began prostitution when aged 11 to 13 years, which coincided with them running away from homes where they had experienced sexual abuse. 'Only 9 percent' of the children said they had a pimp when they began as prostitutes, although the researchers correctly warn that it could be that children who work with pimps are harder to access. Chilean national research was based on

interviews with 56 children exploited in prostitution, '88 percent' being girls. The average age of initiation in sexual exploitation was 12-13 years and 'most' of the girls were introduced by a friend, which means that there was no pimp involved (ILO/IPEC South America, 2006). Another study by a Chilean NGO on 43 beneficiaries in its own care centre both counters and complements the national survey results (Paicabi, 2005). To begin with, '35 percent' of the children are boys and '58 percent' of all the children said they were initiated between ages of 13 and 15 years. 'Most' of them were involved in sexual exploitation sporadically ('41.9%') and '32.6 percent' were freelance (ILO/IPEC and SENAME, 2004).

In contrast, an unusual, statistically satisfying, study of the almost total population of 14-17 year olds in Oslo schools (Norway) found that the 1.4 percent who had sold sex included three times more boys than girls. This throws some doubt on theories of the overwhelming victimization of girls. The authors found no associations between sale of sex and either socio-economic variables or school success. Their one valid correlation was with the number of nights spent in Central Oslo. Boys, but not girls, were found to have mental health problems, and both genders demonstrated behaviour problems (defined as substance use) or had been victims of violence, and early sexual experience. Nevertheless, 35 of the children who said they sold sex had not yet experienced intercourse (Pedersen and Hegna, 2000).

There have been some exceptions to the tendency of literature on the exploitation of children in prostitution in the Global South towards 'anecdotal, vignette-type descriptions' (Lalor, 1999, 227). Participatory research compared exploitation of children in prostitution in Surakarta (Java, Indonesia), where there is a large community of rural-urban migrants, with children exploited in prostitution in Indramayu, an agricultural area where the majority lived with their parents. This research involved local NGO workers, academic advisors and child advisors, who were all teenaged girls who had been exploited in prostitution and still had contacts within the bars, beauty parlours and massage parlours where they had worked. The children exploited in prostitution were compared with non-prostitute, school-going children, using a battery of methods that enabled statistical results to be triangulated and interpreted with the help of supporting qualitative data. The 'city' children exploited in prostitution in Surakarta were more likely to be heavy users of alcohol and narcotics, compared to the 'country' children, and also had poorer health. The 'country' children in Indramayu had mostly never suffered from sexual health problems. Economic pressures on their families were generally the reason given for entering prostitution. The children benefited from solidarity with their peers, for example through helping each other out financially, although disputes and violence sometimes occurred. The study focused on the social supports for children working in prostitution, and revealed affectionate relationships between the children and their pimps who were sometimes also called 'boyfriends' (Byrne, 2004).

#### *Adolescent sex on the street*

Street based prostitution is overrepresented in the research field (Weitzer, 2005). The data on adolescents who sell sex on the street in both Global North and Global South are often by-products of HIV research, demonstrating the long-term relationship between prostitution and public health (Farley and Kelly, 2000). Sometimes this exploitation of children and youth in prostitution is assumed always to be 'survival sex', but a growing body of research on homeless children in the Global North and street children in the Global South indicates some of the complexities involved.

In the Global North, researchers tend to use relatively sophisticated (although generally not children-friendly) methods as well as samples of satisfactory size, while research on street children tends to be as problematic as research on children exploited in prostitution. There is considerable disagreement about the size of either population. Carrie E. Coward Bucher, for example shows variations in the numbers given by investigators in the USA from 850,000 to 'up to 2 million' runaways a year (Coward Bucher, 2008). But there is general agreement among researchers and programme providers worldwide that, 'once on the street these youth constitute a highly vulnerable population who engage in a variety of high-risk, maladaptive behaviours and suffer from an array of social ills' (ibid, 549). One problem for such children is inability to meet basic needs for food, shelter, clothes and health care. Following a re-appraisal cluster analysis of 422 cases of homeless heterosexual male youth in Northwest USA, Coward Bucher proposed a four-part typology related to programme provision. Thirty-eight percent of the sample fell within the group requiring the most intensive programme input ('comprehensive treatment') 13 percent of whom had engaged in homosexual survival sex and 15 percent in heterosexual survival sex, in addition to criminal activity and substance abuse. Thus the proportion of street-living children and adolescents resorting to survival sex prostitution is relatively small. Kevin Lalor (1999), quoting earlier Global South research, claims that 'most' juvenile prostitutes have tried other work first and are [in prostitution] part time', which is indicative of the fact that other survival strategies may be more widely available. According to Harriot Beazley, street girls in Yogyakarta (Indonesia) sell souvenirs or work in other small-scale activities, and only occasionally engage in prostitution (Beazley 2002). It could be that the small proportion of street-living adolescents who do become involved in prostitution have a range of other problems, such as drug use and abusive home backgrounds, which render them less likely to be able to survive on the streets by means other than selling sex.

**Table 3: Comparison of some research on urban adolescent 'survival-sex' activities in the Global North**

Where	When	Researchers	Research conclusions
Pacific NW, USA	Research 1994-1997	Coward Bucher	13% of 160 male homeless youth homosexual sex, and 15% heterosexual survival sex [in a total sample of 422 the equivalent percentage is 5% homosexual and 6%]
Montreal, Canada	Published 2000	Roy et al	30% Trading sex for money, shelter, food, drugs and gifts
Los Angeles	Published 1995	Kipke et al	43% trading sex for food, money or drugs
USA National sample	Published 1999	Greene et al	28% of multi-city sample of street youth and 10% Youth living in project shelters Traded sex for money, food or shelter,
Oslo, Norway	Published 2003,	Pedersen and Hegna	Sample all 14-17 year-olds in public and private schools in Oslo 1.4% had sold sex, three times as many boys as girls, associated with other behavioural problems including substance use Boys=heroin; girls=ecstasy)

Coward Bucher's results are echoed elsewhere in the Global North by researchers using different methods and samples - including all-female, and all-prostitute. The characteristics of adolescents exploited in prostitution in urban areas of the Global North appear to be much the same as the stereotyped profiles of adult women prostitutes – they are poor and they are drug users (Pederson and Hegna, 2000; Table 3). The main problem with all such studies is that they tend not to use control groups, so that causal analysis is not reliable.

### *The exploitation of boys in prostitution*

One result of debates on women in prostitution has been limited attention to the commercial sexual exploitation of boys, a topic that might shed light on gender-focused debates about prostitution in general, as well as on the exploitation of children in prostitution as a whole. Some boys who sell homosexual sex have been reported to link the stigma of prostitution with discrimination against their sexual orientation (Boyer, 1989 in Pedersen and Hegna, 2003). This discourse is more than a continuation of the growing literature on Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM, see for example, Aggleton, 1998). Existing literature suggests that boys who sell sex to men are not necessarily manifesting a homosexual sexual orientation; many seem to have heterosexual relationships with girlfriends. On the other hand, Moroccan adolescent boys and youth selling homosexual sex told a researcher that this provides them with a way of both exploring and living their sexual identity. Social discrimination would prevent them from finding alternative employment (O'Connell Davidson, 2005).

Earlier studies (quoted in Pedersen and Hagna, 2003, 143) 'suggest that mutual masturbation and oral sex are most common when very young boys sell sex', a conclusion that should be followed up in any investigation of the 'black box' in Figure 3. One early study 'found that childhood sexual seduction followed by a reward (money or gifts) was a typical precursor of adolescent male prostitution (Caukins and Coombs 1976, cited *ibid*). Emotional dependency and affection-seeking behaviour will be followed later by mutual hostility. Loneliness appears to be a major factor – men buying sex with boys like to pretend that they are involved in a relationship involving mutual affection (*ibid*, 137).

Most studies of boy prostitutes have taken place in countries of the Global North, where homosexual acts are not illegal, and it is possible openly to discuss men who have sex with men. But three ECPAT studies in South Asia demonstrate the importance of cultural differences even in a single region. A relatively small-scale study of the exploitation of boys in prostitution in Hyderabad (India) reported few pimps and largely female customers (Akula, 2006). In Lahore and Peshawar (Pakistan) a rapid analysis described boys having sex with older men in long-term relationships that were not always based on cash transactions and sometimes involved boys with transgender identity, based on traditional cultural practices (Muhammad and Zafar, 2006). The exploitation of boys in prostitution in Bangladesh, is also part of established traditional practice, and is reported to be based in hotels, homes and the street, although boys are controlled by networks of pimps who create an atmosphere of fear, backed up by a high incidence of rape and abuse (Ali and Sarkar, 2006).

## *Public health and mental health*

Children's rights to health care and health education (CRC article 24) are sparsely covered in the research literature of either medical or social sciences. Yet from a rights perspective the topic covers a far wider range of issues than sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancies. Health implications of the exploitation of children in prostitution, while estimated to be considerable, have yet 'to receive appropriate medical and public attention worldwide' (Willis and Levy, 2002, 1417). A large-scale European study, in which 24 girls 15-to-17-year-old represented 12 percent of the total sample, demonstrated that trafficking, even if not for sexual exploitation, is a health issue (Zimmerman et al 2006). On a smaller scale, in other studies children's complaints about skin ailments and itching genitals point to lack of self care, which could result either from inability to access health facilities or feelings of worthlessness (Ali and Sarkar, 2006, Byrne, 2004).

Historically, concern with the health of prostitutes emphasized public health, concerned above all to prevent the spread of STIs into the general population. Prostitutes have been conceptualized as sources of infection, and subjected to health checks within various policies of legal control. HIV/AIDS has added a new dimension, especially for children. Their relative lack of power makes it more difficult to negotiate or insist on condom use. Physical immaturity renders children who have sex with adults particularly at risk of STIs. Boys exploited in prostitution experience specific problems due to anal penetration, which causes chronic anal pain (Ali and Sarkar, 2006) as well as resulting in genital lesions that make them vulnerable to all kinds of STI, especially HIV. There is also evidence that children exploited in prostitution lack information about STIs and genital hygiene (Lalor, 1999; Byrne, 2004). For these reasons, it is reported that the WHO has 'warned that child prostitutes may pose a greater danger to public health than adult prostitutes' (Lim, 1998, 178) – a statement that is more likely to contribute to stigmatization than to protection.

Girls exploited in prostitution experience higher levels of pregnancy as well as of STIs than either adult prostitutes or the general population. Physical immaturity is combined with ignorance about health issues and lack of access to ante natal care (Willis and Levy, 2002). Pregnancy outcomes are not good. Moreover many girls seek perilous abortions using traditional methods or illegal abortionists. Kevin Lalor reported on eleven pregnancies among the group of 30 girls exploited in prostitution he studied in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), aged 14-18 years. Three had been pregnant more than once. Two babies had been carried to full term and were living with their mothers on the street, while two were still unborn at the time of research. Two others had been born but subsequently died; one not surviving a premature birth and the other living for only 12 months. Six girls said they had had informal abortions at least once (Lalor, 1999). Abortion and miscarriage were also common in the Indonesian study. Girls described traditional abortions with no medical treatment despite copious bleeding (Byrne, 2004).

Information about health care in various reports shows that children exploited in prostitution rarely seek professional medical advice, preferring self-treatments, such as taking an over-the-counter antibiotic each day to ward off STIs, or resorting to traditional 'cures', partly because STIs are seen as shameful and partly because of poor understanding of causes, symptoms and preventative measures (ibid). Lack of money for medical costs is not apparently a problem in Java, where children 'expend relatively little money on looking after their health' compared with purchases of cosmetics, clothes

and perfume (ibid, 119). Children in Colombia tended not to use health services, mainly because they are mistreated when staff discover they are drug users (ILO/IPEC South America, 2006). In Java, researchers found that children knew which pharmacies will sell medicine over the counter without prescriptions and had been introduced by adult prostitutes to midwives and doctors who will provide contraception of various kinds – but not full advice. For example, one girl having contraception injections ceased to demand that customers use condoms. Among the reasons children gave for having unprotected sex, in addition to customer preference, was that children did not want to prolong sexual intercourse (ibid).

**Table 4: Estimated yearly occurrence of adverse health effects of the exploitation of children in prostitution** (Based on an estimated 9 million girls and 1 million boys prostituted each year and 2,376,000 infants born to prostituted children each year)

<b>Adverse health effects in prostituted children</b>		<b>Estimated yearly occurrence</b>
Infectious disease	STIs	2,000,000
	HIV infection	300,000
	Human papilloma virus	4,500,000
	Hepatitis B virus	500,000
Pregnancy	Maternal Deaths	4,752
	Spontaneous abortion	900,000
	Induced abortion	1224,000
	Abortion-related complications	367,200
	Abortion-related deaths	710
Mental illness	PTSD	6,700,000
	Attempted suicide	1,640,000
Substance abuse	All substances	9,000,000
Violence	Physical assault	2,500,000
	Rape	2,500,000
	Murder	6,900
Malnutrition		Unable to estimate
<b>Adverse health effects in infants born to prostituted children</b>		<b>Estimated yearly occurrence</b>
	Infant deaths	190,080
	Complications of STIs	237,000
	HIV infection	249,480
	Deaths from HIV infection	54,886
	Hepatitis B infection	8,316

Source: Adapted from Willis and Levy, 2002

An unusual survey of the global health burden of the sexual exploitation of children, by medical doctors Brian Willis and Barry Levy, provides some interesting food for thought, despite using other people's estimates of incidence fairly uncritically (Willis and Levy, 2002). They claim that studies of the 'health problems' of children exploited in prostitution tend to focus on HIV infection and mental health, and that there is very little reliable information about morbidity and mortality, because 'some studies are not published; published studies are difficult to access and tend to report qualitative, rather than quantitative health data; and funding for large quantitative studies is difficult to access'. Nevertheless, they claim that 'Information from prostituted children could be derived from the raw data of many studies on sex workers that include children, but the reports of these studies do not usually stratify by age' (Willis and Levy, 2002, 1421). This underlines the importance of research with an age perspective as well as a gender

perspective. Quantitative, accurate data is the only way to convince governments and to form the basis for policy, programme and service provision. Willis and Levy are almost certainly mistaken in the estimates they use as the basis of Table 4. Nine million girls and 1 million boys exploited in prostitution is not even credible as a 'back of the envelope' calculation. But, with better baseline data, existing epidemiological data could provide a viable and interesting global picture (ibid).

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Violence against children is also a health issue. Physical violence between children exploited in prostitution is reported to be due to low thresholds of frustration and anger. Self harm is also reported in the study in Java (Byrne, 2004). An ILO/IPEC rapid assessment in Colombia, states that emotional abuse had been encountered by one third of the sample (ILO/IPEC South America, 2006). Interviews with 854 people, aged 12 to 68 years currently or recently in prostitution in Canada, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, USA and Zambia, almost half of whom were less than 18 years of age, revealed multiple traumas, with rape and assault widespread and 68 percent showing self-reported symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Nevertheless, the methods used in this survey were suspect both ethically and in terms of eliciting accurate data. The 'brief structured interviews' used on this complex and delicate issue included the series of questions 'Have you been raped?', 'Who raped you?' and 'How many times have you been raped?' (Farley et al, 2003). The researchers also provide a reason for not making a distinction between prostitution of women and exploitation of children in prostitution of children, 'women who begin prostitution as adolescents may have parts of themselves that are dissociatively compartmentalized into a much younger child's time and place' (ibid), which might be seen as equating adult female prostitutes with children. Their proof of this statement, which rests on the observation that adult female prostitutes keep stuffed toys on their beds, shows the importance of using control groups. Many adult women who are neither prostitutes nor suffering from a dissociative personality disorder have cuddly toys on their beds.

Mental health is not well covered in the literature on children exploited in prostitution, probably because of lack of skills and knowledge in this area among researchers. Research in Lahore and Peshawar, Pakistan, noted 'psychosomatic' symptoms, particularly a lack of energy and disinclination for physical movement among boys (Ali and Sarkar, 2006). In contrast, many studies of children exploited in prostitution report use of drugs and alcohol to *lower* psychological tension, although the researchers' understanding of drugs seems to be based on imagination rather than medical knowledge. A rapid assessment in Colombia stated that half the children interviewed used marihuana, 'most' of them consumed alcohol and others used cocaine, ecstasy, glue, which are stated to be 'mainly drugs to sedate and numb the senses' (ILO/IPEC South America, 2006). This is a common, unrealistic claim in the literature - both ecstasy, and cocaine are *stimulants*. (Hecht, 1998 includes a good discussion of this tendency in the literature).

Within the mental health discourses in developing countries, the knowledge base is very limited. Northern perspectives tend to assume the inevitability of trauma in children exploited in prostitution, which can result in general and almost arbitrary diagnoses of PTSD. For example, one Sri Lankan report claims that poverty, sexual abuse and natural disasters can all cause PTSD (Chandrasekera, 2006). Originally a diagnosis used for war veterans, PTSD was included in the United States as a diagnosable disorder for adults in 1980, but not included for children until seven years later. Now, by

contrast, research on PTSD in children claims to reveal a universal pattern of immediate reactions and developmental effects on children exposed to 'trauma', although this is debatable (Montgomery, 1995).

In so far as any mental health principles are used in the rehabilitation of children exploited in prostitution in the Global South, Northern interpretations of symptoms are matched by Northern ideas of cure rather than culturally appropriate ideas of healing, which is a process involving not only the individual but also the entire community (Honwana, 2005). Current mental health literature on Southern countries seems to be more about needs, services and welfare for mental illness, which is a governance issue rather than a matter of rights or individual well-being.

### *Research with children*

Within both academic and child-protection research a trend over the past 20 years has been to attempt research *with* children rather than *on* or *about* them. Most conventional research uses adults (parents, teachers, NGO workers) as research respondents to provide information *about* children. When children are included as respondents they are usually the subject of psychometric tests and interview schedules, rather than being enabled to give their opinions and talk about their experiences. Children exploited in prostitution have shown, however, that they have their own constructions of their activities:

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Children [in Thailand] never defined themselves as 'prostitutes'. While it was common for children or their parents to say they 'go out for fun with foreigners' or 'have guests', I never heard anyone refer to themselves as a child prostitute ... 'to be called a child prostitute was a great insult and deeply hurtful ... They continually emphasized that they did not 'sell sex' (Montgomery, 2007, 419-20).

In a number of villages in Indramayu [Indonesia] prostitution is regarded as a 'normal' form of employment, and the children involved in prostitution are considered as the main supporters of their families. ... the local community does not ostracize commercial sex workers. On the contrary, those who find work in prostitution are regarded as individuals who have to work in this way to make ends meet (Byrne, 2004, xii).

Some research with children seeks only to give children's 'voices' a specious authenticity that will support adult opinions. The sociology of childhood, in contrast, seeks to place children's constructions of their own reality alongside adult constructions (James et al, 1998). From a pragmatic perspective, children's unmediated ideas can provide essential information for programme planning and evaluation (Hart, 1997). The process of research with children requires children-friendly methods that facilitate expression of their views and descriptions of their experiences despite limited ability in using verbal means of communication. Also important is a multi-method research approach that offers several modes of self-expression and allows children's views to be contrasted with those of adults, as well as compared between different age groups of children. The 2005 situation analysis research in Lahore and Peshawar began with the assumption that children have the right to be heard, and is based principally on seven focus-group discussions with children and adolescents, consisting of eight-to-fifteen

children, in different locations, each including nomad boys and girls, children and adolescents with alternate sexual identities, and other groups of children, vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. In addition, researchers used walk-through surveys in red light areas with 12 to 17 year olds (Ali and Sarkar, 2006).

Although children-led research is rare, there are some examples. In red-light areas of Kolkata (India) and Dhaka (Nepal) youth involved in ECPAT's Youth Partnerships Project for Child Survivors of Commercial Exploitation in South Asia (YPP) are carrying out research they conceived and planned to develop better understanding of children and youth exploited in these locations. They have developed questionnaires and are implementing them with the support of adults. Nevertheless, questionnaires, surveys and focus-group discussions are not children-friendly methods of data collection – even if designed by children.<sup>8</sup>

Within child-research circles other methods are being explored, especially for ethical research with vulnerable children. One recent example, with children exploited in prostitution in Viet Nam, studied narratives made by 22 girls aged between 15 and 18 years in response to visual stimuli. The analysis grouped narrative elements in the ways girls presented their lives: poverty, lack of economic alternatives and obligation to support their families. This method facilitated discussion with children who might find it difficult to talk about their lives if asked direct questions and mitigated attempts to construct 'acceptable' narratives to please researchers (Rubenson et al, 2005). Visual methods also provide ethical alternatives to intrusive research that can re-traumatize research respondents. Nevertheless, the Vietnamese sample is small, only one method was employed and no control group was used. The challenge to research with children is to use ethical, children-friendly research that is also scientifically satisfactory – a challenge that has been met by some recent research with acceptable samples and multiple data-collection techniques (see for example Byrne, 2004).

