

PREVENTING THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN:

Frameworks for Intervention

ECPAT is a global network of civil society organisations dedicated to ending the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.



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During the drafting of the articles for this Journal, ECPAT International held two Global Expert Meetings to elicit the advice from a variety of multi-sector specialists. The first meeting, a Round Table Discussion on Preventing the Sexual Exploitation of Children, was held in Geneva on 2 October 2015 and participants included: Margaret Akullo, Alessia Altamura, Anastasia Anthopoulos, Florence Bruce, Mark Capaldi, Donald Findlater, Susanna Greijer, Mark Hecht, Lori Heise, Christopher Mikton, Julia O'Connell Davidson, Lorraine Radford, Eliana Riggio, Dorothy Rozga, Maia Rusakova, Lucie Shuker, Joe Sullivan and Jane Warburton. The second meeting took place in Paris from 5-6 October 2015 and was part of the Global Study on the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism. Participants included: Angela Hawke, Catherine Beaulieu, Clara Sommarin, Dorine van der Keur, Dorothy Rozga, Eliana Riggio, Elise Bonneau, Emilia Pool Illsley, France Charlet, Frans de Man, Guillemette Vuillard, Ilana de Wild, Mark Capaldi, Matthias Leisinger, Prof. Mark Eric Hecht, Mechtild Maurer, Milena Grillo, Dr. Najat Maalla M'jid, Özgür Kahale, Theo Noten and Vimala Crispin. ECPAT International wishes to thank all these individuals for their valuable time and inputs.

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ECPAT International

328/1 Phayathai Road Ratchathewi
Bangkok 10400 THAILAND

Tel: +662 215 3388, +662 611 0972 Fax: +662 215 8272

Email: info@ecpat.net Website: www.ecpat.net

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PREFACE

Over the last 25 years, much of the prevention work to end the sexual exploitation of children (SEC) has been in developing responses around criminal justice interventions or broader awareness-raising and campaigning of the dangers and harms associated with this type of child sexual abuse. More recently, however, a number of sectors and agencies have been exploring the potential of developing a more nuanced and conceptual framework to tackle prevention utilising a public health model. Such an approach has generally distinguished three levels of prevention: Primary Prevention (preventing SEC before it would otherwise occur); Secondary Prevention (reducing the risk of SEC in “at-risk” groups); and Tertiary Prevention (preventing further SEC offences through interventions specifically targeting child victims or offenders). The “prevention dimension” is arising from a growing interest in understanding and tackling social norms related to the demand for sex with children which can then be approached through different angles and perspectives.

The new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda, adopted in September 2015, provides an unprecedented opportunity for ending the sexual exploitation of children. It poses a fundamental question regarding what may be the most effective approach to prevent and protect vulnerable child populations from increasing exposure to sexually exploitative environments. This latest ECPAT Journal (Series 11), *Preventing the Sexual Exploitation of Children: Frameworks for Intervention*, seeks to map and shape a framework to understand how diverse interventions can be applied to prevent different manifestations of SEC. It emerges from a number of ECPAT-led initiatives in 2015 which included an examination of evidence-based SEC prevention frameworks while also identifying emerging responses to prevention approaches in other aspects of the child rights field.

