



# THE DEMAND FOR THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN BY THE INDIRECT EXPLOITERS

## The Intermediate Level of Demand

This Summary Paper explores the intermediate level of the Demand Tree as introduced in Summary Paper 2. Demand for the sexual exploitation of children (SEC) can be generated by a variety of offenders and met through several channels. Seeking children for sexual purposes can be pursued directly by searching for potential victims on streets, beaches, bars, brothels, public parks, ports, industrial areas, train and bus stations, cybercafés, under bridges and in other places where young people live and gather. In addition to physical encounters, children can be approached virtually through information communication technologies (ICTs), through Social Networking Sites, online gaming and other virtual channels. Although some children may act independently without the intermediation of a procurer (for example by engaging in “sex for survival” on the streets in exchange for food, shelter or drugs) the bulk of the demand for sexual exploitation of children, including of a commercial nature, is brokered by a number of facilitators who reap the benefits of the SEC highly profitable business. This Summary Paper will highlight the role played by intermediaries acting both online and offline in connecting the predator with the victim. From a demand perspective, the intermediate level of causality may be regarded as particularly critical because it is at this junction that SEC is organised into a system servicing direct offenders in their pursuit to obtain sexual services from children. In this space, where the demand for SEC is brokered, the market is structured to allow demand to meet the supply and profit to be generated.

### Family and Community Members

Many children are exploited by someone they know. Family or community members may broker their own or other children by offering them for the purpose of creating child sexual abuse materials (CSAM).<sup>1</sup> Traffickers systematically recruit girls from among destitute families proposing to marry the child for free,

<sup>1</sup> UNODC (2015), “Study on the Effects of New Information Technologies on the Abuse and Exploitation of Children”, May 2015, Vienna: UNODC, 29.

or deceitfully offering boys and girls work or education opportunities as a route out of poverty.<sup>2</sup> When forced into child labour, victims are at risk of highly exploitative forms of work and sexual exploitation, including domestic work where isolation in strangers' homes expose children to several forms of sexual harassment.<sup>3</sup> Child labourers may also be involved in informal occupations linked to the travel and tourism industry, where outsiders may exploit them sexually or take photographs for illicit purposes.<sup>4</sup> From exploitative labour to slavery relating to prostitution and pornography, the step may be equally short for children having no alternatives. ICTs can be used to facilitate trafficking of children by advertising victims on the Internet and facilitating transfers via mobile phones.<sup>5</sup>

## Pimps, Traffickers and other Intermediaries

Facilitators of SEC play a central role in the chain of exploitation. They may be directly involved, acting as pimps and traffickers, or may instead service the child sex trade from the outside, in a role as more indirect intermediaries. Pimps are individuals who directly operate the child sex business.<sup>6</sup> They establish contact with victims, entice them into sexual exploitation and make them available to sexual predators, whether they are local or travelling offenders.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, traffickers are primary facilitators of SEC and their role varies throughout the different phases of the trafficking process, including by recruiting, transporting and exercising control over children.<sup>8</sup> Indirect intermediaries support the SEC process on the fringes as an extra source of income<sup>9</sup> receiving a percentage of the profits from the exploiters and/or the victims. They include hotel staff, taxi drivers, formal and clandestine tourist guides, owners or housekeepers of residences, street sellers and members of the local community among others.<sup>10</sup>

Although facilitators are often men, women are also involved as traffickers, brothel owners and in other roles as profiteers of the sexual exploitation business, in some contexts even outnumbering male intermediaries. It is noteworthy that, as compared to other crimes where female participation in total number of convicted persons was found to be in the range of 10-15 per cent, trafficking in persons involved a higher proportion of women offenders.<sup>11</sup>

Many children engaged in the adult prostitution industry, including trafficked girls, are commonly used for the purpose of online sexual exploitation, including CSAM.<sup>12</sup> Pimps may use ICTs to establish contact with clients and market sex services.

2 *Ibid.*

3 OSCE (2010), "Unprotected Work, Invisible Exploitation: Trafficking for the Purpose of Domestic Servitude", Vienna, 17-18 June 2010, 21, accessed 9 July 2016, <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/75804?download=true>.

4 ECPAT International, Defence for Children-ECPAT Netherlands (2016), "Offenders on the Move. The Global Study Report on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism", May 2016, 27,28, 50, 51.

5 Frederick, John et al. (2010), "Trafficking and Exploitation in the Entertainment and Sex Industries in Nepal: A Handbook for Decision-Makers", Terre des Hommes, Kathmandu, 28.

6 UN Human Rights Council (2015), "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography", UN Doc. A/HRC/31/58, 30 December 2015, para. 35.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*

9 IIN (2007), "XIII Informe al Secretario General de la OEA Sobre las acciones emprendidas por los Estados Miembros para combatir la explotación sexual comercial de niñas, niños y adolescentes en las Americas", 18-19.

10 Sotelo, Marco (2013) "Experiencia de colaboración bilateral en el combate de la explotación sexual comercial de niños, niñas y adolescentes asociada al turismo en Costa Rica y su aplicabilidad en el combate de la Trata de niños, niñas y adolescentes con fines de explotación sexual", Oficina Internacional de los Derechos del Niño, Bogotá, 2013, 17; INN (2007), "XIII Informe al Secretario General de la OEA Sobre las acciones emprendidas por los Estados Miembros para combatir la explotación sexual comercial de niñas, niños y adolescentes en las Americas", IIN, 2007", 18-19; Fundación Renacer – ECPAT Colombia (2015), "Explotación Sexual Comercial De Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes en las Ciudades de Acacias, Cartagena y Leticia, Colombia", Working paper, 2015, 12; ECPAT International, "Informe de monitoreo de país sobre la explotación sexual comercial de niños, niñas y adolescentes: Colombia", 52.