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### *Mechanisms through which children are exploited in prostitution*

Information about mechanisms through which children are exploited in prostitution almost always occurs as incidental data in more general studies. According to this evidence, mechanisms of enslavement are not universal. Undoubtedly some children are entrapped into bondage through payments made to their parents by traffickers or other third parties – payments that incur interest and become debts that can never be paid off. Other children exploited in prostitution are effectively imprisoned by brothel owners, and many who are apparently free are, in fact, in the control of pimps, who exercise control through violence and fear.

Nevertheless, other mechanisms are possibly more widespread. In an ILO/IPEC rapid assessment, Le Bach Duong identified five systems of recruitment in Viet Nam. Children:

1. Are persuaded by friends who may be brothel-based intermediaries, with dual motivation – to make money themselves and to help children find an income;
2. Are deceived by friends or neighbours into believing that they will find a service-sector job; sometimes involving cash advances to families;
3. Voluntarily enter prostitution;
4. 'Volunteer' because of family problems;

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<sup>8</sup> [www.yppsa.org](http://www.yppsa.org)

##### 5. 'Volunteer' because of personal problems.

The last three 'systems' are claimed to be the most common: 'children themselves searched for an activity in sex service deliberately without the help of friends or relatives' (Duong, 2002, 47). Their relative freedom is revealed in the fact that they tended to move from one establishment to another. Duong comments that, while three quarters of the children in the substantial sample took the decision to enter prostitution themselves, this does not necessarily 'mean that they know what it was they were getting in to' (ibid, 50). Even though persuasion and deception make children into victims, and entering prostitution is not exactly voluntary because of the lack of alternative sources of income, these mechanisms are not slavery. To claim that they are is to dilute the definition of slavery and demean the sufferings of its victims.

During research in Northern Thailand, Simon Baker collected data from children using essays, role play and visual stimuli, re-examined statistics and carried out extensive interviews in communities with adults – from teachers to ex-prostitutes. The mechanisms by which the research respondents said children entered prostitution were similar to those Duong describes in Viet Nam:

- A known sex-worker agent lends money to parents in return for a child leaving the home village to become a prostitute;
- Children are forced by parents to enter prostitution;
- Children themselves decide to enter prostitution.

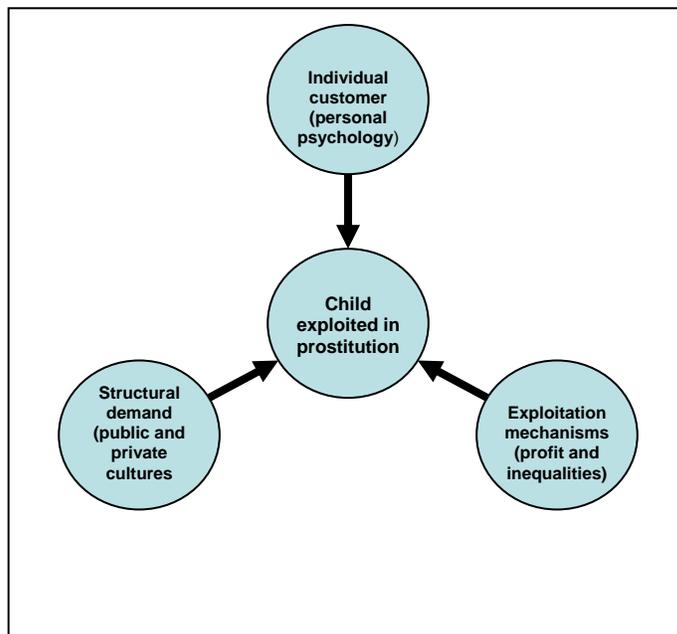
Baker reports that, in all three cases, the motivation is to improve the family finances. Parents and children know the risks but they see huge benefits if they are successful, such as finding a foreign husband or earning the money to build new house (Baker, 2007). Two further mechanisms were mentioned by respondents, but Baker could find not a shred of factual evidence for either. Vague reports of parents selling children and of members of ethnic groups being tricked into prostitution 'seem to be widely perceived myth' (ibid, 188).

Available evidence worldwide shows similar patterns. Intermediaries in the 'black box' (Figure 3), who provide and maintain children in prostitution and form the main link with customers, are not always powerful pimps and brothel owners. These do exist - the former being generally male, and the latter female. Other intermediaries may be children (Montgomery, 2001), fellow tourists and staff of child-care facilities (Grillot, 2005, Renault, 2006). Adult prostitutes occasionally operate as intermediaries for customers seeking adolescents. But in many places adult street prostitutes (and their pimps) threaten and drive off the cheaper, younger and less-established competition. For 'MSM' customers seeking sex with boys, gay web sites provide a 'service' to both tourists and travellers by indicating likely meeting places and intermediaries. But the most widespread mechanism reported is the intervention of people for whom making the link between customer and prostitute supplements sparse income. Drivers of taxis and other vehicles, street vendors, waiters and other hotel staff, workers in massage parlours, bars and restaurants, as well as tour operators, are all mentioned so frequently in the literature as intermediaries that concrete data on their activities should be a research priority. Small-scale projects that raise awareness among taxi-drivers, for instance, have proved successful in Cambodia, but to go to scale such projects need a solid basis of evidence (ECPAT International, 2005, ILO-IPEC, 2007, Grillot, 2005 and many others).

## Customers of prostitutes: The 'demand side'

The causes of the commercial sexual exploitation of children are multiple and have interactive and dynamic relationships. Decisions and actions are better informed by comprehensive research efforts focusing on the demand factors. One objective of the children-led research of YPP in South Asia is to understand better the local context of prostitution (or 'black box') from a youth perspective, rather than descriptions of various kinds of customer.<sup>9</sup> The young-people's statement from WCII also recommended research on the demand side of the exploitation of children in prostitution as an urgent priority.<sup>10</sup> This area of the discourse is remarkably little explored. The structural origins of demand are more interesting than the individual motivations of offender-perpetrators.

**Figure 5: The demand side of the exploitation of children in prostitution**



Satisfactory research, which might lead to better policies and prevention programmes, would need to focus on structural demand, which is reproduced at two levels in society – the private level of family life, and the social/public sphere that underlies individual actions (ECPAT International, 2005). In addition, demand operates through financial motivations of intermediaries, whether they are large-scale operators or local link-persons needing to supplement a meagre income (Figure 5). A combination of personal psychology, the cultural bases of sexuality, inequality and economic rationality work simultaneously

to bring about each sexual encounter between an individual adult and an individual. The literature review for this theme paper found that information on individual customers is increasing, but that the other two elements of demand are either sketchily present in the discourse or based on poor evidence.

The theme paper on the sexual exploiter for WCII pointed out that there is no single exploiter.<sup>11</sup> Customers are many and various, with differences of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, wealth and so forth. They are not identical at physical or moral levels (O'Connell Davidson, 2005). Demand may be conceptually separated between the customer and the intermediary, who profits by the transaction. In practice this distinction is not so clear. The common factor is inequalities between the purchase,

<sup>9</sup> [http:// www.yppsa.org](http://www.yppsa.org)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.ecpat.net/WorldCongressIII/PDF/Resources/2005\\_FinalLJUBLJANA-EN.pdf](http://www.ecpat.net/WorldCongressIII/PDF/Resources/2005_FinalLJUBLJANA-EN.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.csecworldcongress.org/PDF/en/Yokohama/Background\\_reading/Theme\\_papers/Theme%20paper%20The%20Sex%20Exploiter.pdf](http://www.csecworldcongress.org/PDF/en/Yokohama/Background_reading/Theme_papers/Theme%20paper%20The%20Sex%20Exploiter.pdf)

intermediary and child, which may be a social-structure power differential (such as age, gender or ethnicity) but can also be an imbalance between individuals, such as size, or psychological or emotional strength.

The consistent picture from research – regardless in some cases of the conclusion reached - is that the age of children in prostitution tends to be between 14 and 17, with customers aged between 15 and 60 years. A fairly conclusive example is recent research on the market for sex carried out in five Peruvian towns by a variety of established national NGOs and published by ECPAT. The research focused only on female prostitutes and used a limited range of multiple-choice responses. The results not only make it clear that very few customers are looking for pre-pubertal children, but also hint at some other preferences of customers, which could provide questions for future research elsewhere (ECPAT International, 2005). The towns were the national capital (Lima), Iquitos and Tarapoto in the Amazon jungle, the Andean tourist town of Cuzco, and a provincial capital (Huancayo) also in the Andes. The data show the complex, and often inter-related, motivations for men to choose a specific prostitute, which can be grouped as three major 'preferences: age, appearance and ethnicity:

- Age-related:
  - Adolescent girls made men feel powerful, proved they were men, rejuvenated older customers, were fresh and more loving. It is clear that cultural discourse of 'purity' is involved, but surprisingly there is no mention in this research of the myth of children being free from HIV infection;
  - Older prostitutes were more sexually experienced;
  - Underage customers being initiated to prove they are men – around the age of 15 years – by older family members who may choose for them an older (and therefore experienced) prostitute;
- Appearance-related:
  - Beauty and cleanliness were sought in all prostitutes;
- Ethnicity-related:
  - The myth of the 'jungle woman' who is especially desirable because of her mystical sexuality.

Despite the sparse literature on customers who exploit children in prostitution, it is possible to begin to develop a rudimentary typology (Figure 6 and below). This typology will obviously be incomplete and, like all typologies, cannot be used for anything other than 'butterfly collecting' unless it is also related to both the transaction and the supply side in structural analysis. The matrix in Figure 6 must be viewed as a first attempt only, Further columns might be added to include motivation, and the image each has of the 'other' – a particularly potent form of distancing and objectification, in which fantasy may play a heavy part. Several researchers also mention loneliness as a factor in both customer and prostitute (Mansson, 2001, Monto, 2000, O'Connell Davidson, 1998, Pedersen and Hegna, 2003, 137).

**Figure 6: Elements of a possible matrix for understanding the relationship between child prostitutes and customers**

Customer	Prostitute	Intermediary(ies)	Transaction
Preferential child abuser (usually male?)	Pre-pubertal, male or female	Other preferential child abusers	'forced' in that child is too young to understand Emotional dependence, money and gifts
Situational (Male) Local or traveller  • Needs control  • Needs sex  • Needs specific sexual experiences	Female or male, post pubertal  Female post pubertal  Adult sexually 'aggressive male or female	Various, including  • Pimps • Brothels • Bars • Hotels • Taxi-drivers	Usually money
Intentional sex tourism North/South and within rich and poor countries in regions  • Heterosexual male  • Men who have sex with men  • Transgender  • Female	'Exotic' female post pubertal (including >18)  Pubertal or post pubertal  Transgender post-pubertal (including >18)  Pubertal and post-pubertal 'exotic' males (including >18)	• Pimps • Brothels • Bars • Hotels • Taxi-drivers • .....  Self  Self?  Self?	Money, gifts, relationships
Intentional sex traveller (or foreign resident) in developing country	Child in impoverished community; child in orphanage; child in	Traveller; other travellers; staff of orphanage; family members	Friendship; money and gifts; volunteering, sponsoring or working
Any adult	Target-earning adolescents (needs money)	Self	Anonymous market purchase
Young men (and women?) globalized sex transgressing norms and borders	All possibilities so might include children but not preferentially	'Shopping': Sex is a commodity like any other	Anonymous market purchase
Local older men and women with money ('sugar daddies' and 'sugar mummies')	Girls and boys in poor communities, with few educational or income-generating possibilities	Child or his/her family, or the customer	Quasi marriage; Money, gifts, support for girl's family (may be some cross-over with some intentional sex travellers)

Principal sources: Bernstein, 2001; ECPAT International, 2005; Hughes, 2005, ILO/IPEC 2007, Kempadoo, 1999Mansson, 2001, O'Connell Davidson, 1998; Monto, 2000; Pedersen and Hegna, 2003,

### *Pedophile 'customers'*

Although figuring prominently in headlines, preferential abusers of pre-pubertal children ('pedophiles'), who give gifts and money to the children with whom they develop sexual relationships, seem not to be the bulk of customers. Nor are they all sex tourists. Increasingly they may be resident in Southern countries rather than holiday makers, although both risk falling foul of extraterritorial legislation (BIDE, 1998). Few seem to be customers of brothels or any other commercial mechanisms of prostitution. Brokers for traveling pedophiles are sometimes other pedophiles who are resident abroad, who facilitate introductions to local children. Other pedophiles visit, volunteer in or take up employment with organizations that actually or ostensibly work for the benefit of vulnerable children, such as orphans or street children (Renault, 2006). As reported for some (self-) prostitution of adolescent boys, the transaction is as much emotional as sexual and monetary. But this is best defined as sexual abuse rather than prostitution.

When travellers act as their own intermediaries, the process through which they access children is usually described in the literature as 'grooming', meaning preparing not only gatekeeper adults to provide access but also children for activities about which they must not 'tell'. In Cambodia, for example, the account of a brief survey by the NGO Action pour les Enfants, using unstructured questions with key informants, found that outside the main cities and tourist centre, where sex offenders are increasingly monitored, sex travellers (male) have identified 'safe areas' in rural, remote and non-tourist communities and child-care facilities. One unnamed 'European' director of an orphanage was also identified by informants as an intermediary (Renault, 2006).

### *Non preferential and incidental/situational customers of adolescents in prostitution*

Non preferential customers are either not specifically choosing a child or adolescent or not aware that the prostitute sold to them for sex is less than 18 years of age. Many reports of brothels and bar-based prostitution describe women and adolescents working together in the same conditions, so the lack of age awareness on the part of customers is not surprising. Indeed, they may have preferences according to other criteria, such as appearance, 'cleanliness', friendliness and ethnicity. This can also apply to men working in male-only enclaves, such as remote mining enterprises, who do not discriminate on age grounds when they select a prostitute from a provided by employers, who may well have chosen cheaper and less difficult to control younger females to bring to the enclave.

### *Macho-lads 'in need of control'*

'Macho-lads' is a term coined by O'Connell Davidson to refer to commodified sex with children (and women) by tourist males who have been socialized into a masculine gender identity based on 'the successful exercise of control over women, over other men, over their own bodies and over material objects (O'Connell Davidson, 2000, referring to Segal, 1990). This term could be applied to male customers of (male or female) prostitutes everywhere. 'Young' means 'powerless', so young is preferred and possibly cheaper, especially if free lance. The macho-lad is described as 'morally and sexually indiscriminate' (ibid, 62).

### *Women haters 'in need of sex'*

Socialization into the notion of male 'need' for penetrative sex (which is underwritten by some medical and counseling practitioners) can lead to misogyny, based on fear of females and expressed in rage, violence and revenge towards mothers, or women who seem to represent mother figures. Such men may be ambivalent about using prostitutes because they fear that prostitutes take advantage of men's weakness to exert control over the transaction. These men may also fear that Global-North prostitutes will exploit them and they may therefore travel to seek freshness, innocence, smallness (and perhaps love) with prostitutes of the Global South. Thus this kind of customer is likely to be seeking a girl-woman, who may not be below 18 years, rather than specifically seeking sex with an adolescent girl (ibid).

### *Female tourist customers*

Female customers seem rarely to seek pre-pubertal boys. But female tourists looking for temporary, exotic, young male partners have for decades been a well-established phenomenon in certain areas (the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, some parts of Latin America) and in some countries (The Gambia, Thailand, Bali in Indonesia: ECPAT International 2007, Dunn, 2001, Kempadoo, 1999, 2001;, and others). As with men looking for sex with boys, young male prostitutes with female customers tend to be self-employed and the transaction is as much quasi-emotional as monetary – a holiday romance (Sanchez-Taylor, 2006: O'Connell Davidson, 2000, Jennaway, 1993). For this reason, this is sometimes called 'romance tourism' (Jeffreys, 2003). Jacqueline Sanchez Taylor writes:

none of my respondents used the term prostitution to describe their encounters and none considered their sexual behaviour a form of sexual exploitation even when they acknowledged that it was 'all about money', and this was because they employed gendered constructions of sexuality to read their own sexual encounters (Sanchez Taylor, 2006, 50).

The idea that women can be sex tourists in the same way as men has been challenged (Jeffreys. 2003) but the similarities may outweigh the differences.

### *Long-term customers*

In some cultures it is hard to distinguish between multi-partner and prostitute-customer relationships, especially if there are financial transactions of gifts and cash involved. (see Lalor. 1999 for example). Early marriage accompanied by a bride price can amount to prostitution, brokered by parents. Likewise teenagers who accept gifts, money and shelter from older men may be regarded in this way:

In many places informally arranged prostitution spills over into apparently non-commercial encounters within which tourists [and/or locals] who do not self-identify as prostitute-users can draw local/migrant persons who do not self-identify as prostitutes into profoundly unequal and exploitative relationships (O'Connell Davidson, 2000, 60).

Local quasi-marriage relationships between young girls and older, richer men ('sugar daddies') or between boys and older, richer women ('sugar mummies' or 'chapses' in Jamaica) can be an option for school leavers in areas of high youth unemployment (for example, Dunn, 2001).

### *Juvenile customers*

There is some evidence in the research record, as well as from practitioners, that some customers (of both children exploited in prostitution and adult prostitutes) are themselves less than 18 years of age. In Latin America the initiation of boys to sexual relations at the age of 15 years is arranged by older male family members through visiting a brothel to 'prove' manhood, which can be traumatizing for a less-developed pubertal boy. Independent earning street boys will also spend cash on sex with adult prostitutes. A multi-country study on the demand side produced the tentative result that 18 percent of customers first paid for sex before their eighteenth birthday (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson, 2003).

### **Global and regional trends?**

It is common practice, and therefore a common expectation, for a paper of this type to provide an overview of global and regional trends. This would be useful for monitoring changes and progress between World Congresses, but adequate data are not available either as a baseline or for ongoing monitoring. The one indication from research is that, although there are clearly some pedophile and preferential abusers among those who exploit children in prostitution, most exploitation is of post-pubertal adolescents by men (and women) who are neither child abusers nor pedophiles. Nevertheless this does not deny that their sexual activities are violations of international human rights law as well as crimes in both domestic and extraterritorial legislation. It is also clear that no amount of factual evidence seems to affect the persistent trends of calling all customers of children in prostitution 'pedophiles', and of claiming an increase of the exploitation of more and ever younger children in prostitution. Investigation dominates over reliable research so no comparisons are possible. In so far as an increased incidence can be asserted, this is likely to be indicative of increased reporting due to awareness-raising activities since WCI.

New forms of exploitation of children in prostitution have been described, but it is not clear what kind of trend these represent, or how new they really are. *Enjo kosai*, or compensated dating, which currently attracts considerable media interest,<sup>12</sup> has been observed since the early 1990s, although there are some indications that the practice is spreading from Asia to both Western and Eastern Europe (McCoy, 2002-3, Mossige et al, 2007).<sup>13</sup> Children exploited in prostitution as target earners for consumer goods, drugs and entry to discos have been remarked since the 1980s (Ennew, 1986). However, a genuinely recent trend is the youth version of the 'call girl', as mobile phones are used by intermediaries to contact prostitutes for specific customers.

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<sup>12</sup> See for example [www.chinadaily.com.cn/hkedition/2007-11/28/content\\_6283347.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hkedition/2007-11/28/content_6283347.htm) -

<sup>13</sup><http://www.cbss.st/childcentre/getFile/89A9BCC3-802B-23DB-6C7526B216F8AD61.pdf/dbaFile15312.pdf>;  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/paying\\_the\\_price.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/paying_the_price.pdf)  
<http://www.afpssu.com/promotion-sante-scolaire-universitaire-1301.html>

Monitoring trends requires qualitative measurements, but the single persistent trend worldwide is that most statistics provided cannot be relied upon. Simon Baker is one of a handful of researchers who have reviewed the sometimes outrageous reports on the numbers of child prostitutes in Thailand, from academics and media alike, most of which are based on repetition of a figure from over a decade earlier (Table 5). Baker states that:

The 800,00-child-prostitution figure created in 1989, has been widely reported ... It was based on two dubious assumptions; namely that 40% of sex workers were aged under 18 and that there were 2 million such workers in the country. Both assumptions have been shown to be unrealistic. For the figure to be true one in every four females aged 1 to 17 would have been a prostitute ... This was not the case in 1989, when the figure was first created, nor was it in 2004 when it was [still being] claimed (Baker 2007 2-3; see also Montgomery 2001 and Lim, 1998, for similar comments on the same 'statistics').