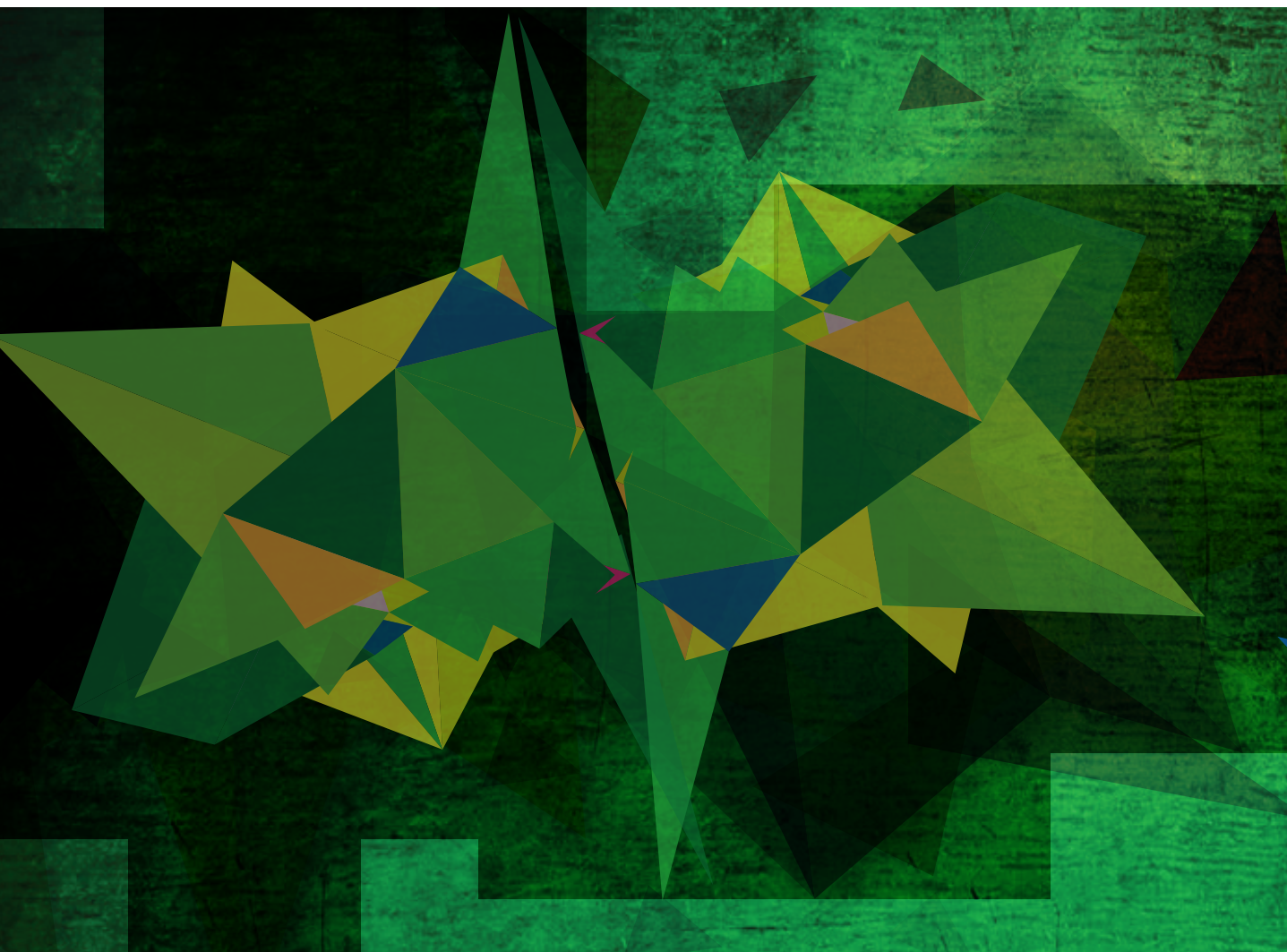
The first article in this Journal, *Preventing the Sexual Exploitation of Children: A mapping of practice and interventions*, outlines a prevention framework for reviewing practices globally based on examples from the ending sexual violence sector. By illustrating interesting “lessons learned” from prevention interventions, the article identifies some of the current gaps, ongoing questions and challenges in replicating or scaling up successful prevention strategies.

The second article, *Towards a Prevention Framework for Child Sexual Exploitation*, starts from the premise that global approaches to prevention through a more “public health” lens will enable child rights actors and duty-bearers to see how diverse interventions can be applied in relation to different manifestations of SEC as well as in various regions and nations of the world (due to cultural and contextual differences). Key lessons learned are extracted from the conceptualisation of prevention approaches in order to offer a more nuanced understanding of effective prevention strategies. The paper proposes a draft conceptual framework which can be tested and developed further.

Emerging from the soon to be launched Global Study on the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism is the third journal article: *Better Understanding for Better Prevention of the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism: An analytical framework for policy design*. This article practically illustrates an analytical framework, specific to a major manifestation of the sexual exploitation of children. By focusing on prevention, this framework aims to produce changes in the contexts of the socio-economic environment and the contexts of potential offenders and child victims.

From this Journal it is evident that different sectors and partners need to be connected to a SEC prevention agenda so that key factors and determinants that lead to the sexual exploitation of children can be adequately addressed. These may be socio-cultural, structural, situational, relational, environmental or personal drivers, but they all need to be better understood and integrated into a much broader and more comprehensive framework. This Journal helps start that process.

Rebecca H. Rittenhouse
Legal Research and Monitoring Officer
ECPAT International



Preventing the sexual exploitation of children: A mapping of practice and interventions

by: Jane Warburton

INTRODUCTION

Existing data suggests that vast numbers of children are sexually exploited, probably in all countries, every year. A response model can never reach all of those affected. We already know something of the immediate and longer-term impact on child victims, and the potential for a wider ripple of impact or

long and short term consequences that affect families, children and communities. However, the lack of focus on preventing violence from happening in the first instance, based on the assumption that such behaviour is inevitable, unchangeable, and/or is a marginal issue (none of which are valid), has meant that the response to the recovery and reintegration of child victims of sexual exploitation is always trying - and failing - to catch-up. As such, a model that seeks to prevent such abuse from happening in the first instance has to be the priority for future development.