11 UNODC (2014), Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.V.10, 27, accessed 9 July 2016, [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP\\_2014\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP_2014_full_report.pdf).

12 UNGIFT (2008), "The Vienna forum report: a way forward to combat human trafficking", 11-12.

## Peers

Peers, both boys and girls, can operate as SEC facilitators leveraging the empathic relationship established with victims to earn their trust and manipulate them.<sup>13</sup> In the U.S.A., increasingly teenage boys recruit younger girls into the sex business, working for older pimps and thus protecting the more senior pimps from detection,<sup>14</sup> whereas in Canada, trends have been recorded of young people “pimping each other out”.

ICTs may serve to amplify the problem by facilitating the objectification of children, especially girls.<sup>15</sup> A recent phenomenon stemming from ICTs is sexting and sextortion among peers. Sexting involves youth sending self-produced sexual images using electronic media.<sup>16</sup> There has been a trend of girls being trapped in sextortion by boyfriends who had recorded sex scenes through hidden cameras and later blackmailed them and their families, or uploaded the material on the Internet for sale as pornography. In fact, young people are more likely to receive requests for sexual images from peers than from strangers. While sexting is often coercive,<sup>17</sup> even those engaged in sexting willingly are at risk for unknowingly adding to the supply of illegal online CSAM.<sup>18</sup>

## Criminal Networks

The multi-billion dollar profits generated by illegal SEC have attracted the interest of organised crime, which has been traditionally gaining from prostitution.<sup>19</sup> Organised criminal networks are also active in the area of CSAM production and distribution.<sup>20</sup> Online forms of organised crime “differ from traditional notions of organised crime that rely on physical violence and trust-based relations... [instead,] ICTs may lend themselves to short-lived networks across vast differences and among offenders who do not have any in-person connection”.<sup>21</sup>

## Modelling Services

It has been documented that questionable modelling agencies have been active in some European destinations to entice children into sexually exploitative activities. Adolescents have been used by such agencies to produce pornographic material.<sup>22</sup> These services may be organised by transnational child sex

13 Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas (2014), “La explotación sexual comercial de niñas y adolescentes en Nicaragua”, Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas, Managua, 35.

14 SharedHope International (2012), “DEMAND. A Comparative Examination of Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States”, accessed 5 September 2016, <https://sharedhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/DEMAND.pdf>.

15 Ringrose, Jessica et al. (2012), “A qualitative study of children, young people and ‘sexting’, A report prepared for the NSPCC”, 7-8, accessed 5 September 2016, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/qualitative-study-children-young-people-sexting-report.pdf>.

16 Wolak, Janis and Finkelhor, David (2011), “Sexting: a typology”, *Crimes against children research center*, 2, accessed 5 September 2016, [http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV231\\_Sexting%20Typology%20Bulletin\\_4-6-11\\_revised.pdf](http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV231_Sexting%20Typology%20Bulletin_4-6-11_revised.pdf).

17 Ringrose, Jessica et al. (2012), “A qualitative study of children, young people and ‘sexting’, A report prepared for the NSPCC”, 7.

18 Wolak, Janis and Finkelhor, David (2011), “Sexting: a typology”, 2.

19 ECPAT International (2015), “Their protection is in our hands. The state of global child trafficking for sexual purposes”, ECPAT International, Bangkok, 2015, 27.

20 UNODC, “Study on the Effects of New Information Technologies”, 33.

21 *Ibid.*

22 ECPAT International, “Global Monitoring status of action against commercial against sexual exploitation of children: Ukraine”, Bangkok: ECPAT International, 13, accessed 7 July 2016, [http://www.ecpat.net/sites/default/files/A4A\\_V2\\_CIS\\_UKRAINE.pdf](http://www.ecpat.net/sites/default/files/A4A_V2_CIS_UKRAINE.pdf).

offenders, or by local criminal networks to create a pool of children to respond to the demand of child sex abusers. Model agencies have been identified as recruiters and producers of CSAM in a number of regions, including Eastern Europe,<sup>23</sup> South Asia,<sup>24</sup> Africa<sup>25</sup> and North America.<sup>26</sup>

## ICT Facilitation

Information and communication technologies, when misused, can turn themselves into powerful facilitating mechanisms for SEC. Indirect exploiters have found a number of ways to leverage ICTs to their advantage. Facilitators of SEC, potentially better organised than the direct exploiters, have been known to use ICTs to seek clues from what children mention online to better target potential victims. This may include watching Social Network Sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, to find children who are particularly vulnerable due to personal issues taking place in their home or community. Similarly, the indirect exploiters can find details with respect to country, city and even schools, by “trolling” or investigating specific content being posted by the child or about the child. This has been noted in the cases of pimps and traffickers trying to find young people for their “clients”.

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> ECPAT International (2014), “The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in South Asia: Developments, progress, challenges and recommended strategies for civil society”, 31, accessed 7 July 2016, [http://www.ecpat.net/sites/default/files/Regional%20CSEC%20Overview\\_South%20Asia.pdf](http://www.ecpat.net/sites/default/files/Regional%20CSEC%20Overview_South%20Asia.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> eNCA (2015), “Boy, 10, testifies in modelling boss sexual assault case”, 7 October 2015, accessed 7 July 2016, <https://www.enca.com/south-africa/boy10-testifies-modelling-boss-sexual-assault-case>.

<sup>26</sup> Gould, Dave (2013), “Anthony Fonseca: Modeling agent faces additional child pornography charges”, WPTV, 17 July 2013, accessed 7 July 2016, <http://www.wptv.com/news/region-c-palm-beach-county/west-palm-beach/anthony-fonseca-modeling-agent-faces-additional-child-pornography-charges>.

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