It is characteristic of these numbers games that figures frequently refer to a span in which the upper number is double, or more than double, the lower number; for example 'between 200,000 and 500,000' – a difference of 300,000, which is clearly not meaningful, yet will persistently appear the literature and be repeated in publication after publication year after year, as if it were an accurate estimate. Until this tendency is removed from the discourse there can be no acceptable monitoring of trends either globally or between regions.

**Table 5: Comparisons of (Gu)estimates of numbers of child prostitutes in Thailand**

Number/when	Age	Gender	Source and date
2.8 million 1999-2002  Of which: 2 million 20,000 800,000	2,020,000	'adult women' 'Adult males' Boys and girls	The Nation 2004
Could be up to 800,000	Children	Unclear	Kilgour 2003 citing CIDA
Over two million  800,000	Under 16	Unclear	Graber 2000 citing 'relief agencies'
800,000	Children	Unclear	Nanglia 1999
As many as 800,000	Children	Unclear	Cullen 1994
800,000 ( a recent boom')	Children	Unclear	Shakespeare 1994

Source: Baker, 2007

A further persistent characteristic of the literature is that there is still so little children-friendly, ethically-sound research that enables children's experiences and views to be properly taken into consideration (a violation of articles 12 and 13 of the CRC). Nevertheless, there are improvements in this respect, as indicated earlier (Byrne, 2004, Rubensen et al, 2005). An ESCAP Toolkit, targeted the 44 percent of countries in the East Asia and Pacific region that are committed to the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action but do not have NPAs, with to the importance of collecting baseline data from children and adults on which effective policies and programme can be founded, using a mixture of methods for data collection – observation, focus group discussion, interviews, visual methods and role play (ESCAP, 2006).

## **Summary**

Considerable improvements in research quality are needed if the incidence, prevalence and mechanisms of the exploitation of children in prostitution are to be understood sufficiently well to be the basis of effective policies and programmes. The situation could be improved by experienced researchers, aware of current progress in academic children's studies and using rigorous research protocols that allow children to share their experiences and opinions, so that reliable, comparable data can be collected and analyzed. The provision of information about global (or even national) trends will not be possible until data are collected using methods that can be compared across countries and regions.

Themes that warrant further research include boys exploited in prostitution, the health of children exploited in prostitution and structural approaches to the mechanisms through which children are prostituted. Currently the focus is on customers alone, although the increasing data available on this aspect indicate that a typology could be constructed.

## Trends in advocacy and programme response

A large-scale survey of agencies involved in programmes targeting children exploited in prostitution in 28 cities of Canada, Mexico and the USA found a lack of coordination between agencies combined with intense ideological differences between NGOs about how to address the problem (Estes and Weiner, 2001). Because of the ideological rifts within and between different perspectives, policy and programme responses depend on the dominant campaign perspective. From the review of the discourse carried out for this theme paper a typology of advocacy-related responses emerged, depending on whether the exploitation of children in prostitution is seen as a crime against children, violence against women, child abuse, (a worst form of) child labour, or a life-style choice.

### Advocacy

Advocacy has been an increasing feature of international and national action against the commercial sexual exploitation of children since the early 1980s. At that time, the information on which campaigns were based was derived largely from media, and made liberal use of (sometimes lurid and unsubstantiated anecdotes, as well as some unlikely numbers – some of which are still in circulation. Sustained advocacy propelled the international community to recognize the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children, to gather governments and civil society at WCI in Stockholm in 1996 and remains at the core of activities. Advocacy thus still drives the processes of policy-making, programming and investigation as well as donor fashions. Yet, information that is appropriate for campaigning is usually an unreliable basis for developing the National Plans of Action called for by WCII or, indeed, for any successful policies and programmes.

#### *Children as advocates?*

A largely missing factor in advocacy has been children themselves taking the lead and providing their opinions, especially those who have been personally involved in sexual exploitation as prostitutes. This is disappointing given the emphasis on children's participation in the WCII outcome document.<sup>14</sup>

There are of course exceptions. One approach supported by the ESCAP programme in Bangladesh, was the campaign of brothel-based prostitutes who policed the recruitment of under-age girls (ESCAP, 2001). Likewise, involving child survivors and at-risk youth in advocacy against the commercial sexual exploitation of children is a core principle of the South Asia YPP and has proved very effective, both from the perspective of the young people involved and the impact of their advocacy work.<sup>15</sup> Among experiences in the Global North, the United Kingdom campaign against sexual exploitation sought to involve young people with experience of prostitution in decisions that affect their lives; to provide opportunities for their voices to be heard and to enable them to campaign on their own behalf (CRC article 15). Based on their own experiences, young people's recommendations included increased and improved emergency accommodation, with greater choices available; separate accommodation for children and adults and extra

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<sup>14</sup> [www.csecworldcongress.org/en/yokohama/Outcome/index.htm](http://www.csecworldcongress.org/en/yokohama/Outcome/index.htm)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.yppsa.org>

support for 16 to 17 year olds; more and better professional support, preventative programmes and media challenges to stigmatizing stereotypes.<sup>16</sup>

When children are advocates on sensitive issues adults have a duty to protect them from exploitation and invasion of privacy by the media, as well as to avoid violating their dignity and causing re-traumatization through public testimony about painful or stigmatizing experiences. Children as advocates must not include personal testimony, decoration, exploitation.<sup>17</sup> Nor should children be charged with solving problems or undertaking tasks that are the responsibilities of adults. Listening to children should open new spaces for understanding and action. But it is adults who must shoulder the burden, act and take the consequences.

## **Programmes**

The main trend in policy and programme work is an emphasis on practice rather than advocacy or research. One reason for the trend towards action rather than indignation has been the post-WCII development of National Plans of Action (NPAs) against the commercial sexual exploitation for children. Programming action has arguably the greatest expansion of expertise in the field since WCII and includes innovations in care and recovery, and quality of care standards, specialized counseling and social work and reintegration programmes, with particular emphasis on children-friendly and children-focused practice. Yet the approaches have been criticized for being neither coherent nor holistic (Emes and Weiner, 2001). Moreover, few successful pilot projects go to scale.

Programme responses in the field of the exploitation of children in prostitution now include a range of options including rescue/recovery, rehabilitation, reintegration and, to a certain extent, prevention. These are all shared with programme work on trafficking, while prosecution and punishment of customers is related to programmes aiming to eliminate sex tourism. Nevertheless, the greater share of donor attention and resources provided to programmes on trafficking and sex tourism is preventing focussed development of a programme approach for the exploitation of children in prostitution (Figure 7).

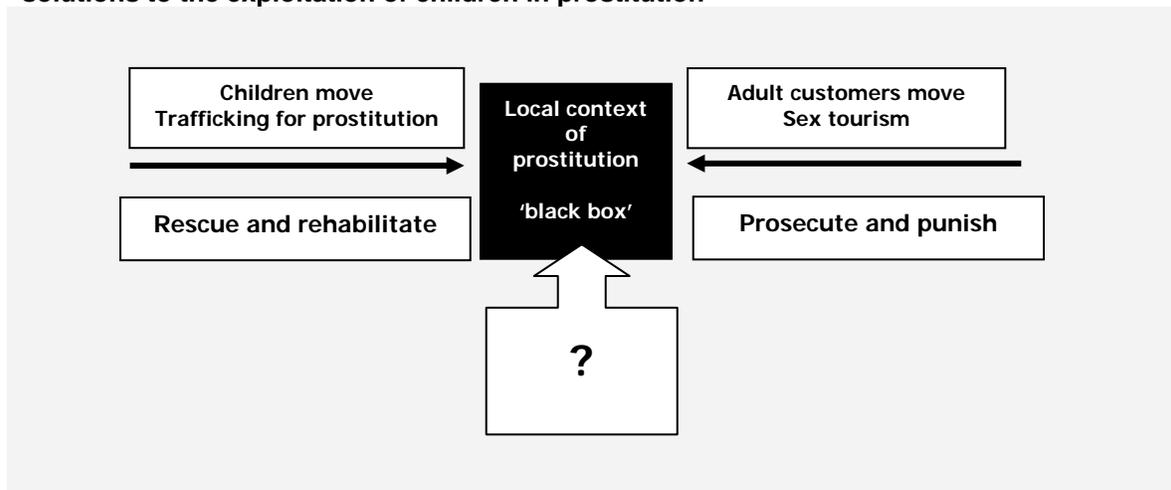
Evaluations have identified the necessary conditions for making interventions work at national level. For example, in the Philippines the involvement of the national body overseeing local government authorities was crucial, but political will, responsive networks, supportive media, committed professional leadership within a developed social work sector, effective management and a support system were also required (ESCAP, 2001). If these conditions are not available, then sustainability may rest on the fragile foundation of the personal efforts of one committed and energetic activist, as stated to be the case in Thailand (ibid).

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs>

<sup>17</sup> See <http://iawgcp.org> for minimum standards for organizing children's participation

**Figure 7: Focus on solutions to trafficking and sex tourism impedes the development of solutions to the exploitation of children in prostitution**



### *Rescue and return*

Despite the reported ‘paradigm shift’ in practice ‘from control and punishment to care and welfare’ (Melrose, 2004, 18), ‘rescue’ remains an abiding obsession in some quarters. ‘Rescue’ relies on constructions of ‘innocent victims’ and restoring ‘stolen childhood’ (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, 2; see also Holland, 1992). Gretchen Soderlund describes a violent raid in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in which 37 women and ‘children’ (adolescent girls) were rescued. The raid was documented on hidden digital cameras, the footage used on USA television in 2004, and ‘widely cited as proof of an insidious global sex trade that often preys on small children’ (Soderlund, 2005, 66).

Rescue scenarios depend on the notion of child sex slaves in a rhetoric that constructs captivity and freedom as polar opposites. Activists focus on the raid itself, but provide little or no information about the aftermath. Information from campaigning organizations in South and Southeast Asia suggests that rescue raids are a very common activity. Yet in Phnom Penh it is reported that ‘14-15’ of the victims rescued in the raid had subsequently escaped to other brothels. Indeed six teenagers had run away from the NGO shelter within a week of the raid (ibid). The explanation for such escapes from ‘rescue’ may lie in other aspects of the post-rescue scenarios, which indicate violations of human rights:

- Women and children are held in police custody or remand homes, denied freedom and access to information, and abused by police;
- Court procedures do not allow testimony or representation or, when they do, are neither victim-friendly nor children-friendly;
- Decisions on children’s futures seldom include the opinions of children;
- The right to privacy is violated by media reporting;
- Stigmatization of and discrimination against children exploited in prostitution (Baker, 2001).

The question of what is to be done with ‘rescued’ children is addressed in a study of laws against the commercial sexual exploitation of children in India, commissioned by ECPAT and Plan International, which states that most government-run welfare homes

are only one step better than jails, and that some of their young residents appeared to be unaware of any difference (Bhat, 2004).

Consistent reports from helping agencies show that some children 'return persistently and voluntarily to prostitution' (United Kingdom Department of Health and Home Office, quoted by Melrose 2005, 18). Prostitution is usually more lucrative and requires less sustained work than the income-generating opportunities offered in projects. 'As a consequence, it is very difficult for those who become involved in prostitution to leave it behind and find other employment' (Byrne et al 2004, xii). Even if the 'choice' is not informed, children are still choosing and then voting with their feet – a major challenge to policies and programming.

### *A crime against children*

When the exploitation of children in commercial sex is primarily regarded as a crime against children advocacy efforts have include lobbying for laws that define and prohibit the exploitation of children in prostitution in line with the Optional Protocol. Most countries in the world do not yet have laws that specifically address the exploitation of children in prostitution or that criminalize the client/exploiter of children in prostitution (Madriñan, 2004). The purpose of some 'monitoring' seems to be prosecution of offenders rather than rehabilitation of victims (Renault 2006).

Children-friendly research in two Indonesian cities found that, in terms of law enforcement, adolescents exploited in prostitution were treated the same as adult prostitutes. This demonstrates the need for more focused facilities, such as counseling centres, shelters and youth centres that would provide artistic, entrepreneurial and creative opportunities for under-18-year-olds leaving prostitution, (Byrne, 2004). The results also highlighted the need for a consultative process to 'socialize' the Indonesian Child Protection Law – meaning that stakeholders in government departments, NGOs, academics, and religious and political leaders should be made aware of the provisions of the law and their responsibilities with respect to child protection (ibid).

Specific legislative provision can alter the environment in which the commercial sexual exploitation of children thrives. A major change is urgently required in countries that blame and prosecute children for being exploited in prostitution. Examples vary from the Kyrgyz Republic, where the exploitation of children in prostitution is recorded as a crime committed by children (Elibezova et al, 2004) to the United Kingdom where adolescents who 'persistently and voluntarily' return to prostitution are prosecuted (Melrose, 2004), no doubt resulting in some being incarcerated with adults. One of the most common observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child when reviewing state reports on the Optional Protocol is that children (under 18) involved in prostitution should always be treated as victims, never as offenders. According to the Committee, article 8 of the Optional Protocol, which calls for protection measures for children at all stages of the legal process, has not been sufficiently implemented through children-friendly courts, justice systems and law enforcement agencies.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> [www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs)

Other relevant and supportive legislative measures can be taken on the age of sexual consent, corporal punishment and extraterritorial legislation, which all require putting domestic law in line with international standards.

The protection of older children is complicated by national laws on the age of sexual consent and there is also no international consensus on what a 'proper' age of sexual consent should be. The latest Convention of the Council of Europe (on the protection of children from sexual abuse and exploitation) leaves it up to states parties to fix the age below which it is prohibited to engage in sexual activities with a child.<sup>19</sup> But determining the age of a child so that offenders can be prosecuted depends on effective systems of civil registration – not only birth registration but also retrospective registration systems for undocumented older children, including especially vulnerable groups such as refugees, children of illegal migrants and ethnic minority children.

The use of physical and emotional punishment, together with humiliating practices, in the name of socialization and discipline of children is almost universal. Yet the almost universally ratified CRC indicates (in articles 19, 28 and 37) that this is a violation of their human dignity. Ending adult rights to employ all forms of physical, emotional and humiliating violence against children, by outlawing all forms of corporal punishment of children at any time and in all places, would be a major step towards eliminating sexual violence. Implementation of such legislation would necessitate widespread public education about child development, and the duties of parents, teachers and all adults to fulfil the human rights of children. In its turn, this would have effects on the socio-cultural environments that encourage sexual exploitation and abuse. Children need to be aware of their rights in these respects and to be provided with children-friendly and protective complaints mechanisms, such as Child Helplines.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, extra-territorial legislation implies cooperation between different national law enforcement agencies, with strict attention to agreed rules of evidence and the use of children-friendly courts, especially when children are witnesses outside their own culture (BIDE, 1998).

### *Child abuse and the caring professions*

Many agencies link sexual abuse and sexual exploitation along a continuum of abuse, so that customers are always defined as perpetrators or offenders (see for example ESCAP, 2001). This approach is related to movements to increase the qualifications and skills of people working with abused and exploited children to deliver services of care and rehabilitation.

Advocacy for better services in the area of recovery/rehabilitation of children who have been exploited in prostitution is not a common form of campaigning, probably because of the popular view that rescue is the only necessary response. Yet, professionalization of care-giving services and higher standards in counselling are required worldwide for children who have been exploited in prostitution. Greater accountability of care-givers is increasingly sought as abuses of children in institutions are recognized, although levels of accountability remain low. In the Global South, 'Victims have a pressing need for appropriate psychosocial and medical services', which are only rarely available (ESCAP,

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<sup>19</sup> [www.coe.int/childprotection](http://www.coe.int/childprotection)

<sup>20</sup> [www.childhelplineinternational.org](http://www.childhelplineinternational.org)

2001, 3). Such services are also very costly in both human and financial resources, which donors are reluctant to provide because of the high cost per child (ibid). Research on the health and social sector services available in Asia surveyed 727 children, plus staff of facilities (including health clinics), teachers and police, concluding that the scant services available were concentrated on physical recovery rather than psychosocial care (ibid).

Regular monitoring of placements for children who have been rescued/recovered from exploitation in prostitution is perhaps the area most in need of professionalization. Article 25 could be argued to be the most violated and ignored article of the CRC. Individual children's progress in various types of rehabilitation facilities seems seldom to be monitored and, when it is, children's opinions seem not to be taken very often into consideration (article 12 CRC). In addition the facilities themselves seem rarely to be evaluated with professional objectivity.

One partial exception is the research evaluation of three protective safe houses in the Canadian province of Alberta. The report refers to the 'paucity of relevant research specifically dealing with the issue of the exploitation of children in prostitution' on which to base either programmes or evaluation. Provision is lessened by outreach that reaches mostly only girls in visible exploitation, with few boys and children in hidden forms of prostitution represented in the population served by the safe houses. Survival sex was not even on the agenda of the welfare authorities associated with one safe house. The report comments that the 'Child welfare [authority] needs to realize that beer and a place to sleep for sex is prostitution' (Alberta, 2004, 36). Thus the safe houses had low occupancy rates, and were not cost-effective.

Lessons had been learned within all three safe houses. Heavy users of drugs and alcohol needed to be separated from girls who were not; the evaluation found that children were being re-recruited during their time in the safe houses, telephone numbers of drug dealers and pimps were provided to girls who had not previously had such contacts. Lack of knowledge and skill in rehabilitation from substance abuse received comment, with lower levels of success among girls making brief stays (six to 26 days) in the houses. The maximum length of stay was only 47 days. The report recognized the need for preventative public education on sexual exploitation, targeting schools, parents, welfare workers, police officers and the public at large. In addition, outreach to other groups and follow-up for former residents were recommended (ibid).

### *Prevention*

Preventative measures have been said to be important because sexually-exploited children are likely to be future child abusers but also because they are likely to return to prostitution (ESCAP 2001, 4). However, the main aim of prevention is to avert the violation of children's rights and protect children's wellbeing. In the first place, the promotion of the human rights of children (implemented in schools, communities and families) empowers children and also equips adults to take up the role of effective duty bearers.

Education is the preventative measure suggested by most policies and programmes – from public education to inclusion in school curricula. Child and youth delegates to the Latin American regional mid-term review proposed that commercial sexual exploitation of children should be addressed in the school curricula, especially for 6-12 year-olds,

supported by public education at community level and in community-level support centres (Castanha, 2008).

All curriculum content needs to be placed in the context of children's rights, health education and public education about birth registration, backed up by concrete government and civil-society implementation. Prevention is not best achieved by one-off or brief curriculum items and campaigns in schools (ESCAP 2006). The commercial sexual exploitation of children should be integrated with the curriculum as a whole, not only in schools but also in teacher training (including in-service training). Curriculum design should not be limited to older children, because the messages may come too late. An important element is not allowing the 'cultural trump card' to be played so that sex education is not allowed by parents. The Tanzania Guardians programme in primary schools in the 1990s showed that it is possible to counteract appeals to religion and tradition provided that the programme is integrated and parents are key actors in the process. The Guardians Programme had five components that supported school-based messages:

- Peer education on health education in general, including education on sexual matters;
- Sex education included in teacher training;
- Information to parents about child sexual health;
- Integrated activities with health workers in clinics;
- Work with the media to encourage useful prevention messages and reduce exaggerated emotive reporting (Mgalla et al, 1998).

Prevention can also focus on customer/users – but for this to be effective more information about customers and about exploitative mechanism is urgently required. It is disappointing that seven years after WCII, the recommendation of the youth statement has not been acted upon except through relatively isolated academic studies. Local pedophile behaviour needs to be researched, alongside traditional practices that encourage commercial sex between adults and young children. Likewise, the messages to children, parents, the public and teachers should be based on factual information rather than myths or scare stories. Above all, accurate numbers are required – vast numbers tend to make adults feel helpless to do anything about a problem and thus leave children with an additional burden of vulnerability.

Legal penalties might also be supposed to act as a deterrent for pedophiles who travel abroad (who are not customers of prostitutes in the strict sense), who could have their activities curtailed by the systematic use of extraterritorial legislation, visa and work permit restrictions monitoring and record-keeping in national and international mechanisms (such as Interpol), prosecution by the receiving state (rather than deporting offenders to offend elsewhere), and by child protection policies implemented to monitor contact with children by visitors, sponsors, volunteers and employees.