This paper looks primarily at current practice and asks: who is doing what, where and with whom, to prevent the sexual exploitation of children. One of the recurring issues is the significant gaps in the evidence about what works, including little or no clarity or consensus about what constitutes success. But this paper also starts from the premise that the absence of evidence of efficacy or impact does not mean that interventions are ineffective. Gaps in the evidence are a major issue in terms of the potential for developing, scaling up or replicating such work, but it is important to recognise and appreciate the current and potential learning that is or could be offered by existing interventions. The paper offers examples of interesting prevention-related interventions, including those that, through rigorous research and evaluation, have been able to demonstrate impact and concludes by exploring some of the current gaps, ongoing questions and challenges of preventing the sexual exploitation of children (SEC).

A MODEL FOR PREVENTION

A prevention model, based on the World Health Organization (WHO) public health framework, looks at primary, secondary and tertiary prevention efforts. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation's Eradicating Child Sexual Abuse (ECSA) project¹ has used this to structure and categorise work aimed at preventing sexual abuse and exploitation of children. This looks at:

- Work aimed at preventing sexual abuse/exploitation before it happens (primary);
- Work aimed at those considered at high or higher risk of perpetrating sexual abuse/exploitation and/or those at high risk of being victims of it (secondary);
- Work aimed at reducing the risk of reoffending or continuing to perpetrate sexual abuse/exploitation, and/or of being revictimised (tertiary).

The tools developed by the Foundation are intended to facilitate and provoke discussion and comparison across the isolated silos that have epitomised much of the prevention work to date.

While this focus on the prevention stages is very helpful, it might also be useful to think about an additional dimension; who or what is being targeted. Much of the work to date has focused on influencing individuals. However, this approach could be taking place without reference to the societal or structural drivers that maintain or perpetuate certain patterns of sexual abuse and exploitation. This will be further discussed in the section addressing norms and societal tolerance.

UNDERSTANDING RISKS OF PERPETRATING SEXUAL VIOLENCE TO PREVENT SEC

A prevention model is premised on understanding the risk factors or vulnerabilities for being a perpetrator and/or a victim of sexual abuse or exploitation and assumes that at least some of these elements are amenable to change. We know that these risk factors/vulnerabilities are complex, interconnected and dynamic. They operate at the level of the individual, community and society. Their impact is influenced by the presence or absence of protective factors, again operating at different levels.

¹ See: http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/ecsa_eradicating_child_sexual_abuse.htm

Understanding the risk and protective factors related to different forms of violence may help answer the questions about the relevance of data from other sectors to a study of sexual exploitation of children. In the absence of comprehensive and specific data about perpetrators and victims of child sexual exploitation, much of this paper looks at the data generated from the broader category of sexual violence. The assumption of some connection between these different forms of violence needs further research and testing. Certainly, more needs to be understood about the similarities and differences in respect of the risks and protective factors that apply to different sorts of sexual violence.

Based on existing evidence, it is clear that the risks of becoming a perpetrator and the risks of becoming a victim of sexual violence are similar.

“Risk factors for being a perpetrator include low education, exposure to child maltreatment or witnessing violence in the family, harmful use of alcohol, attitudes accepting of violence and gender inequality. Risk factors for being a victim of intimate partner and sexual violence include low education, witnessing violence between parents, exposure to abuse during childhood and attitudes accepting violence and gender inequality.”

There may be a gender dimension to this. Are boys more likely to become perpetrators than girls, and girls more likely to be victims than boys? Under-reporting suggests the need for considerable caution around such statements.

An increasing number of studies are looking at some of the factors that increase the risks linked to becoming a perpetrator of sexual violence and/or an exploiter of children and young people. While there are gaps in the sector’s knowledge, there is some understanding of the *factors* that make it more likely that someone will become a perpetrator of sexual violence. Reviews of available evidence undertaken by the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), and the Partners4Prevention programme in Asia highlight the following groups of risk factors that escalate risks of perpetration, which are potentially amenable to change: a strong association of men’s use of sexual violence and their own experience of violence in childhood (as victims and/or witnesses)^{3,4}. Other adverse childhood experiences linked to later perpetration include disrupted attachments, parental experience of excessive drug and alcohol use; strong gender inequitable norms and attitudes⁵ (this is seen by some as the predominant risk cluster, both at a structural and an individual level); and age – half of men that perpetrate rape did so for the first time as juveniles⁶. Sexual violence is also associated with other forms of “delinquent” behaviour particularly among young perpetrators, including the use of weapons and the use of alcohol. In some ways all of these are connected to certain views of masculinity and attitudes towards gender.

Additional or more specific factors identified include:

- Attachment and personality disorders;
- Social learning and delinquency; and
- Substance abuse and the use of firearms⁷.

In determining appropriate interventions or practice, it is important to make some of the starting assumptions clear. These include:

- Sexual violence is widespread, across all societies and predominantly perpetrated by men and boys;

2 World Health Organization (2016), Violence against Women Fact sheet No. 239, updated January 2016, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/>

3 See: <http://www.partners4prevention.org>

4 Fulu, Emma, *et al.* (2013), “Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women and How Can We Prevent It? Quantitative findings from the United Nations multi-country study on men and violence in Asia and the Pacific”, UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV.