Finally, the frequently mentioned link between child domestic work and the exploitation of children in prostitution should be systematically explored (Brown, 2007, Muhammad Ally and Finberg, 2005). Campaigns against child domestic work could simultaneously be a prevention of the exploitation of children in prostitution.

## *Children as planners*

'Professionalization of care-giving services' is a core policy focus identified by the South Asia YPP youth, who feel need that this is often overlooked, although their proposals do not specifically mention the exploitation of children in prostitution. The focus is on trafficking rather than prostitution, which indicates that children are not immune to the obscuring nature of the trafficking discourse.<sup>21</sup>

In Colombia, children (including children who had been sexually exploited) were part of consultations for the development of the National Plan of Action for the period 2006-2011. They were involved through workshops and their opinions were taken into consideration.<sup>22</sup> Apparently child and youth participation has been taken on board as state policy and other initiatives also provide children with a platform to contribute their opinions.<sup>23</sup>

## **Practice trends**

Within the field of practical action, two concerns dominate the literature – good practices and capacity building.

### *Achieving good practices*

Although publications of 'good practices' frequently appear, there are no agreed criteria for good practice, no supervision or quality control. Children are vulnerable to further abuse in projects that have not implemented child-protection policies and do not have children-friendly complaints mechanisms in place. Practice cannot often be monitored or evaluated meaningfully because baseline data are lacking. Further requirements are detailed, objective documentation and transparency.

The practices that worked, identified by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) on the basis of four years of experience in several countries included:

- Training at village level on community awareness of the commercial sexual exploitation of children (Cambodia, Bangladesh);
- Partnerships with lawyers (Pakistan);
- Multi-sectoral, local-government-led activities, in which 'children have a say in planning of activities for prevention' (ESACAP, 2001, 67);
- Nationally-coordinated awareness-raising campaigns on sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, development of professional skills, legal reform and law enforcement (Sri Lanka);
- Revision of national [policy on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, involving government, intergovernmental agencies, local and international NGOs (Thailand). This resulted in:
  - Decriminalization of victims;
  - Training for police and social workers;

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<sup>21</sup> Youth Policy Recommendations from the Regional Consultation for the Youth Partnership Project in South Asia: Empowering Youth to Fight the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, page 35.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.oit.org.pe/ipecc/pagina.php?seccion=23&pagina=102>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.unicef.org.co/pdf/BrochureHyD-English.pdf>

- Persistent activities;
- New legislation;
- Children-friendly judicial processes for both victims and witnesses;
- Extra-territorial legislation.

In this last case, the package of changes was described as representing ‘a major shift in Thai official attitudes, although more time and training is necessary before such changes become officially entrenched’ (ESCAP, 2001, 98).

### *Building capacity – setting standards*

ESCAP’s survey results in 2001 revealed the low standard of facilities available (CRC article 3) as well as the lack of skills in health, education and law-enforcement professionals. Identified training needs included child development (physical and social), the effects of commercial sexual exploitation, drugs and detoxification, HIV and other STDs. Training given by the ESACP team between 1996 and 2000 included case management, counseling, training of trainers and gender sensitivity. Such a wide range of capacity-building needs requires considerable human and financial resources to implement, especially for regular evaluation of impact and reinforcement of capacity.

It is also increasingly recognized that ‘recovery’ requires ‘substantial capacity-building skills’ (ESCAP, 2006, 23) and that rehabilitation is a long-term ‘elaborate’ process (Thompstone, 2002-3). But facilities for rehabilitation of children who have been exploited in prostitution tend to be isolated from all other child-protection facilities. Experience shows that mental health counseling for both adults and children needs to be broad-based because individuals are the locus of several overlapping experiences.<sup>24</sup> Thus an individual child may be categorized as a former prostitute, but also require support in dealing with a substance-abuse problem, poor physical health, family conflicts, homelessness, lack of education and skills, exposure to natural disaster and any number of other past or ongoing problems. This means that Quality of Care Standards need to be introduced, implemented and monitored across the full range of child-protection facilities. Standards should be developed in national contexts and be progressively achieved, rather than imposed as impossible goals (Thompstone, 2002-3).

## **Summary**

Three decades of programme work in this area seem to have resulted in very little well-documented progress for children and adolescents exploited in prostitution worldwide. The picture gained from the available literature is of scattered, poorly-documented ‘solutions’ that seldom involve children in planning, much less in implementation. Isolated examples of projects that work do not disprove this comment, but could be harnessed at regional level as examples that may be good practices. The lack of criteria for good practice and absence of adequate baseline data together diminish attempts at meaningful monitoring or evaluation.

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<sup>24</sup> Bemak nd Chung

## Significant gaps

The main gaps in information on the exploitation of children in prostitution can be seen in detail through returning to the rights-based framework in the first section of this paper (Figure 8).

**Figure 8: A rights-based framework reveals significant gaps**

Using the CRC and Optional Protocol only

Key human rights	Ideas	Current most significant gaps
CRC 1, 16	Children, childhood, children's dignity, privacy	Debates and legislation on the age of sexual consent research with children on gender identity and sexuality, for boys, girls and transgendered children
CRC 34, OP	Exploitation of children in prostitution	Focused data on local interactions between customers, intermediaries and children
CRC 2, 30	Non discrimination	Comparisons of patterns of exploitation of children in prostitution by age (pre- and post-pubertal) gender, ethnicity
CRC 12 (13, 15)	Participation, consent, power and evolving capacity	Research with children on their experiences; children's involvement in planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes
CRC 37 (19, 28)	Non violence (corporal punishment)	Legislation to prohibit corporal punishment of children in all
Linked articles relating to prevention and provision		
7, 8	Civil registration	Birth registration - especially retrospective registration for older children
CRC 3,4	Reasonable expectations from duty bearers	Professionalization of skills and accountability in work with children, including research; Government commitment and political will with respect to upgrading such skills and qualifications Government allocation of budget and other resources to children in general and children exploited in prostitution in particular
5, 8, 19, 22	Family	Research on family-based factors that encourage, produce and prevent children being exploited in prostitution
22, 25, 28, 29,	State obligation of support and alternative family care	Registration and evaluation of government and civil society shelters and other facilities for children who have been exploited in prostitution; mandatory implemented and evaluated child protection policies;
32, 35, 36	Protection from child labour, trafficking and exploitation	As for article 34 (above)
28, 29, 17	Education and information, including sexual education and teacher training	Advocacy for sexual education in schools; public education – including rights and health education' ex education integrated into health education and life skills curriculum and included in teacher training (including in-service training); peer education
24, 35, 39	Physical and mental health, health education and rehabilitation, including protection and rehabilitation from substance abuse.	Improved, integrated health education including sexual education; training of clinic staff; improvement and evaluation of rehabilitation and mental health provision, using culturally relevant methods
40 (12)	Juvenile justice (non criminalization of child prostitutes), processing and sentencing of offenders, child witnesses, children-friendly courts	Decriminalization of children exploited in prostitution; training for law enforcement and juvenile justice staff; children-friendly courts.

The most significant gap is the refusal to develop a scientifically adequate framework for understanding the exploitation of children in prostitution. The absence of 'reliable information; and the repetition of inaccurate information are the main limitations of the research record.

### **Persistent lack of reliable research**

Criteria for reliable research can be distinguished at the levels of research basics, methods and data.

- Basic criteria
  - The information is provided by a credible organization/individual;
  - The aims of the research are clear and appropriate;
  - The research is based on adequate review of already-available information;
  - Ethical issues have been properly addressed;
  - The research approach is children-centred/focused;
  - Appropriate definitions are used for child-protection issues.
- Methods criteria
  - Research methods are adequately described;
  - More than one research method is used;
  - The methods are appropriate to the research questions and the research population;
  - Researchers are trained and supervised;
  - Researchers/data collectors are appropriate for the sample population.
- Data criteria
  - The research report provides sufficient information about the sample size, location and conditions of research;
  - Details are provided about any factors that might have affected data quality;
  - Data have been properly analyzed, including cross-checking between results of different methods and different populations;
  - Conclusions are firmly based on data;
  - The research design is replicable and can be used for monitoring, evaluation and comparison.

Numerical values may be used to show the weights that can be assigned to various factors that determine whether or not data are reliable (UNICEF EAPRO, 2007, and Attachment 3).

### **Inadequate statistics**

Unscientific research and sensational data can be useful for initial awareness-raising campaigns. But by WCI it was clear that, with the problem of the commercial sexual exploitation of children internationally recognized, scientific, reliable data were required to inform policies and programmes and to set up monitoring systems. Thus the Agenda

for Action adopted at WCI included a commitment that data bases, disaggregated by age, gender, ethnicity, indigenous status and other relevant factors would be in existence by the year 2000 (2 (i) (b)). Clearly this did not happen. Concluding observations on states parties' reports from the Committee on the Rights of the Child – on both the CRC and the Optional Protocol – almost routinely mention the need for accurate, disaggregated data.<sup>25</sup>

- Children-centred statistics

National statistics discriminate against children who appear in census and household surveys bas attributes of households, schools and other adult institutions (Saporiti, 1994). Children tend to be an undifferentiated category deserving special treatment, rarely disaggregated by ethnicity, caste, religion, by 'evolving capacities' or sexual development. Pre- and post-pubertal children are rarely differentiated. Yet a broad survey of child sexual abuse and prostitution, which disaggregated data by gender and ethnicity, found markedly different patterns for the commercial sexual exploitation of children according to these factors (Estes and Weiner, 2001).

- Gender disaggregation

Disaggregation by gender alone raises the question of whether it is children's rights or women's rights that are at stake, and can result in statistical discrimination against boys, or even against children.

- Age disaggregation

Disaggregation by age in national population statistics tends to present data in five-year age ranges, which take no account of the different stages in childhood marked by every culture, and certainly do not recognize stages of sexual maturity.

## **Inadequacies in monitoring and evaluation**

The Committee on the Rights of the Child requires states reporting under the Optional Protocol to provide disaggregated data by sex, region, age, nationality and ethnicity, if relevant, and any other criteria that the State party considers relevant.<sup>26</sup> By October 2008, The Committee had reviewed 27 state reports, but no country had put in place reliable mechanisms for data collection that comply with international standards.

Since WCII, two regional attempts have been made to develop data bases for the commercial sexual exploitation of children. In the East Asia and Pacific region a data base monitoring 10 regional commitments of the Stockholm Declaration was piloted in Cambodia, Philippines, Viet Nam using UNICEF ChildInfo as the best potential model, and creating a CSEInfo database (Vaddey, 2005 in UNICEF EAPRO, 2005). Initial progress revealed a lack of appropriate, accurate data. By 2008, progress in the pilot countries was visible only in the Philippines through the activities of a central-

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<sup>25</sup> [www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs)

<sup>26</sup> Guidelines for reporting on the Optional Protocol -

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G06/450/97/PDF/G0645097.pdf?OpenElement>

government sub-committee established for this purposes. In Viet Nam the monitoring process effectively ceased with the dissolution of the government agency with responsibility for collecting and analyzing the indicators. In Cambodia, UNICEF staff were unable to trace any information on the progress of CSECInfo (information from UNICEF EAPRO Child Protection Section). As is so frequently the case, political will is lacking even to count the most vulnerable members of society. See also a similar initiative led by ILO-IPEC in Latin America.<sup>27</sup>

Evaluation cannot be based on poorly-documented 'solutions' that – despite some excellent examples to the contrary – still do not involve children at any stage, nor on loose good practice' accounts that often reveal a 'desire to claim credit for successful initiatives' (Baker 2001). Evaluation requires good baseline data, outcome as well as output indicators, and access to genuine lessons learned (Baker, 2001) where mistakes are transparently recounted. Transparency is also required about underlying agendas, the influence of different moral and theoretical frameworks and socio-political and economic agendas. The outcomes of 'rescue' (now often renamed 'recovery') and the relationships between this and 'persistent return' to prostitution are also urgently in need of study. Further evaluations are necessary on prevention efforts.

Data on children exploited in different modes and contexts of prostitution are not, in any case, collected systematically anywhere. A prerequisite would be agreed international definitions of different forms, as well as comparative research protocols. It could be argued that to try to develop international data bases given the poor state of current information might be described as too much too soon chasing too little too late.

## Information gaps

- *Labour-market issues*

Income generation alternatives are offered by NGOs working with child prostitutes, but research and advocacy on wider labour issues, such as discrimination in the workplace or low salaries, is rare. The exploitation of children in prostitution as an economic activity and alternative. Child prostitutes are cheap. Also very little follow up research to examine the often-made link between the exploitation of girls in domestic labour and their entry to prostitution (see for example Brown, 2007; Muhammed Ally and Finberg, 2005).

- *Family relationships*

'Family breakdown' is not sufficient as an explanation – much less a root cause. Two levels of analysis should be used, the dynamics of relations within a family, and a child's relationship to family. Family is all-too-often equated with nuclear family. It is clear that a prostitute's relation to his/her family varies according to culture, and gender. For example in SE Asia Parents, or other family members, who prostitute their children occur in the literature alongside parents who cut off all relationship with their prostituted offspring.

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<sup>27</sup> [http://white.oit.org.pe/ipec/documentos/brochure\\_devinfo\\_ingles.pdf](http://white.oit.org.pe/ipec/documentos/brochure_devinfo_ingles.pdf)

- Indonesia – variation between towns in the same province, in which parents know about a girl's prostitution and parents who do not (Byrne, 2004);
  - Thailand – in some areas of which the former matrilineal structures demand that a girl should 'pay back the breast milk' to her family and even sometimes support her brothers; families look after a child, or children, while women continue to work in town (Baker, 2007);
- *Structural analysis of demand side*

Further information is required about customers, but within a structural analysis that does not focus on individual motivations alone. This should include historical and cross-cultural analysis of why demand is produced, and how it affects supply, why it is tolerated and what factors encourage the development of demand, markets and prices. It is important to discover what sexual behaviours are permitted/appropriate in public and private spheres – at home or abroad – and for whom (ECPAT International, 2005). The roles of intermediaries, especially at local levels could be investigated to find points of intervention for prevention strategies.

- *Health information*

Information about the national costs of health care, in addition to public health concerns about transmission of HIV/AIDS and STIs, and 'underage' pregnancies might prove to give strong leverage to campaigns to encourage governments to commit resources to eliminating the exploitation of children in prostitution (CRC article 4). More importantly, such information (including mental health information using more appropriate models than PTSD) could be used to improve programmes for children exploited in prostitution (CRC article 24). Wallis and Levy suggest that a health research agenda should include:

- Quantitative needs assessment at community, national and global levels;
- Identify health problems and long-term health needs;
- Screening and health service assessment at community level;
- Aggregate community-level studies to provide monitoring and data for national level policies and programmes as well as accurate figures for the number of child prostitutes [not defined];
- Global level systematic estimates of mortality and morbidity of child prostitutes. (Wallis and Levy, 2002).

Missing information on the context includes data on:

- Cultural factors encouraging or discouraging the exploitation of children in prostitution;
- Cohort and longitudinal studies;
- Differences between the exploitation of pre- and –post pubertal children;
- Different patterns of exploitation of girls, boys and transgendered children.

## Conclusions

This theme paper has focused on research issues, because the information generated by research is a key rights issue in this field. The review of literature on the exploitation of children in prostitution undertaken for this paper clearly showed that available reports are too frequently marred by problems of definition, ideology and method, which inevitably affect the information base for effective policy making and programming. Some fundamental flaws in the literature (and consequent advocacy and programming) remain unchanged since WCI. Thus one conclusion is that ways must be found, through systematic collaboration between academic and activist communities, to mitigate this situation. A key element should be building the capacity of those who commission research and use its results to seek, evaluate and understand reliable information.

In the past, research on the exploitation of children in prostitution tended to be largely characterised by non scientific methods and reliance on newspaper reports. In this tendency it follows the trend established by research and advocacy on prostitution:

*In no area of the social sciences has ideology contaminated knowledge more pervasively than in writings on the sex industry. Too often in this area the canons of scientific inquiry are suspended and research deliberately skewed to serve a particular political agenda (Weitzer, 2005, 934, emphasis in the original).*

Battles over concepts and data between researchers still tend to be almost more notable than attempts to do anything about the exploitation of children in prostitution, and to promote parallel competition between NGOs providing services and projects.

As one practitioner has noted, 'Talking of children and young people involved in prostitution has become something of a semantic minefield' as well as 'a vital component of the way the issue is constructed, understood and responded to in practice' (Melrose, 2004 19-20). A further problem revealed by the review was that the discourse on children and prostitution is obscured by discourses on trafficking and sex tourism. A factor in this lack of clarity is that, while no one denies the existence of the exploitation of children in prostitution, this undeveloped discourse is a contested terrain, in which ownership is asserted by competing adult perspectives.

While information on the exploitation of children in prostitution is weak, it shares one characteristic with the trafficking and sex tourism discourses. A persistent feature is the appearance, acceptance and repetition of unsubstantiated, misleading and exaggerated figures for the number of children in prostitution provided by a range of sources. Not only do these not provide any justification for the estimates, they also usually fail to provide a definition of the prostitution to which they refer. Even when numbers may be quite justified and are based on counting procedures rather than estimates, the writers usually do not say what proportion of the total population of children the number represents, nor do they make clear the age groups included in a sample. In addition, women and girls are aggregated, although accompanied by the phrase 'as young as...' to indicate the lowest age and imply that pre-pubertal children are involved, when the median age is actually over 18 years. A further technique is to report the ages at which adult prostitutes say they began to sell sex, without verifying against other research methods. Not only is memory notoriously faulty on questions of age, but also respondents may be constructing narratives they assume the researchers wish to hear. In addition,

inadequate birth registration in the Global South means that many people can only give an approximate age. The distinctions between pre-pubertal child, adolescent child and adult are thus persistently blurred. Yet, even reputable researchers often take guesstimates from other sources at face value (see for example Willis and Levy, 2003 and in Tables 4 and 5t).

Although the argument of this paper has repeatedly challenged the statistical record, this is not because 'the problem does not exist' and therefore nothing need to be done. Manifestly children are exploited in prostitution throughout the world. Human rights instruments, humanitarian principles and moral standards concur absolutely that the existence of even one sexually-exploited child is unacceptable to the international community. But mythological or inaccurate or misleading information about children is also a violation of their rights and may almost certainly lead to further harm because of inappropriate action.

Clearly the exploitation of children in prostitution is only a surface manifestation of deep problems within the fabric of social life concerning the relationships between adults and children as well as understandings of both sex and gender. Work must continue to combat both the structural and day-to-day realities of exploitative situations, so that the demand, expressed in individual customer behaviour, cultural imperatives and exploitative mechanisms can be successfully addressed. The literature already reveals that the supply side of the exploitation of children in prostitution is a complex situation, in which poverty and gender are only two elements. More reliable information is urgently required to examine the complexities through which children become vulnerable to exploitation in prostitution, including separation of the data on pre-pubertal children from that on adolescents, as well as disaggregating data on women from that on children. This should be supported by further research on the prostitution of boys and on the inter-relationships between customers, intermediaries and children in prostituting transactions.

Nor should the call to recognize children's agency be taken as more than treating them as social actors, taking their own accounts of their experiences and their own opinions and choices seriously, so that they become part of the solution. To advocate for children's agency and children's participation does not entail abrogating adult obligations as duty bearers. All aspects of preventing and dealing with the commercial sexual exploitation of children are the responsibility of adults – who are accountable for both problem and solutions.

The enormous variety of situations and contexts in which children become exploited in prostitution is one key to the failure of the international community to eradicate this violation of human rights. There is no unifying framework of either theory or practice. No understanding of either root causes or surface manifestations. A scattered set of descriptive information is combated with an equally diverse scatter-gun approach to programmes. When theories and interventions are discussed this puts us at the centre of the problem, not at the end-point of solution, because all are embroiled in ideological or self-serving debates. Every group wants to be alone on the moral high ground. In the year before WC1, Sharon Stephens wrote about 'the high price children must pay when their bodies and minds become the terrain for adult battles' (Stephens, 1995, vii). One outcome of WCIII should surely be global agreement that, with respect to the exploitation of children in prostitution, controversy will stop so that it no longer impedes the work of eliminating this unacceptable practice.

## Recommendations and duty bearers

### *The duty-bearers*

Governments are the foremost duty bearers for all human rights. But government' duty-bearers on the ground are not ministers and officials of line ministries but actors at local level, such as police, municipal authorities, local courts, school authorities and staff, health personnel and (where they exist) social workers and counselors. In many cases, the provision of services to children is likely to rest with non governmental actors, so that there may be a practical or potential sharing of duty between state and non state actors, requiring coordination, monitoring and support, especially with respect to periodic review of placement (CRC article 25).

Academics are not usually thought of as duty bearers but have a key role to play in improving the quality of both theory practice in research used for policy and programme. Academics and networks of academics such as Childwatch International <sup>28</sup> and the International Child and Youth Research Network (ICYRNet)<sup>29</sup> have a duty to learn about human rights and apply them in practical, policy-related research on the exploitation of children in prostitution. It is also the responsibility of practitioners to learn about ethical, scientific research and how to judge the reliability of data and analysis.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that no child should be regarded as a duty bearer in the elimination of the exploitation of children in prostitution, even if they do participate in campaigns and project implementation, and even if they do take choices that lead them or return them to prostitution. The responsibility for the harm prostitution does to children, adults and society as a whole, rests with adults and the institutions they have created and maintain. There is no way that adults can evade the duty to eliminate this wholesale violation of human rights.

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.childwatch.uio.no>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.icrynet.net>

**1. General recommendations:  
the preconditions for positive changes**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Principal duty bearers</b>
1.1 Recognize and respect the agency of children	Regional human rights bodies to either take the human rights of children seriously, and/or commit to implementation	Regional intergovernmental bodies, Governments, civil society, NGOs, IGOs, researchers
1.2 Create a space for discourse in which respectful, objective debate is possible	National and international expert meetings on the exploitation of children in prostitution	Activists and academics
1.3 Change the environment in which it is possible for children to be prostitutes;	Focused attention on cultural beliefs and practices that encourage or discourage the exploitation of children in prostitution	Academics and peer-reviewed journals
1.4 Change the environment in which it is possible for children to be prostitutes; reduce the vulnerability of children to violence	Universal ban on corporal punishment of children	Governments, legal experts, law enforcement agencies, organizations working in public education
1.5 Review the idea of 'age of consent' and regularize legislation; ensure that all children are documented in a systematic civil registration system	Birth registration, especially retrospective birth registration of older undocumented children	Governments, legal experts, intergovernmental organizations, donors

## 2. Recommendations for research and researchers

Recommendation	How	Duty bearers
2.1 Recognize duty-bearing status of academic researchers and research institutions	Learning about and understanding the human rights of children Recognizing that academic researchers have a duty towards children to be involved in the way the results of their research are used in policies and programmes. Objectivity, reliable research activities do not absolve academics from their adult duties towards all children.	Academics and other researchers. International and regional child-research networks such as Childwatch International, ICYRNet, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa and Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales <sup>30</sup> Professional academic bodies
2.2. Scientific research, peer-reviewed, objective, published in peer-reviewed journals	Centre of excellence/summer school for research on the commercial sexual exploitation of children Capacity building, mentoring Academic exchanges and study visits	Academic community as above, donors
2.3 Ethical strategies appropriate to the commercial sexual exploitation of children	National ethical committees for child research	Governments, academic community, NGOs, Intergovernmental organizations
2.4 Build appropriate research capacity and data base	Capacity building in research with children on child-protection issues that yields verifiable, replicable and quantitative data Establish and implement indicators of reliable research  Comparative research using scientific protocols and children-friendly methods Include children who have been exploited in prostitution as research partners	International NGOs in combination with governments and academic bodies  UNICEF  Regional NGOs and IGOs with partners  Governments, NGOs, IGOs, academic bodies commissioning or carrying out research Academics
2.5 Children-centred statistics; Disaggregated information – by age, sexual age, gender, ethnicity.....	Targeted, reliable research on intermediaries at local level Calculations and recalculations in census, household surveys and all statistical information on children	National statistical offices
2.6 Make it clear that guesstimates are a violation of children's rights	Targeted campaign strategy	UNICEF, Committee on the Rights of the Child, supported by academics

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.childwatch.uio.no>; <http://www.icrynet.net>; <http://www.codesria.org>, <http://www.clacso.org>

### 3. Recommendations for advocacy, campaigning and public education

Recommendation	How	Duty bearers
3.1 Recognize and respect children's agency	Children as advocates (non exploitative)	Civil society advocacy organizations
3.2 Campaign for National Plans of Action including prostitution as a distinct item.	Campaign for collaboration between line ministries and civil society representatives, including intergovernmental organizations, to draft, disseminate, and adopt a National Plan of Action that includes specific focus on children exploited in prostitution	Civil society, especially lobbying individuals and organizations Inter-government organizations Governments
3.3 Campaign for adequate resources for implementing an NPA	Disseminate information about the NPA	NGOs, CBOs,
3.4 Media training in the responsible use of reliable information when reporting on children's issues	Use existing materials and opportunities for media training in children's rights to privacy and dignity, and create further materials and opportunities – including for reinforcement of principles and implementation	CBOs Intergovernmental organizations NGOs and CBOs (especially rights-based) Schools Local media
	Train children and their parents in how to protect themselves against media intrusion; encourage children to report on their own experiences and ideas,	Law enforcement agencies, legal profession, central government, NGOs, CBOs, media
	Enforce existing legislation, or new legislation to protect individuals' privacy	Governments Media and organizations of media professionals
	Adoption and implementation of child-protection policy and code of practice in reporting on children and children's issues Advocacy organizations, International Union of Journalists NGOs	Adoption and implementation of child-protection policy and code of practice in reporting on children and children's issues Advocacy organizations, International Union of Journalists NGOs
3.5 Responsible use of reliable information in communications about children and especially the exploitation of children in prostitution	Training in recognition and use of reliable information (could be combined with media training) Adoption and implementation of child-protection policy and code of practice in advocacy and campaigns on behalf of children	Academic research institutes and networks together with campaign and advocacy professionals

#### 4. Recommendations for policies and programmes

Recommendation	How	Duty bearers
4.1 Recognize and respect children's agency	Public education about violations of children's rights in rescue activities Abolish the rescue syndrome	Human rights organizations, donors
4.2 Capacity building for all professionals working with children, whether government or civil society	Include children who have been exploited in prostitution as partners in programme design, management and monitoring	All organizations, especially donors
	All professional organizations (health, teaching, social work, research) to set rights-based standards for all interactions with children	Professional bodies
	Mainstreaming children's rights issues into all professional training. Support for translation of key texts into national languages where necessary	Universities and training institutes, supported by the international academic community
4.3 Establish quality of care standards for all organizations and staff of organizations working with children, especially in recovery and rehabilitation of children exploited in prostitution	Reinforcement of national skills in work with children, through dedicated modules and courses, in-service training and scholastic and professional exchanges	Collaboration between North and South educational establishments and faculty staff; through bilateral and multi-lateral collaboration between governments
	Government and IGOS convene national and regional meetings of caring professions and professionals	Governments, regional IGO/INGOs, Committee on the Rights of the Child, all institutions, facilities, staff working with children, including law enforcement agencies.
4.4 Abolish all legislation that blames/criminalizes children	New or revised legislation Children-friendly courts for child witnesses	Central government, Ministries responsible for internal affairs, justice, education, families and children
4.5 Legislation to prohibit all forms of corporal punishment against children in all contexts,	New or revised legislation	Central government (Ministries responsible for internal affairs, justice, education, families and children) supported by provincial, and district byelaws
4.6 Implementation of legislation	Sufficient budgetary resources, well managed and evaluated	Central government
	Information about landmark judgments in other countries	Intergovernmental organizations, international NGOs
	Information about implementation and lessons learned in other countries	

#### 4. Recommendations for policies and programmes

Recommendation	How	Duty bearers
	Adequate human resources, ongoing training and qualifications, professional supervision and evaluation	Central government, local government, universities and training colleges, NGOs, professional institutions, Bilateral and multi-lateral support from governments
4.7 Base policies and programmes on scientific, verifiable research; monitor using these data as baseline	Training in children's rights in research and the basis principles of reliable information (reinforced regularly)	Central government NGOs academic individuals and institutions
4.8 Local models of rehabilitation	Research on local models of mental health rehabilitation and counseling	NGOs in collaboration with professional organizations
4.9 Realistic economic alternatives to prostitution	Market research to establish labour market opportunities, especially with counseling and supervision available	Commercial and government formal sector employees  Vocational training agencies (
	Income generation training in skills and money management, (including stipends while training, work experience, job placement and follow up) government and NGO agencies providing realistic skills required on the labour market generating adequate income)	Financial sector for money management skills
4.10 Cooperation between programmes for holistic responses	Joint training, networking and funding proposals	All agencies
4.11 Awareness raising among and income generation for intermediaries, such as taxi drivers, tour guides	Research intermediary mechanisms and groups	NGOs and local government, working on the basis of reliable research on local mechanisms
	Provide awareness raising, money management and income generation packages for both employees and employers	NGOs, commercial sector organizations, finance sector
	Support trades unions and labour organization in the informal sector	Local trades unions and ILO
4.12 Children-friendly complaints mechanisms for reporting violence, exploitation and other abuses	Toll-free child helplines, with trained counselors and referral agencies Training law enforcement agents, institutional staff and helping agencies in non violent child care School suggestion boxes Public education, especially of children	Government Telecommunications bodies NGO Social work agencies Teachers Schools Ministry of Education Community leaders Community-based organizations

#### 4. Recommendations for policies and programmes

Recommendation	How	Duty bearers
4. 13 Improve capacity of health-sector to identify, report on and prevent the exploitation of children in prostitution	Children's rights training at all levels Children's rights committees in communities and including children Skill training (regularly reinforced) for health sector workers at all levels	Childhelpline International  Government Health authorities Health sector professional organizations Health promoters/NGOs/CBOs
4. 14 Improve capacity of children to protect themselves and their peers against sexual exploitation	Peer education Peer monitoring	CBOs NGOs Village and community leaders Children and youth

## Time-bound goals and indicators

In the absence of reliable information; indicators of progress in combating the exploitation of children in prostitution are rudimentary, and sometimes related to other global goals.

By the end of 2009	ECPAT monitoring will have stimulated all countries reporting thus far to develop comparable quality data collection
By the end of 2010	A complete legal ban on the corporal punishment of children in all contexts and all countries.
By 2011	A functioning ethical and methodological body within academia, recognized by states parties and supporting the special rapporteur
By 2011	Disaggregated, children-centred statistics on children in statistical offices of all states parties to the Optional Protocol
By 2010	Comprehensive regional mappings of all information on the exploitation of children in prostitution, with a critical review of reliability of information, disseminated to all ECPAT and UNICEF offices and appropriate government bodies.

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## Attachment 1: Glossary of terms as used in this paper

The terms used to refer to actors and processes in the exploitation of children in prostitution have diverse meanings according to the organizations and individuals using them. This glossary does not attempt to provide authoritative definitions, but is provided to clarify the way key terms are used in this thematic paper.

Adolescent	Post-pubertal girl or boy, usually aged between 13 and 17 years.
Boy	Male aged less than 18 years.
Child	Human being less than 18 years of age.
Childhood	Variable, culturally-defined life stage, before assumption of adult roles and responsibilities.

Children-centred statistics	Statistics in which the data are presented (for example in tables) so that they focus on children, rather than adults, households, institutions or services.
Child prostitute	See the definition of ‘child prostitution’ (below) from the Optional Protocol. It is argued by some writers that ‘child prostitute’ implies that children can consent to ‘sex work’, a term that indicates that prostitution for women (although not necessarily for children) is legitimate work and that to deny this is to violate the human rights of women. Not used in this theme paper other than in direct quotation from another source.
Child prostitution	‘Child prostitution means the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration’ (Article 2 (b) of the CRC Optional Protocol). In this theme paper the term ‘child/ren exploited in prostitution’ is used to refer to children involved in this practice.
Control group	A control group of research participants is necessary for most research, particularly when the aim is discovering a cause or causes. Members of a control group have all the same characteristics as the research sample (for example age, gender, ethnicity, economic status), except for the factor being researched. In research relevant to this theme paper the control group should normally be children who are not exploited in prostitution.
Corporal punishment	Corporal punishment refers to physical and emotional punishment of children and includes direct and indirect assaults, hazardous tasks, confinement, verbal assaults and humiliation.
Customer	See ‘prostitute’s customer’. This theme paper uses customer in preference to either ‘customer’ or ‘prostitute user’.
Disaggregate	Analyse quantitative data to show differences between sub-groups (such as rich and poor, boys and girls, children of different ages, genders, ethnic groups, or persons with disabilities).
Discourse	The shared language products of a community (in this theme paper, people and organizations concerned about the exploitation of children in prostitution). The products of a discourse include speech, research, reports, media output, the texts of legislation as well as their interpretation, statistics, campaigns, advocacy,

administrative writing and actions, plans, policies, monitoring and evaluation.

Exploitation	'Exploitation' has two related meanings: to make unfair profit; and to take advantage of unequal power and or economic status. Used in both senses with respect to children in prostitution, exploitation can result from the actions both customers and intermediaries.
Gender	The term 'gender' has a variety of uses and meanings, which have shifted during the past two decades. In general, this paper uses 'gender' according to the conventional sociological usage to distinguish between biological (sex) and social (gender) characteristics. Gender includes roles and role performances distinguishing females and males (such as clothing, speech patterns, movement, and activities). A more recent tendency has acknowledged the existence of more than these two gender options and distinguishes between a wider variety of terms and roles, such as homosexual, gay and lesbian, bisexual, queer, transgender and third gender. In addition 'gender identity' refers to self definition of gender as opposed to cultural assignment. Discussions of gender have been complicated in recent years because sex and sexuality are no longer viewed as purely physical attributes.
Generation	Relationships of power in which younger people are dominated by older people – referring particularly to relationships between adults and children.
Girl	Female less than 18 years old.
Global North/South	Global North and Global South are not geographical concepts, but indicate differences in power, wealth, technology and politico-ideological dominance. Used in this paper in preference to developed/developing, minority/majority, West/East.
Human rights	The rights and freedoms to which all human beings are entitled, currently embodied in United Nations' human-rights law.
Method	In research, ways of collecting information, for example, interview, group discussion, literature review, observation.
Methodology	The theoretical basis of research practice, especially the conceptions of research subjects and human society, which justifies using certain methods as well as the principles of using them.

Patriarchy	The organizing principles of social life through which social and cultural institutions representing the dominance of older people over younger people and of males over females.
Pedophile	A clinical term used by psychiatrists in the Global North to refer to an adult with a personality disorder that involves a specific and focused sexual interest in pre-pubertal children (perhaps limited to fantasy). 'Pedophile' is often incorrectly used to refer to any adult who has sexual relations with a person less than 18 years old.
Pre-pubertal child	Girl or boy whose secondary sexual characteristics have not yet developed – usually aged less than 13 years.
Prostitution	The social institution through which sexual acts by males, females or transgendered people are purchased for cash, gifts, advantages or other payment (see also child prostitution).
Prostituted child/ren	See the definition of 'child prostitution' (above) from the Optional Protocol. According to some perspectives, the term 'prostituted children' implicitly erases children's agency so that prostitution becomes implicitly something that is done to them without their consent. This terminology is linked to the assertion that prostitution is always due to male violence. Not used in this theme paper other than in direct quotation from another source.
Prostitute user	A man, woman or transgendered person who makes use of sexual services offered by a prostitute. Sometimes regarded as objectifying the 'user' and therefore as pejorative. Not used in this theme paper other than in direct quotation from another source.
Prostitute's customer	'Customer' means the person to whom professional services are provided for payment. The customer of a prostitute is therefore any person who pays for sexual services. This may be taken to imply that prostitution is sex work and may not include non-monetary payments. Not used in this theme paper other than in direct quotation from another source.
Prostitute's customer	A man, woman or transgendered person who purchases sexual services, with cash, gifts, advantages or other payment.
Reliable data	Data that have been collected and analysed systematically, so that results can be replicated. 'Reliable'

implies transparency about research methods and processes so that the veracity of results can be confidently evaluated.

Rights-based	Using human rights as a framework for research, policy, programme and other actions.
Sex	Depending on the context, 'sex' refers both to being of a particular biological sex, and/or having sexual relations with another person.
Sexuality	A cultural concept, rather than an innate biological given. Sexuality is not limited to biological reproduction.
Sexual identity	A term that, like sex, has two distinct meanings. One describes an identity roughly based on <a href="#">sexual orientation</a> , the other an identity based on biological <a href="#">sexual characteristics</a> .
Sexual rights	A concept related to, but different from, <a href="#">gender identity</a> . Sometimes used to refer solely to fertility and reproduction (biological rights) but increasingly including civil rights, complete with rights/duty-bearer language together with discussions of citizenship, identity and self determination (Richardson, 2000).
Transgender	Generally used to include a variety of gender variations among , behaviors, and groups (Gert Hekma in Summers, 2004).
Violence	The widely-used World Health Organization definition of violence, is:  The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. <sup>31</sup>  In this paper, 'violence' implies both physical and emotional violence, as well as threats and humiliation.

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<sup>31</sup> [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/world\\_report/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/).

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## Attachment 2:

### Annotated bibliography

*Delia Paul*

#### **Contents**

Introduction

Contributions to theory and research practice

ECPAT International Global Monitoring Series

ECPAT International Situation Analyses of the commercial sexual exploitation of children

ILO/IPEC Rapid assessment series

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## Introduction

This annotated bibliography is a non-comprehensive selection of English-language literature. The annotations are not summaries, but rather comments intended to provoke discussions that could result in fresh solutions. The literature on the exploitation of children in prostitution, already vast at the time of World Congress I in Stockholm, has multiplied to the point where any literature reviewer has to make fairly ruthless choices about what to include. When commissioning *Knowing Children* to produce this paper, ECPAT International requested that the emphasis should be on 'practical and positive aspects'. Accordingly, I have chosen to review papers that firstly exemplify recent trends in how the problem of the exploitation of children in prostitution is conceived and represented, and secondly describe the types of solutions being proposed and adopted. This has meant that the literature chosen is not confined to academic sources but tends to be dominated by reports from the development aid industry – mainly from NGOs but also from government, donor and commercial consultancy sources. Research from such sources has its limitations, discussed in the annotations, but also provides the best opportunities there are for reviewing approaches and actions taken since the World Congress II in Yokohama. I have favoured recent papers, but include some older ones that are still relevant because of the clarity of their approach, or because they are particularly good representations of certain streams of thinking.

The exploitation of children in prostitution is characterized variously as a crime, as child abuse, as an economic and labour issue, and a problem of unequal power relations. When viewed as a problem of crime, the solutions have to do with law and law enforcement. When seen as abuse, the remedies are social sanctions against offenders, and care for victims – which could be physical and psychological health care as well as 'reintegration' strategies such as training for alternative employment. Labour studies that view prostitution as a form of work find answers in worker organization and improved labour standards. Since the prostitution of children is widely abhorred, solutions such as worker organization or peer support groups are not promoted as ways of supporting such children, because to do so would imply acquiescence in an intolerable practice. Nevertheless, I have listed a small number of studies that take a labour-market view, as they generate ideas other than the abolitionist approaches demanded by the 'crime' and 'abuse' perspectives. Finally, a minority of writers locate the problem of the exploitation of children in prostitution in the fact of children's low status compared to adults, including dimensions of race, class and gender as well as age. Solutions to this trend tend to fall into a category that might be loosely termed 'child empowerment' – usually strategies targeting particularly disadvantaged children, for increasing children's participation in decision making, capacity building in children's rights, and advocacy by and about children.

Child sex tourism and trafficking are covered by other thematic papers for World Congress III, but I have chosen to review a small number of papers on these themes because they deal with the question of 'good' or 'best' practice in working with sexually exploited children.

I have included some reports that, strictly speaking, are not specifically concerned with the exploitation of children in prostitution, because they illuminate some aspect of these different approaches. So, for example, a recent report by the ILO on problems faced by young migrant workers in Thailand is included, because it gives context to other

approaches that seek to present the exploitation of children in prostitution as uniquely violent.

Reports by NGOs are often preoccupied with proving the presence of children in prostitution, and the young age at which children enter into prostitution. There are many instances of flawed methodology and ideologically driven claims. Contentious and conflicting findings abound – for example, about the extent to which the exploitation of children in prostitution is bound up in transnational crime networks. Some reports take this as a given, while others, in seeking an empirical basis for the claim, have discovered structures of recruitment and production more akin to cottage industries than global supply chains.