5 Jewkes, Rachel (2012), “Rape Perpetration: A review”, Pretoria: Sexual Violence Research Initiative.

6 Jewkes, R., *et al.* (2011), “Prospective study of rape perpetration by young South African men; incidence and risk factors for rape perpetration”, Pretoria: SVRI.

7 Jewkes (2012), “Rape Perpetration”.

- Prevention of sexual violence cannot simply rely on empowering victims or potential victims, or by responding once the abuse has taken place; and
- Addressing the use of and tolerance of sexual violence is an issue for the whole of society.

The two principle strands of work explored are:

- Work with men and boys on reducing the risks of perpetrating sexual violence;
- Work aimed at reducing the risks of being exploited.

Prevention work aimed at men and boys

Is male violence a biological inevitability? Clearly not. The majority of men, (around 80% according to the previously cited survey work undertaken by SVRI and others) are not perpetrators of extreme forms of sexual violence. However, a significant percentage of the male population do currently perpetrate some form of sexual violence. All interventions aimed at preventing this start from the basis that such behaviour, and the attitudes and norms that maintain or “tolerate” it, can be changed.

To be effective, we might assume that efforts to prevent such violence from happening must address both the risk factors that operate at the level of the individual, and those that work at a societal or structural level. This includes challenging the acceptance or tolerance of the use of violence, understanding more about the risk factors and how they operate, and identifying and expanding ways in which these risks can be effectively reduced, at both individual and structural levels. Different interventions and programmes operating at the individual and structural levels may complement, reinforce and thus accelerate or sustain change. While this seems to be a realistic assumption, it does need to be tested further as there is, as yet, little documented evidence of these inter-relationships.

The link between experience of sexual abuse as a child and later perpetration is complex. It needs to take account of gender and the presence or absence of protective factors. It has been suggested that exposure to a number of interacting stressors/difficulties is much more significant than any one experience, including being a victim of sexual abuse⁸. The idea that the majority of sex offenders are or were all victims of sexual abuse has been challenged⁹. Different figures for prevalence have been generated using self-report mechanisms (where more than 66% claimed to have been sexually abused) and those using polygraph testing (which suggested about 29%, more in line with population figures in general), indicating some over-reporting by offenders¹⁰.

Those most likely to engage in sexual violence also reported higher rates of depression, low life-satisfaction, poor health, gang membership, alcohol and drug use, and the use of transactional sex¹¹.

How all of these factors connect causally or inter-relate is not clear from the data, but understanding more about the trajectory and connections might help in developing a range of interventions that can contribute to reduced risks of perpetration.

Reducing risks by reducing childhood exposure to violence in the family setting

There is a link between the experience of or witnessing violence in the family and later perpetration of sexual violence. Thus, interventions aimed at reducing violence in the family, family support, strengthening parent-child attachment and promoting positive non-violent forms of discipline, are all strategies with

⁸ Hackett, Simon (2004), “What works for children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours”, Barnardo’s publications.

⁹ Richards, Kelly (2011), “Misperceptions about child sex offenders”, *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice*, no.429, Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology (September 2011).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Fulu, *et al.* (2013), “Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women”.

the potential to reduce the perpetration of sexual violence, in the short, medium and longer term. Most of these interventions to date have focussed at the level of the individual or family. However, it is possible to envisage broader policy and structural frameworks that apply some of these lessons and understandings to encourage an environment that is pro-family, and affirms and applauds positive parenting.

Evidence about effectiveness of such interventions comes predominantly from work in high income contexts, but a review of work in low and middle income countries¹² suggests that parenting interventions in some of these countries have improved parent–child relationships and reduced negative parenting practices, lessened the incidence of violence within families, and can contribute to reducing the likelihood of the later perpetration of violence by children from those families. Two high quality studies offered models for intervention design in low–resource settings. They suggest that “it is feasible to: use non-professional local staff to deliver interventions to parents; deliver interventions through home visits; and, add interventions to routine health services for pregnant women and new mothers.”¹³ Further research in lower income contexts, specifically aimed at establishing if and how these mainstream parenting programmes might contribute to a reduction in violence, is currently being implemented in Tanzania and Uganda, supported by SVRI¹⁴.

Reducing the risks of perpetration of sexual violence through understanding and challenging social and structural norms that perpetuate sexual violence

Social norms theory suggests that it may be more effective to understand and focus on changing social norms rather than individual attitudes. Social norms operate in, and influence virtually all of the situations faced by communities. They condition or dictate the behaviour of individuals. Targeting certain norms may be especially relevant “for addressing situations of violence, including exploitation and abuse against children and women, as these are primarily the result of social interactions.”¹⁵

Social norms theory suggests that for behaviour to change, it is necessary to understand and focus on changing dominant social norms rather than seeking to generate change through challenging individual’s attitudes and beliefs. Understanding more about norms, how they operate and thus how they might be changed is a key element in framing future work.