Against this backdrop of conflicting and competing claims and interpretations, this bibliography cannot indicate with any certainty either the scale of the problem of the exploitation of children in prostitution, or its causes. What it can do, is to show directions the discourse has taken, and to highlight neglected areas.

For every claim made about the dominance of certain perspectives in the development aid arena, counter-claims can be made drawing on references from popular culture. While abolitionist perspectives in this literature present purchase of sex as an inherently violent male act, it is also possible to read blogs and newspaper columns by middle-class courtesans such as Belle de Jour and Tracey Quan.<sup>32</sup> If activist zeal relies upon conceptions of childhood as a time of innocence and purity, the runaway success of the<sup>33</sup> Harry Potter books and films attests to our identification with a world in which children are sexually aware, while grown-ups are weak, unreliable and malevolent. A comprehensive bibliography on this topic could therefore spread indefinitely to include a great many more references from daily life.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://belledejour-uk.blogspot.com/>; <http://www.tracyquan.net/gossip/blog.php>

<sup>33</sup> [http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page)

## Contributions to theory and research practice

**Kempadoo, K., and Doezema, J., (eds.), 1998, *Global sex workers: Rights, resistance, and redefinition*, New York and London, Routledge.**

This collection of articles by feminists, now a decade old, is mentioned here because it represents a viewpoint that is often absent from discussions of the exploitation of children in prostitution. The writers in this collection reject the notion of prostitutes as victims, and the dichotomy of 'forced' *versus* 'voluntary' prostitution. Its description of tensions between 'developed' and 'developing' country sex worker unions could easily be translated in contemporary terms to consider the ways in which children in poor countries are objectified as passive victims.

In contemporary discussions, prostitution is deemed an unacceptable form of child labour, hence the exploitation of children in prostitution discourse has continued down an abolitionist path with little controversy, though with occasional reminders of children's agency as workers who may pimp for each other and who may manipulate customers to obtain maximum benefits (for example Montgomery, 2001). This book reminds us that today's discourse, by comparison, is more homogenous.

**Kempadoo, K., (ed.) 2005, *Trafficking and prostitution reconsidered: New perspectives on migration, sex work and human rights*, Harndon VA, Paradigm Publishers.**

These academic papers critique the prevention, rescue and recovery approaches taken by governments and NGOs to combat trafficking. Jyoti Sanghera's contribution lists the dominant assumptions about the trafficking of women and children into prostitution from a feminist perspective. Phil Marshall and Susu Thatun provide a robust critique of the orientation of public policy towards trafficking prevention at its source, while the role of labour-market demand and of destination countries, in regulating immigration and working conditions, have had relatively little attention. Josephine Ho demonstrates how ECPAT's initial campaigns against the exploitation of children in prostitution have been transformed into efforts to prevent sexual experimentation amongst youth.

While agreeing that the exploitation of children in prostitution is a problem to be addressed, the writers in this volume provide some alternatives to the abolitionist perspectives that are commonly taken in NGO and donor circles.

**O'Connell Davidson, J., 2005, *Children in the global sex trade*, Cambridge, Polity Press.**

Against the dominant constructions of the exploitation of children in prostitution which paint children as passive victims and customers as the main offenders, Julia O'Connell Davidson is an important dissenting voice. The author unpacks concepts of prostitution, paedophilia, trafficking, pornography and sex tourism, questioning the assumption that children's rights can be treated separately from adults' rights, and that prostitution can

be addressed separately from inequity. The roots of these current attitudes, she argues, may lie in a profound unease with market liberalization; some things ought not to be for sale.

This book continues along the lines of Judith Ennew's 1986 book, *The sexual exploitation of children*, which clearly positioned the exploitation of children in prostitution as a problem of unequal power. O'Connell Davidson's fresh take on an old issue offers a robust critique of many of the solutions that are currently popular, such as the recent focus on customers as the source of the problem, which in her view 'discursively constructs CSEC as a problem of individual morality'.

**Weitzer, R., 2005, Flawed theory and method in studies of prostitution, in *Violence Against Women*, 11 (7), 950-964.**

Weitzer critiques three recent articles by feminist authors that present prostitution as being a form of violence. Although he addresses studies of adult women in prostitution, many of his arguments also apply to recent research by NGOs on children exploited in prostitution. He claims that the emphasis of the three articles on prostitutes as victims obscures their agency, that the methods used are unclear (it is often not explained how and where the researchers contacted prostitutes), that selection bias is common as it is often 'unsuccessful' prostitutes currently receiving care from social services who are interviewed – hence targeting those who are most distressed – and that the most severe cases of abuse are presented as typical. Moreover, within the field of prostitution studies, findings are often conflicting and contradictory.

## **ECPAT International Global Monitoring Series**

This series consists of country reports on almost every country in the world. The structure of each country report corresponds to the Agenda for Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, a framework that came out of the First World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Stockholm (1996). In effect, these are monitoring reports that provide an overview of the situation of commercial sexual exploitation of children in each country and a somewhat critical analysis of countries' National Plans of Action and the status of implementation. The reports are brief, usually less than 40 pages long and currently 68 are listed on <http://www.ecpat.net>.

### **The Gambia**

**ECPAT International, 2007, *Global Monitoring Report on the status of action against commercial sexual exploitation of children, The Gambia, Bangkok: ECPAT International.***

The Gambia is noted as a sex tourism destination for both men and women. Children sometimes act as pimps for other children. The Gambia enacted a Tourism Offences Act in 2003 specifically to deal with offences by foreign tourists. The report does not attempt to compare penalties for tourists with those by locals for the same offences. It appears that getting convictions is difficult and in 2004, a British national was acquitted in a Gambian court despite the testimony of five under-age girls against him.

Sexual harassment by male teachers in exchange for grades and pocket money was also reported to be a problem.

### **Mozambique**

**ECPAT International, 2007, *Global Monitoring Report on the status of action against commercial sexual exploitation of children, Mozambique, Bangkok, ECPAT International.***

Mozambican girls are trafficked into South Africa. Besides going to work in brothels, girls are also sold to mineworkers as 'wives' in short-lived marriages.

Mozambique's approach to harmonizing national legislation with international conventions is unusual. Mozambican law states that once an international instrument is ratified and adopted, it becomes part of domestic legislation unless it contradicts existing legislation. In practice, this allows for extensive violations of the CRC.

The report views foreign investment as a threat to children in Mozambique as it will bring foreigners into impoverished rural areas.

## ECPAT International Situational Analyses

For this series, ECPAT International commissions in-country researchers – usually academics or staff of local NGOs – to carry out ‘rapid analyses’ of the incidence and types of the commercial sexual exploitation of children in individual countries. The most common research method used is interviews with ‘key informants’ and children. These studies are usually limited in scope and scale, concerned to establish the presence of children’s (girls’) involvement in prostitution in the places studied, and often reporting raw numbers without comparing with population size, and thus giving no idea of prevalence. Recent reports have investigated the exploitation of boys in prostitution.

The writers tend to rely on non attributed opinions, often from sources such as the directors of local charities, who may have a vested interest in claiming that the problem of the exploitation of children in prostitution is ever-increasing. Focus group discussions are also a popular means of gauging local perceptions of an issue. However, information provided through focus group discussions often relies on hearsay and second-hand reporting. Surveys of press clippings often form part of the research and are intended to show the scale and type of problems associated with the exploitation of children in prostitution. But these are subject to similar limitations as focus group discussions and unattributed sources, with the additional twist that the reportage may be a result of NGO awareness-raising campaigns in the past, and so cannot be viewed as independent confirmation of issues about which NGOs are concerned.

Some of the reports focus on legal instruments to prevent the exploitation of children in prostitution, and the extent of law enforcement, as well as undertaking some appraisal of social services available to assist children leaving the commercial sex industry. A problem with the reporting of children’s involvement is that the age range included in the studies is often very wide, grouping 17-year olds with pre-pubertal children. There is little evidence in these reports to suggest that most customers really prefer young children rather than young women.

### Bangladesh

**Ali, M., and Sarkar, R., 2006, *The boys and the bullies: A situational analysis report on prostitution of boys in Bangladesh*, Bangkok, ECPAT International.**

While many accounts of boy prostitutes focus on tourism, this report views boy prostitution as embedded in cultural practices. Fifty boys exploited in prostitution were interviewed in detail about types of sexual act, sexual orientation of customers, and cultural perceptions of the different roles of men who have sex with men.

The unavailability of women creates demand for boys to be exploited in prostitution, which is linked to the existence of a migrant population of men and boys. A pattern of rape, abuse and a ‘culture of fear’ created by pimps is highlighted. Boys have limited access to health care because of shame. Some boys receive support from NGOs, but these have framed the issue in terms of the needs of men who have sex with men, rather than children’s rights.

There is a strong correlation of prior sexual abuse among boys exploited in prostitution, who risk prosecution for sodomy if they report incidents.

## **India**

**Akula, S.L., 2006, *Situational analysis report on prostitution of boys in India (Hyderabad)*, Bangkok, ECPAT International.**

This research is based on individual interviews with 30 boys exploited in prostitution, six ex-prostitutes and 30 others considered 'vulnerable' (including boys not living with their families and working as rag-pickers, day labourers, ports, cleaners, tea vendors and shop assistants. Nine directors of NGOs and 42 other adult key informants were also interviewed, including cab drivers, beggars, police and hotel workers. The report claims that 'according to local perceptions, the number of boys selling sex has increased by alarming proportions in the past three years' (page 7).

Most of the boys interviewed were 18 years old, while some were aged 16 and a few aged 13. Pimps were not much involved - boys would generally seek their own customers in key sites including parks and places of worship. In some cases, pimps would bring boys to hotels for sex with men. More than three-quarters of the boys claimed their customers were single or married women whose husbands were away, and that they did not negotiate any payment (the implication being that customers could pay whatever they chose). Many boys reported having sexual experiences with women at an early age, starting at 10 years old, and claimed to have sex with younger girls while on the street. Few boys acknowledged having male partners, though some onlookers commented on the presence of men who have sex with men. Many boys were smokers or substance abusers.

## **Kazakhstan**

**Turganbaj, Z., 2004, *Analysis of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and institutions combating CSEC in Kazakhstan*, Bangkok, ECPAT.**

This report views the changes in socialist state ideology and the shortfall in state-sponsored education as underlying a moral and social crisis for young people.

Individual cases of trafficking of children to the Middle East and East Asia are documented.

## **Kyrgyz Republic**

**Elibezova, E., Elibezova, L., Toktosunov, R., and Selezneva, E., 2004, *Situational analysis of the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Kyrgyz Republic*, Bangkok, ECPAT International.**

Based on Ministry of Internal Affairs' statistics, more crimes by children have been reported over the past five years. The numbers are small; the top figure is 23 crimes reported in 2003 and there were just seven reported cases regarding the exploitation of

children in prostitution. The reasoning in the report is unclear and it seems that children are counted among perpetrators of the crime rather than victims; this way of recording charges is not critiqued by the authors.

The Kyrgyz Republic is identified as a source country for the trafficking of children from Uzbekistan to other destinations, and also a destination for trafficked women.

## **Pakistan**

**Muhammad, T., and Zafar, N., 2006, *Situational analysis report on prostitution of boys in Pakistan (Lahore and Peshawar)*, Bangkok, ECPAT International.**

This rapid analysis, is based on focus group discussions and three 'walk-through surveys' at transport hubs that are frequented by street children.

Runaways and Afghan refugees were among the most vulnerable boys trading sex for food and shelter, often with hotel and inn keepers as intermediaries. Exploitative relationships were with older men, sometimes in the context of 'apprenticeship' relationships, for example with truck drivers. Researchers found there is frequent confusion between the idea of sexual abuse of boys, and prostitution for commercial gain. In practice there seems to be a continuum: some cultural practices are identified as being associated with the exploitation of boys in prostitution; for example *bachabazi*, which resembles concubinage. The report briefly refers to the sexual abuse and exploitation of boys living in transgender communities as well as working in the massage industry. The customers of boy prostitutes, in this report, are always men.

## **Turkey**

**Yucel, H., Karatay, A. and Ogel, K., 2006, *Situational analysis of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Turkey: Istanbul and Divarbakir*, Bangkok, ECPAT International.**

The researches interviewed mostly post-pubertal girls. Boys were difficult to reach due to strong social sanctions against homosexual behaviour. Children living on the streets, including those fleeing violence or forced marriages, are thought to be most at risk of sexual exploitation, which takes place within a wider context of violence against children.

The report suggests that sexual abuse within the family is a hidden problem in Turkey and is ignored by the media. Social norms may result in victims being penalized or even killed ('honour killings') in order to avoid bringing shame on the family. The exploitation of children in prostitution is a new issue in the media and editors may choose not to highlight cases as readers find the topic distasteful. There has been little regard for the privacy of victims.

The writers argue that early marriage is also a form of sexual exploitation of children in Turkey. It is a way for poor families to collect a 'bride price' and hence there is an element of economic exploitation.

## **Uzbekistan**

**Zatsepina, L., and Liliya, K., 2006, *Situational analysis of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Uzbekistan*, Bangkok, ECPAT.**

This report is based on a combination of interviews with children exploited in prostitution and other key informants such as people working in government services or NGOs as well as taxi drivers and hotel employees. The authors also include a review of existing research (where available) and, especially, of media reports which are subject to the usual limitations of being based on hearsay and usually vaguely referenced or not referenced at all. However they do provide some idea of public attention and public attitudes towards the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Unemployment and family breakdown are said to be 'push factors' for the growth of the exploitation of children in prostitution. Evidence for the supposed rise in the exploitation of children in prostitution is based partly on interviews with hotel staff and taxi drivers, suggesting that there is a well-organized domestic industry. Women are also trafficked from Uzbekistan through the Kyrgyz republic to other destinations. The writers believe that the exploitation of children in prostitution is under-reported.

## ILO/IPEC Rapid Assessments

This series emerged from the 1999 ILO Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and is intended to fill gaps in understanding the forms and conditions of children's work, relying mainly on interviews with working children as well as with some key informants. Neither long-term participant observation nor representative sampling are included in the rapid assessment guidelines. Due to difficulties in accessing children working in the most exploitative conditions, researchers assume that representative sampling is almost impossible.

The ILO reports reviewed here suggest there are supportive and friendly relationships between young people and their recruiters, pimps included. In general, they do not conform to the picture of evil exploiters that is sometimes painted in the media. Economic conditions, in particular inequality of development between city and country and across national border areas, are viewed as creating labour-market conditions that are ripe for migrant workers, including children.

There may be selection bias, in that the most exploited children are the hardest to access for interviews. However, the ILO reports do provide a broader context to the problem of the exploitation of children in prostitution, because they discuss other forms of hazardous labour open to working children.

### Jamaica

**Dunn, L., 2001, *Jamaica situation of children in prostitution: A rapid assessment*, Geneva, ILO/IPEC.**

This study was carried out as part of the campaign by ILO/IPEC for member states of the ILO to ratify Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The data were generated by rapid assessment research, including interviews with children and other key informants, focus group discussions with children and other stakeholders, observation of locations where children exploited in prostitution were found, and reviews of secondary data.

The researchers interviewed 129 children and 140 adults in seven different locations, categorized according to social relationships and work patterns. The largest groups were children living and working on the street (mainly boys catering to male customers), children working alongside adults in the commercial sex industry related to tourism (mainly girls) and children involved in seasonal prostitution to gain additional income to increase their of living. Besides the usual categories of prostitution, the study includes fringe activities such as go-go dancing and massage parlours, as well as girls and boys supported by 'sugar daddies' and 'sugar mummies'. Some very young girls were documented as exploited in prostitution. Rumours of the use of children in sexual activities associated with occult rituals are mentioned, although not supported by research findings.

The writer adopts a moralistic tone in the report, including 'push factors' such as 'poor parenting practices', which include 'excessive' household chores and 'distorted value systems' that place a priority on material possessions.

## Tanzania

**Kamala, E., Lusinde E., Millinga, J. and Mwaitula, J., 2001, *Children in prostitution: A rapid assessment in Tanzania*, Geneva, ILO/IPEC.**

This report treats the exploitation of children in prostitution as a labour problem, describing conditions of work and pay. The ages of children interviewed ranged from 10 to 17 years, thus including both pre- and post-pubertal children.

The report identifies poverty and family problems as the main factors leading to the exploitation of children in prostitution. There is also some mention of market demand factors associated with the hospitality industry. Like many others, the report claims that numbers of child prostitutes are increasing, although this is not a longitudinal study. Head counts in specific areas frequented by child prostitutes provide the basis for the numbers provided. There is anecdotal evidence that children who were sexually abused may choose to go into prostitution. The authors note the agency of child workers but consider that working in prostitution is not an easy livelihood option. Children help each other when they encounter problems with the law. Furthermore, in some cases, girls who have other paid jobs choose prostitution as an additional option in order to meet white (rich) men.

In keeping with a research approach that leans toward labour-market analysis, the report emphasizes the need for alternative livelihood options as the main solution to the exploitation of children in prostitution.

## Thailand

**Wille, C., 2001, *Trafficking in children into the worst forms of child labour: A rapid assessment in the Thailand-Lao PDR and Thailand-Myanmar border areas*, Geneva, ILO.**

This rapid assessment interviewed 103 children and youth in border areas who were working in exploitative industries or conditions, or had done so in the past. Almost half were in the sex industry; others worked in manufacturing, construction, fisheries, domestic work and other services. The study found that voluntary labour migration was common and that 'there are relatively few cases that fit popular notions of human smuggling and the trade in children' (page 4). Nevertheless, working conditions for many migrant children were generally poor, and boys who were interviewed complained especially of difficult working conditions in fisheries and construction activities.

The study acknowledged that selection bias may have been an issue, as children working in the most exploitative conditions would be the hardest to access for research. (On the other hand, it could be argued that a study without a specific focus on sexual exploitation is more likely to present a balanced view of the options available to working children.

Children working in the sex industry in the Thai-Lao border areas came from more prosperous ethnic groups in Lao, suggesting that the sending communities are not the poorest ones.

The report recommends that conceptual distinctions between recruitment and the worst forms of child labour should be emphasized, as recruiters of foreign labour are generally trusted individuals providing a service to the community. It also acknowledges that measures to improve working conditions for migrant workers are problematic because they are seen as encouraging illegal migration.

## **Viet Nam**

**Duong, L. B., 2002, *Children in prostitution in Hanoi, Hai Phong, Ho Chi Minh City and Can Tho, A rapid assessment*, Geneva, ILO.**

Le Bach Duong's rapid assessment for ILO/IPEC was based on interviews with 122 children in four locations, and found significant differences in the patterns of recruitment between the northern and southern regions of Viet Nam. Prostitution is more openly practiced in the south, and less socially stigmatized. A majority of children working in prostitution in the south (84 percent) said they had decided for themselves to go into prostitution, whereas less than half of those working in the north.

The study attempted to build customer profiles through the interviews with children. Customers from the wealthier East Asian countries were said to be the most popular as they were willing to pay higher prices and were good tippers.

Family problems were given as the most common 'push factors' for children to enter prostitution. Large family size and poverty were also important factors.

The author takes a critical perspective on the view, common in Vietnam, that the market economy is to blame for the exploitation of children in prostitution. He considers that traditional values, such as stereotyped gender roles, can work in favour of prostitution as well as against it (page 16). Furthermore, traditional values were being to some extent transformed through the collectivization of assets and industry from the 1950s to the 1980s. According to this research, 'almost all the provocations that led children into prostitution can ultimately be traced to processes at the family level' (page 29).

Nevertheless, the author recommends that actions for combating the exploitation of children in prostitution should take place at the national, provincial and community or individual levels, because the factors leading children into prostitution are complex and multi-faceted.

## Regional and comparative studies

**Casa Alianza, ECPAT and the Audrey Hepburn Children's Fund, 2001, *Investigation on the trafficking, sex tourism, pornography and prostitution of children in Central America and Mexico*, San Jose, Casa Alianza.**

This report, issued for World Congress II, was a preliminary investigation into modes of prostitution associated with trafficking, sex tourism, and pornography production in six Central American countries: Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico. Information was gathered through a review of press articles and some interviews (although the number is not given). The report describes local modes of prostitution, which are generally associated with the prevalence of adult prostitution in tourism or to service transient male populations, such as seasonal workers and fisherman. Although children are involved, the study was unable to distinguish general trends regarding younger children in prostitution. In Chiapas state, Mexico, prostitution is managed within 'zones of tolerance' where women can rent cubicles in a state-run facility, in which doctors provide daily health checks and customers must pass through security barriers to enter and leave.