The recent surveys undertaken in a number of different countries and contexts, using rigorous tools and analytic frameworks¹⁶ have highlighted a number of common societal factors associated with the perpetration of violence. Intimate partner violence is strongly associated with gender inequity at both the individual level, and in terms of the dominant norms shared by men and women. This has been identified by some as the predominant factor determining the use of and attitudes towards sexual violence¹⁷. At a societal level, the data identifies power differentials, gender and gender inequitable attitudes, including a sense of male entitlement to sex, as some of the critical drivers of violence against women. The use and tolerance of violence may be seen as simply a question of who has power and the ability to use that power to maintain a position of dominance. Where the victims of violence are children, especially female children, power is related to both age and gender, both of which correlate negatively with power and status in many societies. It is essential to assess how risks and protective factors around reducing the risks of perpetration of violence against children really are similar to or differ from those that make violence against women most likely.

12 Knerr, Wendy, *et al.* (2011), “Briefing Paper: Preventing child abuse and interpersonal violence in low- and middle-income countries”, SVRI.

13 *Ibid.*

14 See: <http://www.svri.org/primaryresearch.htm>

15 UNICEF (2013), Report of Advisory Group Meeting: “Social Norms and Community-based Care Programming in Humanitarian Settings: Building ‘Good Practice’ Approaches for Primary Prevention of Response to Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls Affected by Conflict”.

16 Including the IMAGE study, Partners4Prevention and SVRI.

17 Jewkes (2012), “Rape Perpetration”.

Social norms interplay with individual characteristics, and are affirmed by other experiences or challenged by protective and positive elements within the individual, family and environment. Negative norms can be maintained and reinforced through the behaviour associated with them. These all contribute to a distorted and limited vision of masculinity based on power, strength and control which can contribute to the normalising of sexual violence, the use of sexual aggression and a sense of male entitlement. As an example, the Partners4Prevention surveys found that rape was most commonly associated with a sense of sexual entitlement; reported by 70 – 80% of those who had raped¹⁸.

Men Care and their global fatherhood campaign, is trying to challenge aspects of norms around masculinity and gender, and highlight positive alternative versions of men and fatherhood. Strategies include community dialogue, information sharing, highlighting possible alternative views and visions, and enlisting the support of key influencers or alternative champions¹⁹.

Transformational work needs to be seen as a process that generates a sustainable momentum which is then “mutually-reinforced”. Once that critical momentum or tipping point is reached, there is a real prospect of men and women’s attitudes around gender norms and the behavioural and practical implications of such norms being irreversibly changed. Work targeting norms has to be planned, strategic and well monitored. It needs to be carefully tracked to determine if and what is changing over time. It needs to be comprehensive, sequenced and nuanced to deal with particular issues or contexts. Broad based messages and scattergun methods of reaching people are liable to be off-target and off-message for many groups. Work that is currently underway in East Africa, looking at applying social norms theory to better understand the structural drivers of HIV transmission, including sexual violence and sexual behaviour, is helping to gain much better insights into who the key reference groups are, key opinion formers and influencers, and pointing to a more targeted approach for work aimed at changing norms and behaviour²⁰. Such work offers critical insights into how to plan and implement effective communications, media and campaigning work.

Efforts need to build on the fact that the vast majority of men do not use sexual violence. The results of surveys in Asia found significant numbers of men expressed frustration and concern about the negative but dominant notions of what it means to be a man. Others have already found ways of behaving that embodies gender equity and power sharing. Understanding more might lead to identifying possible opportunities and entry points for the difficult task of changing something so entrenched.

To be effective in changing male attitudes and the norms around the use of violence, engagement with women and girls is a necessity. Partners4Prevention included women in their surveys, and found that they tended to be more conservative and gender inequitable than their male counterparts. As daughters, partners and mothers, these attitudes are crucially important in maintaining gender inequity.

The media can play an important role in reinforcing or challenging dominant norms. The ways in which gender roles are depicted in the media, how masculinity and femininity are portrayed, can have a major influence, particularly in relation to how children and young people think about and understand societal expectations²¹. In addition to countering the negative influences, it is important to recognise the opportunities for more effectively using this power to challenge and change them, at scale. This requires good strategies, alliances that bring together different skills and entry points and training^{22 23}.

18 *Ibid*.

19 See: <http://www.men-care.org/>

20 UKaid, Department of International Development, “Tackling the Structural Drivers of the HIV Epidemic (STRIVE)”, <http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/Project/60850/Default.aspx>

21 See, for example, the work being supported through the Geena Davis Institute: <http://www.thegeenadavisinstitute.org/index.php>

22 See: http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/beyond_access_media_guide.pdf; see also: <http://www.mediaed.org/cgi-bin/commerce.cgi?display=home>; <http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/support-youth-challenging-gender-stereotypes/>

23 See: http://www.nhs.uk/serewash.com/safeguarding/all_of_our_concern_commercialisation_sexualisation_hypermascularity_report_family_lives.pdf

Reducing risks through school-based interventions

The data, collected from a variety of contexts and cultures, shows that age, i.e. being young, is a risk factor in the perpetration of sexual violence. Partners4Prevention found that 50% of perpetrators committed acts of sexual violence for the first time while they were teenagers²⁴. This clearly suggests that the focus of violence prevention work must include work targeting young men and boys in terms of influencing their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour, before they become entrenched. The aim would be both to influence individual knowledge and behaviour, but also to encourage change in broader societal perceptions and norms.

Primary level interventions include mainstream work in schools and alternative education settings. This has the potential to reach all young people before they become perpetrators. The “standard intervention” might also be developed or enhanced to strengthen work with those considered at higher risk (secondary level prevention) and those who have already offended (tertiary).

One of the starting points for challenging and changing gender norms, attitudes and beliefs among school-aged children is understanding what they are, how they vary, and identifying appropriate strategies for challenging perceptions and norms that are problematic. Research conducted in Bulgaria in 2012 by Gender Education, Research and Technologies Foundation²⁵ surveyed 1600 children aged between nine and seventeen. They found that across a number of dimensions children hold non-equitable attitudes and beliefs around gender. Children are influenced by their family and community attitudes and norms, and the media. These socially determined stereotypes potentially impact a whole range of behaviour and life opportunities for both boys and girls.

The school environment and the teaching that takes place there can empower, instruct and model gender equitable attitudes and behaviour. Schools can also be places where violence is routinely practiced by those in authority (often men), in the name of discipline; they can reinforce harmful masculinities, abusive patterns of power and authority, and sustain a regime where victims are impotent and silenced. Training and challenging these negative norms can change the dominant behaviour patterns. The Good Schools Programme, implemented by Raising Voices in Uganda, has recently demonstrated significant reductions in the use and witnessing of violence in schools through engagement, discussion and offering alternative ways of understanding and disciplining children²⁶. To be effective the intervention is more than a one off lesson; it is a whole school approach, which models respect and gender equitable approaches and challenges negative behaviour and violence.

One of the mainstream entry points has been through sex or sexuality education. While such programmes are widespread, their content and aims vary considerably. Internationally, clear guidance around content and delivery modalities has been developed, particularly in the context of their use as part of efforts aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention and response. Evaluations tend to look at teenage pregnancy and sexual health, onset of sexual activity, reduction in the frequency of sexual activity, reductions in numbers of sexual partners, and increase in condom and contraceptive use²⁷. Programmes’ effectiveness has been demonstrated for youth from a variety of racial, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, though most of the evaluations of this work have been undertaken in higher income countries. Though the majority of such programmes have been implemented in school settings, there is clearly scope for such work to be

24 Fulu, *et al.* (2013), “Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women”.

25 See: “Gender equality: the perceptions and attitudes of children”, as part of Gert’s “Schools for gender equality and against violence” project (12 February 2013), <http://www.gert.ngo-bg.org/article231.html>

26 Devries, Karen, *et al.* (2015), The Good Schools Study, <http://evaluation.lshtm.ac.uk/good-schools-study/>; See also: United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative, Safe Schools Program, http://www.ungei.org/resources/index_2822.html

27 Examples include: Alford, S., *et al.* (2008), “Science and Success: Sex Education and Other Programs that Work to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, HIV & Sexually Transmitted Infections”, Washington, D.C.: Advocates for Youth; Wight, Daniel (2011), “The effectiveness of school-based sex education: What do rigorous evaluations in Britain tell us?”, *Education and Health* 29(4): 67-73; United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS (1997), “Impact of HIV and Sexual Health Education on the Sexual Behaviour of Young People: a Review Update”, Geneva: UNAIDS Best Practice Collection.

undertaken in less formal settings, with out of school children and young workers.

A considerable body of work aimed at helping to inform children about the risks of abuse and exploitation has been developed for delivery to younger children in schools, particularly in higher income contexts. A recent review suggests that while there is evidence of the positive impact of “school-based educational programs [that] teach children, [in terms of] ... how to identify dangerous situations, refuse an abuser’s approach, break off an interaction, and summon help ... promote disclosure, reduce self-blame, and mobilize bystanders” there is little evidence about “whether education programs reduce victimization”²⁸. There is some discussion in the literature that such work may in fact increase the level of violence associated with sexual abuse in some instances.