**Estes, R., and Weiner, N., 2001, *The commercial sexual exploitation of children in the U.S., Canada and Mexico*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania.**

This research, funded by the US Department of Justice and other donors, was carried out over a 27-month period to study child sexual abuse and prostitution in 28 cities in the US, Canada and Mexico that were known to have a high incidence of sex crimes. Six hundred and seventeen respondents were interviewed and many more were involved in workshops to discuss the research results. The commercial sexual exploitation of children is closely associated with homelessness, drug dependency and a prior history of sexual abuse. The data are disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, showing markedly different patterns.

One-third of street prostitutes working are under 18 years old, as well as half of those working in indoor prostitution – in strip clubs and escort services. In the USA, the average age of entry into prostitution is reported to be between 11 and 13 years, according to interviewees..

Family dysfunction was found to be the most common factor contributing to the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Poverty was also a contributing factor - but not the main one. Sexual abuse was viewed as part of a continuum of abuse. The report analysed trends in reporting that indicated lax law enforcement by police and under-reporting by health professionals.

The report also analyzed customer groups and pimps. Many customers of children exploited in prostitution are transient males such as military personnel, truck drivers, seasonal workers, convention delegates and sex tourists. Most pimps control only a few girls, but 15 percent were linked to national or regional prostitution networks, and 10 percent were linked to international networks.

Government agencies and NGOs were surveyed to assess their responsiveness to commercial sexual exploitation of children. Lack of coordination between agencies was noted as well as intense ideological differences between NGOs regarding how the issues should be addressed. There was stricter law enforcement in relation to child pornography, compared with the exploitation of children in prostitution.

**Farley, M., Cotton, A., Lynne, J., Zumbeck, S., Spiwak, F., Reyes, M., Alvarez, D., Sezgin, U., 2003, Prostitution and trafficking in nine countries: An update on violence and posttraumatic stress disorder, in *Journal of Trauma Practice*, 2 (3-4), 33-74.**

This article presents results from interviews and self-administered questionnaire surveys of 854 male, female and transgendered prostitutes in nine countries: Canada, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, United States and Zambia. The study investigated prostitutes' experiences of physical and sexual violence, which was found to be routinely experienced by prostitutes in all countries. While all interviewees were adults, the authors emphasize that an overwhelming majority of prostitutes were sexually abused as children and that 'a qualitative distinction between prostitution of children and prostitution of adults is arbitrary' (page 36). The authors argue from an abolitionist viewpoint, equating 'trafficking' with prostitution and accusing the ILO of promoting prostitution because of its use of the term 'the sex sector' (page 64). Legalised prostitution should not be promoted, in their view, because it is impossible for sex to be sold in a safe, sanitary and mutually respectful manner – not only is prostitution accompanied by violence and abuse, the act of buying sex is in itself inherently a violent act. To support this argument, comparisons are made between the health of prostitutes and street vendors in South Africa, and between the incidence of assault experienced by homeless persons and prostitutes in Toronto. In each case prostitution was claimed to be associated with a greater prevalence of violence.

**M'jid N., Haidy, M.M., Passalet, D.D., Saber, K., Belhadj, A. and Checkir, H., 2003, *Situational analysis studies on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Morocco, Mauritania, Chad, Egypt and Tunisia*, Bangkok, ECPAT International.**

The exploitation of children in prostitution is said to be a taboo subject in some of the North African countries studied, resulting in scant available information. Sample sizes varied greatly between countries. In Tunisia information was drawn from case notes about individual children living in institutions in order to protect them from intrusive personal questions.

Research in Chad, Egypt and Morocco attempted to place the exploitation of children in prostitution within a social context of changing family norms, urbanization and adult migration patterns. However, the resourcing of these studies appeared to be insufficient and research questions were not clearly defined. Only Morocco reported a prevalence of the exploitation of boys in prostitution in the tourist centre of Essaouira; the reports from Chad and Egypt focused on girls exploited in prostitution. The exploitation of children in prostitution in these countries is generally viewed as an urban phenomenon.

As in South Asia, in a number of countries early marriage was viewed as a source of economic security for both the bride and her family, but the custom has reportedly

become distorted to short-term liaisons with wealthy, older men, in which the young wives are secondary to senior wives and can be rejected after a brief 'marriage'. Child domestic workers and street children were identified as particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Family problems and poverty were linked to individual choices about prostitution. In Mauritania, the system of 'talibe children' was noted, in which children given over to religious teachers for their education customarily beg in the streets for their daily food, to be shared with the teachers.

In some countries, prostitution and premarital sex on the part of girls is criminalized and not necessarily distinguished as different kinds of activities. The Tunisia report, drawing from institutional case notes, reported that virginity testing of female children was carried out upon admission to centres and that girls would be charged with prostitution if found to be non-virgin. In Mauritania, girls may be sentenced to jail if they are found to be pregnant out of wedlock.

In Chad, children are reported to be pressured by teachers to exchange sex for higher school grades; such pressure can apparently include witchcraft.

## **National investigations and situational analyses**

### **Cambodia**

**Renault, R., 2006, *Survey on street-based child exploitation in Cambodia*, Phom Penh, Action Pour Les Enfants.**

An increase in child sexual exploitation since the 1990s although attributed to foreigners, can also be blamed on Cambodian nationals. Offenders meet and 'groom' child victims on the streets or in tourist venues, such as bars and restaurants, in projects and institutions for children, or become part of community and family life by providing financial help or doing voluntary work. Child protection should include strengthening law enforcement and developing the judicial system, raising awareness about street-based sexual exploitation by foreigners and engaging in more research to inform future intervention strategies.

**Christian Care Centre of the Church of Melanesia, 2004, *Commercial sexual exploitation of children and child sexual abuse in the Solomon Islands*.**

**This research** was part of the seven-country study of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Pacific. The terminology is not clear but the researchers uncovered evidence of under-aged girls being paid for sexual favours by older, more powerful men and within sex tourism. Changes associated with modernization, such as poverty, rural-urban drift, unemployment and being out of school place children at risk. Existing legislation contributes to children's vulnerability.

### **Fiji**

**Save the Children Fiji, 2006, *The commercial sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in Fiji: A situational analysis*, Suva, Save the Children Fiji.**

Fijian children occupy a subordinate socio-cultural position, placing them at risk of commercial sexual exploitation and abuse. There is limited information about sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are not solely the result of poverty. Children become involved in commercial sex because of their sense of being materially deprived. Materialism and consumerism are eroding traditional safety nets that protected children. For example fostering of children by relatives is now considered a burden rather than a traditional obligation. Most perpetrators of the sexual abuse are known to their child victims.

## Indonesia

**Beazley, H., 2002, *Vagrants wearing makeup: Negotiating spaces on the streets of Yogyakarta, Indonesia*, *Urban Studies*, 39 (9), 1665-1683.**

An increased number of street children appeared in Yogyakarta, following the 1987 Asian financial crisis, but girls are not as visible on the streets as boys. This article is based on long-term participant observation in the streets, combined with narratives and mapping exercises. When girls engage in prostitution (which is not necessarily their first choice or a full-time activity), they are victimized by law enforcement agents. Street girls have developed survival mechanisms that are quite distinct from those of street boys. They resist traditional feminine gender constructions, have claimed and use different urban spaces, rely on boyfriends for protection and have wide networks of friends for assistance.

**Byrne, J., (ed.), 2004, *Participatory research on commercial sexual exploitation of children in Surakarta (Central Java) and Indramayu (West Java)*, Indonesia, Jakarta, UNICEF Indonesia.**

This research compared the situation of children exploited in prostitution in a city where there is a large community of rural-urban migrants, with that of children working in an agricultural area where the majority lived with their parents. The research, which was commissioned by UNICEF, involved NGO workers, academic advisors and child advisors. Using control groups in both locations, researchers paid a great deal of attention to the study processes, which were highly participatory and children-oriented. The 'city' children exploited in prostitution were more likely to be heavy users of alcohol and narcotics, compared to the 'country' children, and also had poorer health in general. Most of the 'country' children did not suffer from sexual health problems. Economic pressures on their families were the reason children generally gave for entering prostitution. The children benefited from solidarity with their peers, for example through helping each other out financially, although disputes and violence sometimes occurred.

The study focused on the social supports of children working in prostitution, and revealed affectionate relationships between the children and their pimps who were sometimes also 'boyfriends'. Unprotected sex, pregnancy and abortions were common. Besides customer preference, one of the reasons children gave for having unprotected sex was that they did not want to prolong sexual intercourse.

The research found that children exploited in prostitution were treated the same as adult prostitutes in terms of law enforcement. Recommendations emphasized the need for more facilities for children leaving prostitution, such as counseling centres, homes and youth centres that would provide artistic, entrepreneurial and creative outlets. Stakeholders in government departments, NGOs, academics, and religious and political leaders should be made aware of the provisions of the law and their responsibilities around child protection.

## **Mexico**

**Azaola, E., 2001, *Stolen childhood: Girl and boy victims of sexual exploitation in Mexico*, Mexico City, UNICEF.**

The study aimed to generate statistical estimates of the commercial sexual exploitation of children in six towns, selected on the basis of being important tourist centres or border points. The report draws substantially on lengthy first-person accounts by children, girls and boys – gay, straight, and transgender.

Azaola discusses the impacts on family life of tourism from the USA and Canada. The most lucrative and work-intensive periods (evenings, weekends and special holidays) are those that are also important for family life, resulting in many children of workers being unsupervised when they are not at school. The exploitation of children in prostitution is viewed as part of a wider pattern of labour exploitation, in which parents cannot earn a living wage or are forced to take employment that requires extended absence from home.

One town experienced an influx of groups of teen mothers, who were traveling together to share babysitting and get customers.

The study revealed a high degree of acceptance on the part of child prostitutes of the right of others to beat or control them.

Chiapas state informal zoning of prostitution activities, including the forced confinement of girls in their places of work, and the exchange of groups of girls via regional networks in order to consistently offer novelty to customers.

## **Mozambique**

**Perschler-Desai, V., 2006, *Childhood on the market: Teenage prostitution in Southern Africa* in *JENdA: A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies*, 8, <http://www.jendajournal.com/issue8/perschler-desai.html>.**

*First published in African Security Review*, 10 (4), 2001.

Viktoria Perschler-Desai takes the view that the exploitation of children in prostitution is not only a form of child abuse but also a form of labour for income and often for survival. The paper discusses the results of research into child labour in Mozambique, carried out for UNICEF and the Ministry of Labour in 1999-2001, in which, although it is technically not work, the investigators chose to research the exploitation of children in prostitution. The paper positions the exploitation of children in prostitution as a subset of child labour

issues, and suggests that one of the factors motivating children towards prostitution is harassment and sexual abuse experienced in prior work as hawkers or domestic workers. Poverty is viewed as the major cause of the exploitation of children in prostitution, coupled with problems in the home.

## **Peru**

**Villaviencio, V., 2005, *The customer goes unnoticed*, Lima, Save the Children Sweden.**

This unusual study is based on 'journalistic investigation' by a team of researchers who invented a fictitious sex magazine in order to attract job applicants to take part in 'recruitment interviews' in rented 'offices', as a means of covertly studying their attitudes about sex with children. In this way, 85 men were interviewed at length about their attitudes towards sex with children, while under the impression they were being considered for employment in an industry where permissiveness in this area would be integral to the work culture. Female researchers also posed as job seekers for sex work, in order to study the commercial sex industry in terms of locations and practices.

The researchers' use of subterfuge - bordering on entrapment - produced similar findings to those of conventional research; customers of children exploited in prostitution are generally not seeking sex with pre-pubertal children, men enjoy sex with children because it gives them a sense of power, and this power is related to traditional notions of masculinity.

This study encapsulates some of the ethical issues and dilemmas involved in the study of human sexuality - the difficulty of eliciting information on potentially criminal behavior, the tendency for respondents to exaggerate sexual prowess, and the ways in which researchers alter the situation they are trying to study. Some journalistic conventions, such as the use of unnamed sources - a legitimate means of protecting whistleblowers - are misapplied when used to make unsubstantiated, yet somewhat detailed claims, for example, 'According to reliable sources, there is a street trade in sex with girls under age 18, but this represents only 10 percent of the total sex trade with children and adolescents' (page 68).

## **Solomon Islands**

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## **Thailand**

**Baker, S., 2007, *Child labour' and child prostitution in Thailand: Changing realities*, Bangkok, White Lotus.**

Simon Baker's study critiques the nature of research being carried out on child labour in the region, arguing that most child labour studies are presented without any historical context and therefore cannot provide justification for claims that child labour is increasing. Based on Thai official statistics and his own field work and literature review, the author debunks such claims, arguing that child labour in general and the exploitation of children in prostitution are decreasing.

The content book is based research carried out while Baker lived for a year in Khon Kaen province, where he conducted a census of all children in the four communities (two urban and two rural) that were the focus of his research. The information is based on questionnaires administered with the help of Thai assistants to 767 children and 506 adults. In addition, Baker facilitated discussions in which children gave their own reflections on a photograph of child prostitutes. He also conducted taped, in-depth interviews with working children. His research reveals changing views of what constitutes suitable work for children. 'Child labour' and 'children's duty' are concepts that encompass different and shifting understandings of children's work, and that are viewed differently by city dwellers, country people, children and adults.

Baker examines the 'problem' of child labour in terms of various approaches that have been employed to reduce the employment of children: the law and law enforcement solution, the technological development solution and the economic development solution, to determine which has been most effective in reducing the number of working children in Thailand. His interviews with working children suggest that trafficking is rare and that most young people voluntarily take up prostitution because of perceived poverty. Based on comparisons with other countries, he concludes that economic growth has had the most impact on reducing child labour.

While arguing that true child-labour statistics are almost impossible to obtain at the moment, Baker makes extensive use of figures from Thai National Statistics Office on working children to advance his argument.

The book examines the role of compulsory education in reducing child labour, suggesting that Thailand is entering a phase in which education has largely taken precedence as the main occupation of children. Most child workers in Thailand now are

from neighbouring countries and it is likely that the factors which reduced the numbers of Thai working children could have the same effect on reducing the numbers of child migrant workers.

**Pearson, E., Punpuing, S., Jampaklay, A., Kittisuksathit, S., and Prohmmo, A, 2006, *The Mekong challenge: Underpaid, overworked and overlooked, the realities of young migrant workers in Thailand*, Volume 1, Bangkok, ILO.**

This study does not focus on the exploitation of children in prostitution but rather on the involvement of under-18-year-olds in other occupations with unacceptable working conditions: the fishing industry, domestic work, agriculture and manufacturing. The study is included in this bibliography because it sheds some light on alternatives to prostitution, which are often less well paid and subject to frequent violations of workers' rights. The year-long study found that domestic workers (usually girls) and workers on fishing boats (usually boys) were often subjected to unacceptable conditions such as withholding identification documents and arbitrary wage deductions.

The report criticizes the current definition of labour recruiters as 'traffickers'. Research suggests that recruiters also act as important service providers who have an ongoing role even after workers are placed in jobs, for example in sending remittances and arranging communication with families. These ongoing relationships may indicate that recruiters have a vested interest in maximising workers' profits, so they have more money to send home. The report argues that 'This finding suggests that the emphasis on recruitment and recruiters as the main abusive element in trafficking is misplaced...perhaps more should be done to improve recruitment practices than simply encouraging migrants not to use them at all'.

The report considers that adult workers can play a role in improving conditions for young migrant workers through worker associations and in peer education.

The research report examined demand-side factors that produce unacceptable labour conditions or forms of labour. The study found that employers felt justified in severely restricting workers' freedom of movement in order to protect their investment in worker recruitment – 60 percent of young domestic workers, for example, were prevented from leaving their place of work or receiving visitors. Fourteen percent of fishery workers – two-thirds of the sample were children - had experienced physical violence at the hands of their employers, and over 80 percent had experienced verbal abuse and threats (page 84) These findings indicate that violence against under-age workers is not unique to the exploitation of children in prostitution. The report suggests that solutions lie in the empowerment of worker associations and in raising the status of children and migrant workers in general.

### **United States of America**

**Spangenberg, M., 2001, *Prostituted youth in New York City: An overview*, New York, ECPAT USA.**

This report relies entirely on secondary sources – many being newspaper articles – to derive conclusions. A typical example is '...the Minneapolis, MN Southside Prostitution

Task Force estimates that there [are] about 1,500 women prostitutes for the 15,000 to 30,000 men customers they serve every day. Considering that New York is a much bigger city and popular for tourism and business, there are probably far more customers here.'

This report is included only as an example of calls for more attention to the exploitation of boys in prostitution by media and NGOs. It also calls for more prosecutions of exploiters and increased programming to provide support services to youth at risk.

## Legal surveys

### Bangladesh

**Ali, S., 2004, *Report on laws and legal procedures concerning the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Bangladesh*, Bangkok, ECPAT International/Plan International Asia Regional Office.**

This report is part of a series of investigations into South Asian countries' capacity for law enforcement on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, based on a review of domestic legislation, interviews with stakeholders and consultations with children. The study reveals considerable under-reporting of sex crimes against children. The writer suggests that the lack of data on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Bangladesh is due to the absence of a common legal definition.

There are very few juvenile courts and these are under-resourced. There are also weaknesses in trial proceedings, so that many agreed safeguards for children involved in court proceedings are not observed in practice. Responses have included training in child protection for law enforcement workers and social service providers, campaigns to keep girls in school, and awareness-raising among tourist workers.

### Indonesia

**Arna, A., and Bryneson, M., 2004, *Report on laws and legal procedures concerning the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Indonesia*, Bangkok, ECPAT International and Plan International Asia Regional Office.**

This report is a thorough review of laws and enforcement practices on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Indonesia. The study was part of an investigation by ECPAT International and Plan International Asia Regional Office into legal and administrative provisions for children in this area. The review highlights the lack of victim protection in sex crimes against children.

Among the important recommendations are for the Government of Indonesia to ratify the Optional Protocol to the CRC. The Indonesian Child Protection Act has been used successfully to prosecute sex offenders, but there is little or no information available on arrests, prosecutions or convictions for facilitating the forced prostitution of children.

When sex with children is offered for it is implicitly viewed as a consensual activity and therefore not subject to prosecution unless violence is involved. Children may testify in court, but their testimony is not given the same weight as that of an adult and, for the purposes of prosecution, must be supported by the testimony of adults. False identification papers often prevent prosecution because children's age cannot be established.

## **India**

**Bhat, A., 2004, *Report on laws and legal procedures concerning the commercial sexual exploitation of children in India*, Bangkok, ECPAT International and Plan International Asia Regional Office.**

This study is part of a series of investigations into law and law enforcement conducted by ECPAT International and Plan International Asia Regional, and explicitly broadens the discussion from a previous focus on legislative review, to how legislation is enforced. Victim protection emerges as a clear need. The study recommends enacting 'a comprehensive law...that defines and prohibits the commercial sexual exploitation of children in all its forms' (page 1). The question of what is to be done with children 'rescued' from brothels forms part of the discussion. In general, government-run welfare homes are viewed as only one step better than jails; some of their young residents were unaware of any difference. The author argues for care for victims that will replicate the 'social fabric' of community life.

## **Nepal**

**Pradhan-Malla, S., 2004, *Report on laws and legal procedures Concerning the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Nepal*, Bangkok, ECPAT International and Plan International Asia Regional Office.**

This review of law and legal procedures states that traditional temple prostitution among the Badi and Deuki communities is still practiced; girls under 15 years of age are offered to temples. The report mentions unsubstantiated claims that some children in orphanages have been exploited ion forced prostitution. Foreign adoptions and the lack of border control are noted as particular challenges. The author calls for extra-territorial legislation to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

## **South Asia**

**Bhat, A., (ed.), 2005, *Landmark judgments on violence against women and children from South Asia*, Delhi, South Asia Regional Initiative/Equity Support Program.**

This collection of landmark judgments is very well edited, with summaries of each judgment and their importance in establishing benchmarks on particular issues relating to children and prostitution. The book came out of a meeting of regional activists on violence in 2004, which agreed on the need to pull together and disseminate the more progressive judgments regarding violence against women and children. USAID funded the project.

Chapter 5 on judgments relating to child abuse notes there are very few judgments from Bangladesh, Nepal or Sri Lanka on any form, including sexual abuse, demonstrating that jurisprudence in this area is yet to develop, though all the countries concerned had ratified the CRC more than a decade ago.