Learning from this body of work and thinking about how all these elements might be combined to strengthen their effectiveness can provide useful ideas for future developments. But direct evidence about if and how they impact risks of perpetration or experience of sexual violence generally, or sexual exploitation specifically, is rare or non-existent. While intuitively we might assume that a multi-pronged approach implemented simultaneously in schools, families and through the mass media with the larger community will create synergies and make success more likely in each of the domains, there is little evidence as yet to support this.

As such, one of the weaknesses in many programme evaluations is the choice of indicators or measures of success. A lot of work limits itself to measuring and reporting on changes in knowledge and self-reports, perhaps about actual or planned changes in behaviour. This is understandable, given the ethical, financial and lack of data challenges, but the assumptions about the validity of such measures need to be tested in different settings. Stepping Stones²⁹ and Sisters for Life³⁰, both implemented in South Africa, have been able to demonstrate sustained changes in attitudes and behaviour over time, and in the latter example, have shown a considerable reduction in the use of violence towards a partner.

Reducing risks by influencing bystander attitudes and behaviour

Work focusing on bystander attitudes and behaviour represents a growing body of work that recognises the value of “working with men and boys as potential allies, and to cultivate their commitment to and capacity for preventing and intervening.”³¹

A rigorously evaluated sexual violence prevention programme aimed at increasing the role of the bystander, based on a community of responsibility model, demonstrated both attitudinal and behaviour change which were sustained over time. This programme was delivered in only one session, reaching both women and men as potential bystanders, teaching them how to intervene safely and effectively in cases of sexual violence before, during, and after incidents with strangers, acquaintances or friends³². This suggests that if an intervention complies with the best available evidence in terms of content and targeting, it might help to maximise impact, even with a very low level of “treatment”.

Work that aims to help people to better protect children in their families and communities is premised on the belief that equipping people with information helps them be more alert to the warning signs in the behaviour of a “would-be abuser”, themselves or others, and encourages and supports them to take action to stop it. StopitNow has been implementing such programmes in the United States since 1992,

28 Finkelhor, D. (2009), “The prevention of Childhood Sexual Abuse”, <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV192.pdf>

29 See for example: <http://www.steppingstonesfeedback.org/index.php/page/Resources/gb?resourceid=24>

30 Kim, Julia, *et al.* (2009), “Assessing the incremental effects of combining economic and health interventions: the IMAGE study in South Africa”, *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 87(11): 824-832.

31 Ricardo, Christine, Eads, Marci and Barker, Gary (2011), “Engaging Boys and Young Men in the Prevention of Sexual Violence”, Pretoria: SVRI and Promundo.

32 Banyard, Victoria L., *et al.* (2007), “Sexual violence prevention through bystander education: An experimental evaluation”, *Journal of Community Psychology* 35, Issue 4 (May 2007): 463-481.

and the United Kingdom since 2002³³. It is always hard to generate reliable data about prevention efforts, but their data about the numbers of people accessing and using their information and reporting concerns to their help lines suggests that these services are reaching and informing potentially protective adults, both men and women.

TERTIARY LEVEL PREVENTION: REDUCING RISKS THROUGH WORK WITH OFFENDERS AND THOSE WITH HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR; CURRENT PRACTICE AND THINKING

Much of the work that is labelled “prevention” of sexual violence against children focuses on work with those who have already been convicted. It certainly dominates the more accessible literature on the topic.

The assumptions underpinning this focus area are that:

- The majority of those engaged in harmful sexual behaviour with children are men and boys;
- Most sex offenders start sexually abusive behaviour as children or young adults;
- Early intervention is helpful in reducing the risks of perpetration; and
- Many interventions have only been tried and tested in high-income, high-resource environments and new models of work that can be helpful in low-income contexts need to be found.

While the focus of much of the rest of this paper has been on preventing sexual violence in the first instance, there is interest in and support for work with those who are convicted of sexual offences against children as a means of reducing the risks of further offending. Much of the evaluated practice around prevention has focused on this tertiary prevention work with individuals post-offence. Despite its prevalence in the literature and discussions, there are limitations:

- The vast majority of the work is taking place in the United States, Northern Europe and Australia. There are very few studies in low resource contexts;
- Little or no data rigorously comparing outcomes of different tertiary prevention approaches; and
- Almost no comparison of the costs and impact of tertiary versus primary or secondary prevention efforts.

There are downsides to this approach; its dominance limits the development of alternatives. Certainly in many contexts tertiary prevention work receives all, or a disproportionate share, of the available resources, which in turn curtails the development of, or even thinking about, other models. This limits options and discourages innovation.

It is probable that simply transferring any model of practice from one context to another is neither possible in terms of resources, nor effective in terms of outcomes.

“Whilst potentially tempting, the application of one nation’s “solution” in a different country – in the absence of an analysis of the utility of that “solution” to the different types and circumstances of abuse in that country – can lead to poor policy and practice that fails to tackle the problem of CSA [child sexual abuse]. Every nation needs the confidence and knowledge to develop and deploy a response suited to its own circumstances rather than to simply implement solutions created elsewhere”³⁴.