Included in this collection are South Asian cases which established:

- The need for transparency and the visible administration of justice. (This was with respect to a case in which a very young child was raped while in police custody and two other children were accused by police of the offence);
- The circumstances under which a statement by a child can be changed and still be considered valid (In this particular case the rape victim, a 16-year-old-girl, was still drunk at the time of giving her first statement in which she stated that the sex had been consensual);
- Procedures that would help child victims testify at ease in court. Such procedures include extending the use of testimony in camera, testifying outside the court environment, and providing a support person for child witnesses;
- How child contradictions in children's testimonies should be evaluated;
- That central government has a duty to develop schemes for the care and protection of child victims of sexual exploitation;
- That children brought out of brothels should be treated as children in need of care and protection.

## **Sri Lanka**

**Seneviratne, M., (ed.) 2006, *CSEC: The crime against children*, Colombo, PEACE Campaign.**

The Penal Cod of Sri Lanka was amended in 1995, and again in 1998, in order to increase penalties for child abuse. This publication is a collection of writings about the prosecution of child-abuse offenders, recovery and prevention in Sri Lanka. Some of the information was generated by PEACE campaign volunteers monitoring court cases involving child-abuse offences, indicating a trend towards minimum sentencing and suggesting a rift between the aims of children's-rights activists and civil-rights activists, who do not support the changes.

Vitit Munthaborn's essay in this volume is an exception in its international scope, reviewing recent trends in law and practice regarding cyberpornography involving children. His essay concludes with 10 key recommendations for best practice against child pornography on the internet.

Some other essays contain general assertions about children and prostitution practices that are either not referenced to any source or are vaguely referenced. Children are viewed as innocent and helpless.

One writer claims that more boys than girls are 'vulnerable to CSEC' (page 192). Another links maternal absence with family problems, including the fact that many

mothers have migrated to the Gulf countries for work, leaving their children especially vulnerable (page 151).

**Asian Development Bank, 2003, *Combating trafficking of women and children in South Asia: Regional synthesis paper for Bangladesh, India and Nepal*, Manila, ADB.**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) views trafficking as part of labour migration, and prostitution as one of many forms of employment sought by labour migrants. The text focuses mainly about how to mainstream trafficking interventions into existing ADB operations. There is an implicit recognition that infrastructure development as well as disasters and conflicts result in population displacement, and hence that it is necessary to work with mobile populations to 'rebuild social and human capital'. The report is particularly interesting in its attention to the impact of infrastructure development on trafficking and prostitution: for example where the arrival of large labour gangs may increase demand for sexual services, including those of children, recommending that the ADB apply codes of conducts to its private-sector contractors.

Nevertheless, although specific actions are recommended the language is extremely tentative, for example: 'Labor standards must be addressed to curb the demand for trafficked labor, but this is very challenging in the informal sector and can create suspicion from within the formal sectors as measures by developed countries to limit trade from economies with cheap labor' (page 169).

Generally, ADB favours addressing the demand side for trafficked labour (it does not say how) and to provide 'safe migration' messages to potential labour migrants (it does not say what). ADB suggests that it is necessary to reintegrate returning migrants into their communities, and recognizes the important role of migration in economic development. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as the relevant framework for sub-regional cooperation on trafficking.

Overall, this is a useful sourcebook of stakeholders, legal frameworks and current projects, though likely to soon become outdated.

**Alberta Children's Services, 2004, *Protection of children involved in prostitution: Protective Safe House Review*, Edmonton, Alberta Children's Services.**

The report evaluates the usefulness of 'protective safe houses' in the Canadian state of Alberta, where a 1999 law and its 2001 amendment allows for limited confinement of children found to be involved in prostitution. The safe houses often deal with immediate needs of physical safety, hunger, fatigue and detoxification when customers are first admitted. Customers are typically female and often drug and/or alcohol users. The evaluation judged that safe houses were useful in providing young people with a safe space for detoxification, information and reflection on future life directions. The 2001 amendment allowed for a longer period of confinement, so as to get beyond the detoxification stage and allow time for other activities.

Safe houses also were successful in building general community awareness and cooperation among agencies around the issue of child sexual exploitation. However there were unintended impacts: the exploitation of children in prostitution was possibly forced underground or into other provinces, and safe houses may facilitate recruitment of children into drugs and prostitution by other residents. Some customers may view confinement as punishment.

Cost-effectiveness was low as the facilities were under-used, due to few customers being apprehended. Respondents thought that boys, children involved in prostitution through the internet, and 'non-traditional forms of prostitution', were overlooked by social services and the police.

Recommendations were for more regular and consistent psychological counseling, services specifically for Aboriginal customers, more outlets for physical activities, and greater support when placing customers to new placements following their stay in the safe house.

**Altamura, A., 2007, *Distilling elements of good practice: The Action Programme Against Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes*, Bangkok, ECPAT International.**

Altamura attempts to draw out elements of good practice from various activities by ECPAT's partners in Costa Rica, Thailand and Ukraine: The activities are: an information campaign giving 'safe migration' messages in Costa Rica, training for government and local NGO staff in how to handle trafficking cases in Thailand, and a hotline to help trafficking victims in the Ukraine.

The principles of good practice reported in this volume include: peer-to-peer advocacy, involvement of anti-trafficking stakeholders in developing project activities, and reference to international human rights standards and conventions in information or training material.

These are project descriptions rather than evaluations. There is a tendency to report project activities as achievements, and evidence of success is based on favorable comments by interviewees involved in the programme, rather than on empirical evidence of behavior change. The Ukrainian anti-trafficking hotline did report actual usage, logging roughly 100 calls a week for the period in question, of which 17 percent were from children and 72 percent were enquiries about working and vacationing in other countries. It is claimed that 'hotline counseling has a subtle impact on behaviour' (page 31) though without evidence being presented to justify this claim.

'Integrated' approaches are praised. 'Integrated' appears to mean that people from various disciplines are involved in providing the service, and/or that state, private sector and community groups are cooperating. Another important meaning of 'integrated', in this context, is that different government departments are cooperating, so as to overcome problems of administrative fragmentation. For example, a 'case conference' approach to dealing with victims of trafficking is promoted in the Thai activities.

Activities employed as 'anti-trafficking' initiatives are extremely broad in scope and difficult to compare. Those chosen for inclusion in this small volume do not have a specific emphasis on children, although children are among their target beneficiaries. A more satisfactory approach to distilling elements of 'good practice' would compare like with like: a hotline for example with other hotlines. It would be useful to see how the globalization of public policy is beginning to play out in the arena of programming against the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and whether the same interventions can work (in other words, have a measured impact) in a variety of settings. The programme information provided in this and other 'good practice' compilations does not yield this kind of knowledge, nor does it attempt to differentiate between the kinds of services needed by children, as opposed to adults.

**Baker, R., 2001, *The sexual exploitation of working children: guidelines for action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour*, London, UK government Department for International Development (DFID) Social Development Department.**

This set of guidelines provides background information and checklists of possible actions for aid planners to help address the issue of sexual exploitation of working children.

The report is useful in identifying actions to be undertaken and noting the limitations of research at the time of publication - the absence of reliable information, the duplication of inaccurate research, disproportionate attention to the more sensational aspects of child labour and a focus on child protection to the neglect of civil and political rights.

The guidelines examine issues around the implementation of ILO Convention 182, including the difficulty of distinguishing migration from trafficking and the association of trafficking with sex work, to the neglect of domestic work, construction labour, forced begging and forced marriage. It notes the polarization of ideological debate around the legitimacy of commercial sex work as a means of livelihood.

The UK Department for International Development (DFID), which commissioned the report, adopts a broad definition of sexual exploitation to include not only the sale of sex, but also sexual abuse by employers and co-workers, and demands from teachers and elders for sexual favours. Hence the home, school and workplace are all potential venues of sexual exploitation. Residential centres for children are singled out as particular sites of concern, and development workers are mentioned together with tourists as potential abusers.

DFID's approach to addressing the exploitation of children in prostitution is to engage in effective partnerships with various stakeholders, based on an analysis of who they are, their comparative advantages, what information exists and what work has already been done. Solutions include the development of regional policies on trafficking, closing the gap between international conventions and domestic legislation, and capacity development in the judiciary and police. DFID prioritises the mainstreaming of children's rights, generating new knowledge about the exploitation of children in prostitution, and making targeted interventions.

**Marshall, P., 2001, Globalization, migration and trafficking: Some thoughts from the South-East Asia Region, paper presented to the Globalisation Workshop in Kuala Lumpur, 8-10 May 2001, UN Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking in Women and Children in the Mekong Sub-region.**

Although some discussion of human trafficking has taken place in the Mekong region in the context of the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, trafficking still resembles a cottage industry more than a globalized network. The author recommends regularizing labour migration, where feasible, giving greater attention to the rights of migrants, and setting in place rights-based measures for trafficking prevention and repatriation of victims.

**Melrose, M., 2004, Young people abused through prostitution: Some observations for practice' in *Practice*, 16 (1), 17-30.**

The author notes the paradigm shift in relation to the treatment of young people involved in prostitution, from control and punishment to care and welfare, represented most strongly by the Britain's Sexual Offences Act 2003, which penalizes adults who buy or sell sex from children. However, government guidance issued by the Department of Health in 2000 still allows for the prosecution of teens 'persistently and voluntarily returning to prostitution'. The author argues that such difficult cases should be dealt with through an increased level of care via 'joined-up' government services that would take account of the circumstances in which young people choose to persist in prostitution.

**Peters, H., 2007, *Sex, sun and heritage: Tourism threats and opportunities in Southeast Asia, a report on best practices on tourism and trafficking*, Bangkok, UN Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking in Women and Children in the Mekong Sub-region and World Vision Asia Pacific.**

This general appraisal of measures against child sex tourism focuses on programmes in Thailand and Cambodia. Programmes mainly target tourists and the adults who may deal with them, such as police officers, hotel staff and drivers. The exception is where children themselves are involved in skills development and training. Again, given the wide range of activities that are considered to counter child sex tourism and trafficking, 'best practices' here refer to types of activities (for example, skills training for working children is one, police training is another) rather than a particular type of activity being executed at a high level of skill or competence.

Awareness-raising campaigns and skills training are targeted in the report. The author reports that most awareness-raising campaigns are not evaluated. Those that are, rely on baseline and post-campaign market research on community attitudes to child sex tourism. The author identifies some confusion in campaigns that aim to deter tourists from having sex with children, but picture young, pre-pubescent children in their materials. Not only do these fail to present the message that sex with under-18-year-olds is against the law (not every tourist may know this), they may unintentionally promote the availability of young children for sexual exploitation in that country to true paedophiles, who already understand that their activities are illegal.

Training exercises with government or tourism industry staff are evaluated through post-training questionnaires – this appears to be a ‘customer satisfaction’ approach (in which the trainees are customers of the training agency) rather than a follow-up of institutional practice.

Hotlines for tourists or victims are hampered by a lack of capacity to deal with situations that are reported.

Nevertheless, a number of activities are considered ‘best practice’: training police officers has a key role in arresting sex tourists, training operators of smaller guesthouses, who may facilitate sex tourism in their establishments, and on-street training and licensing of taxi drivers, who often take tourists to brothels.

Peters bemoans current focus on Northern tourists by anti-sex-tourism agencies, while those from East Asia or neighbouring countries tend to be ignored (though at the time he was writing, this was beginning to change). One explanation may be that anti-sex-tourism activities are a public policy activity that donor countries have successfully outsourced to ‘sub-contractor’ states. Since Northern donors and international non governmental organizations have been main donors to the Thai and Cambodian governments as well as to local NGOs, preventative actions have tended to focus on Northern tourists.

**UNESCAP, 2001, Good practices in combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia, Bangkok, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and Japan Official Development Assistance.**

This series of case studies is the result of a United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) programme for strengthening of social services and health personnel in 12 countries in Asia. UNESCAP identified ‘psychosocial and medical services’ as part of the Stockholm Agenda that had at that time received insufficient resources. From 1998-2001 this human resource development programme focused on training service providers in order to assist ‘recovery and reintegration of child victims into mainstream society’.

The UNESCAP approach, in common with many agencies, links ‘sexual abuse’ and ‘sexual exploitation’, casting the exploitation of children in prostitution along a continuum of child abuse. The programme funded a very wide range of approaches, from community-based work through NGOs, to government or multi-stakeholder partnerships such as the Thai National Youth Council and the Bangladesh Department of Social Welfare and Development. While some of the partners employed community-based approaches, the programme reflected a general shift towards the professionalization of care for victims of sexual trauma. This clearly requires ongoing resources within the medical and social work arenas, an issue that the programme itself was unable to address except in the broadest generalities. For example, the village-level workshops run by a Cambodian NGO were reckoned to be sustainable because other NGOs were beginning to ‘incorporate the messages of the prevention programme into their activities’ – a view that presumes the ongoing support of other donors. A need for victim protection, as well as for protecting social workers involved in difficult cases, was recognized.

One approach that has received little attention, but supported by the programme in Bangladesh, was the advocacy of brothel-based sex workers in policing against the recruitment of under-age girls. The same NGO also worked with grassroots organizations of women who had organized successful community-based resistance against sexual abuse, exposing threats of rape to schoolgirls, who were subsequently kept at home for their own safety, and getting them back into school.

**UNESCAP, 2001, *Asia-Pacific answers: Good practices in combating commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth*, Bangkok, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).**

These examples of good practice are presented in five areas of intervention identified by World Congress I: prevention; protection; recovery and reintegration; child participation; and coordination and cooperation. The title is a misnomer as these are not specific examples of good practice, but descriptions of organizations. Sometimes a single type of activity is presented as good practice, but, just as frequently, a multi-pronged approach involving different activities is described.

This style of documentation serves to promote agencies, but does not help to identify good practice in a way that can be replicated, as neither the problem nor the solution is clearly conceived, and there is little attempt to separate out specific kinds of activities for comparison with each other, or to identify principles of good practice in key areas. For that matter, there is not really any common conception of 'good'.

It is possible to categorize the approaches presented in this volume into 'law and law enforcement', 'labour', 'social services' and 'child-empowerment' methods. UNESCAP has maintained a fairly even-handed approach in the kind of programme activities it has supported, with work that falls in all four areas. For example, in the area of prevention, a programme equipping disadvantaged girls to work in the hotel industry, as well as 'Child Wise' tourism industry training for ethical practice against the exploitation of children in prostitution, are both presented as examples of good practice in prevention – a combination of 'labour' and 'social services' solutions. Examples of coordination between government agencies and levels of government are also put forward as good practice.

The report shows that is needed now is a move towards specific, detailed comparisons of similar kinds of interventions as well as more long-term views of impacts in different environments and programme settings. Such a move also might highlight issues of implementation more clearly. At present, common failures of implementation in the area of law and law enforcement are almost always traced to a lack of capacity in enforcement personnel in developing countries. In contrast, failure of implementation in Canada, where small numbers of child prostitutes are actually apprehended, is traced to conflicting principles: the need to respect the agency of children close to adulthood conflicts with need to protect them. In contrast to the exploitation of children in prostitution. Child pornography does not face such a conflict and consequently arrest rates for the production and circulation of pornography are higher (Alberta Children's Services, 2004).

### Attachment 3: Indicators of reliable information

Source: UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, *Reliable Information Data Base*

	Optimal score	Minimum acceptable score
<b>Basic indicators</b>	18	13
<b>Methods indicators</b>	14	9
<b>Data indicators</b>	14	10
<b>Total</b>	46	32

#### Basic indicators

*Indicator: The information is provided by a credible organization/individual*

No information provided about the origin of the research	Score 0
Information about who commissioned or instigated the research, but no contact details	Score 1
Information about the institution/individual responsible for the research, with contact details	Score 2
Full details of the process of commissioning/instigating the research, responsibilities of organizations/individuals involved, with contact details	Score 3

*Indicator: The aims of the research are clear and appropriate*

No information about aims	Score 0
Vague or broad aim(s)	Score 1
List of aims and objectives not closely related to methods or conclusions	Score 2
List of aims, objectives and outcomes that matches methods and conclusions	Score 3

*Indicator: The research based on adequate review of already-available information*

No reference to secondary data or information	Score 0
A list of literature reviewed with mention of results/'findings' but no comparison or critique	Score 1
A literature review with some attempt at critical analysis and comparison, but not referred to within the discussion or conclusions	Score 2
A full review of existing literature and statistics, critically examining their reliability, integrated with research questions, research design, analysis and conclusions	Score 3

*Indicator: Ethical issues have been properly addressed*

No consideration of ethical issues	Score 0
Passed by an official ethical committee (for example of a university)	Score 1
Specific discussion of the ethical issues associated with research with vulnerable children, but no details of ethical strategy adopted or of ethical issues that arose in data collection	Score 2
Ethical strategy incorporated in research design, addressing issues of confidentiality, informed consent and trauma prevention; together with evidence that this strategy has been used consistently in data collection.	Score 3

*Indicator: The research approach is children-centred/focused*

Children are objects of adult concern and their opinions are not included as data; adults are asked <i>about</i> children	Score 0
Children's experiences and opinions are sought, using methods more appropriate for adults	Score 1
Children's experiences and opinions are sought using appropriate methods for children, but not collected or analysed systematically	Score 2
Children's experiences and opinions are sought using appropriate methods, collected and analysed systematically and compared to data collected with adults.	Score 3

*Indicator: Appropriate definitions are used for child-protection issues*

No definitions used	Score 0
Definitions based on media reports	Score 1
Definitions appropriated from literature review without discussion	Score 2
Definitions fully discussed and explained and consistent throughout report	Score 3

## **Methods indicators**

*Indicator: Research methods are adequately described*

No mention of methods	Score 0
Methods mentioned but not described	Score 1
Brief description, no research tools attached	Score 2
Full description, tools attached	Score 3

*Indicator: More than one method is used*

Only one method used	Score 0
More than one method used, but data not compared	Score 1
A variety of methods used and some comparisons made between the data collected through each method	Score 2
A variety of methods used and data triangulated	Score 3

*Indicator: The methods are appropriate to the research questions and the research population*

Methods inappropriate for use with the sample population, for reasons of age, gender, education, language, religion, ethnicity or culture	Score 0
Methods adapted for some characteristics of the sample population	Score 1
Methods developed into research tools targeting specific samples, taking age, gender, education, language, religion, ethnicity and culture into consideration	Score 2

*Indicator: Researchers were trained and supervised*

No training or supervision, or characteristics of researchers mentioned in the report	Score 0
Some basic training for data collectors, but no mention of supervision or quality control during data collection	Score 1
Researchers trained to use research tools they understand and supervised for quality control during data collection	Score 2
Researchers involved in research design, supervised during data collection and providing feedback during analysis	Score 3

*Indicator: Researchers/data collectors were appropriate for the sample population*

No information	Score 0
Some characteristics of data collectors mentioned, but not linked to characteristics of sample population	Score 1
Data collectors had some similarities (for example of language and gender) to sample population	Score 2
Data collectors systematically matched with sample population	Score 3

## **Data indicators**

*Indicator: The report provides sufficient information about the sample size, location and conditions of research*

No information	Score 0
Vague information about where the research took place	Score 1
Details of place(s), times, sample size(s) and characteristics, but no control group	Score 2
Details of places, times, sample size, sampling method(s), characteristics of sample populations, together with context information and control group	Score 3

*Indicator: Details are provided about any factors that might have affected data quality*

No information	Score 0
Brief description of obstacles encountered	Score 1
Some consideration of effects of obstacles on data-collection process and data quality	Score 2
Detailed description of precisely how obstacles encountered may have affected data	Score 3

*Indicator: Data have been properly analysed, including cross-checking between results of different methods and different populations (triangulation)*

Data not presented or only one method used	Score 0
Data presented without comment or triangulation	Score 1
Data compared between methods	Score 2
Data triangulated with research questions and literature review	Score 3

*Indicator: Conclusions are firmly based on data*

No relationship between data and conclusions	Score 0
Conclusions based on data but not on research questions	Score 1
Conclusions refer back to research questions and examine each in the light of data collected.	Score 2

*Indicator: The research is replicable*

Insufficient information about methods or samples for the research to be repeated later, or in a different location	Score 0
The research might be adapted for use in a different location or with a different sample, but could not be replicated for the original location/similar sample (for example in monitoring or evaluation)	Score 1
Research design could be used in the original location, with a similar sample for comparisons and causal inferences to be possible	Score 2
Research design could be used elsewhere for comparative purposes	Score 3