³³ See: <http://www.stopitnow.org.uk/>; <http://www.stopitnow.org/>

³⁴ Lucy Faithfull Foundation (2013), Eradicating Child Sexual Abuse project flyer.

But tertiary prevention work has demonstrated some positive outcomes. With dedicated resources and the political and public support to develop intense therapeutic models of work for convicted child sex offenders, there are indications of reductions in rates of recidivism. However, opinion around impact is divided. Research suggests that good assessments, that identify good candidates for therapeutic programmes, are critically important; i.e. tertiary prevention programmes are not universally effective. There are chronic offenders, perhaps 10% of those convicted of sexual offences against children³⁵, who have offended over most of their lives, show little motivation to change and offend against large numbers of children; these offenders are very difficult to deter through standard interventions. For them, alternative approaches may be necessary. This suggests that risk prediction and good assessment are key elements in selecting the right candidates for therapeutic programmes.

It has been suggested that many of the available tools, though widely used, are of limited value and that community-based programmes are generally more effective than prison - based programmes, although the majority of investment goes to prison-based work³⁶. This may be the result of high rates of public concern and political pressure to be seen as punishing, controlling and containing such offenders.

Some approaches that take place outside of correctional institutions are being implemented and evaluated. One model of working in communities with professional supervision and management through systems of community support, oversight and accountability is the Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) programme. This uses groups of volunteers with professional supervision to support sex offenders as they reintegrate into society after their release from prison. Evaluations of COSA indicate that participation in a COSA programme can result in statistically significant reductions in repeat sexual offences in 70% of cases, relative to that predicted by risk assessment or matched comparison subjects³⁷. While such results are extremely encouraging, more work and longer term evaluation are needed to strengthen the evidence for such work, and to determine if and how such a model might be adapted to different contexts.

Currently, there is little or no exchange and reflection that crosses the very established silos that separate tertiary prevention interventions from efforts that might be labelled as primary or secondary prevention efforts. In the absence of a common language, shared indicators and different ways of reporting success, this segregation or separation is perpetuated. This means that opportunities for learning, sharing results and adaptation are extremely limited. A project being coordinated by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation project ECSA³⁸ aims to find out more about effective and promising primary, secondary and tertiary prevention responses to child sexual abuse from around the world, and facilitate an active discussion and exchange. At the heart of the work is support for “out of the silo” thinking and debate, creatively connecting people employing diverse strategies and expanding the focus. By sharing and supporting reflection and discussion on the best available evidence from primary, secondary and tertiary prevention work, the project hopes to support the development of responses and prevention efforts that are realistic, sustainable and effective.

Work with adolescents with harmful sexual behaviours

Given estimates that a very significant percentage of those sexually abusing children are themselves under the age of eighteen, and that most men who will ever perpetrate a rape will do so for the first time as adolescents³⁹, it is important to explore what we know about reducing the risks of offending/re-offending by adolescents.

35 Smallbone, S., Marshall, W.L., and Wortley, R. (2008), “Preventing child sexual abuse: Evidence, policy and practice”, Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.

36 *Ibid.*

37 Wilson, R. J., Cortoni, F., and McWhinnie, A. J. (2009), “Circles of Support & Accountability: A Canadian national replication of outcome findings”, *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research & Treatment*, 21(4): 412-430.

38 See: http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/oak_foundation_international_toolkit.htm

39 Jewkes, R., *et al.* (2011), “Gender inequitable masculinity and sexual entitlement in rape perpetration in South Africa: findings of a cross-sectional study”, SVRI and South African Medical Research Council.

Young people who sexually offend are a diverse group, with different backgrounds, offence and risk profiles and treatment needs. There is research that offers some optimism about the potential for reducing the risks of sexual offending by young people⁴⁰. It stresses the importance of not viewing adolescents just as “small adults”; work with young people needs to take full account of the specific developmental stage and needs of this population. It also suggests that interventions should be holistic, looking both at the specific abusive behaviour, but also wider aspects of the young person’s functioning, citing the positive results generated by developmentally specific cognitive behavioural work. There is evidence that such approaches have supported young people to move away from spiralling patterns of sexual abuse into appropriate and healthy forms of sexual expression⁴¹.

Work that is explicitly resilience- based is interesting and promising. It takes account of the fact that not all children exposed to the same risks or adversities will respond in the same way. Many young people with harmful sexual behaviours have low self esteem, limited life opportunities and chances to set their own goals; all factors that are suggestive of low levels of resilience. Work aimed at strengthening resilience and enhancing self esteem and social competence may be critical in helping them change, something that can be lost in the interventions that focus only on the deficits or problematic behaviours.

“Programs that appear most likely to demonstrate treatment effects are those that address functioning in a broad range of areas, including the individual, family, school and community systems ... a reliance on individual-level interventions by themselves appears unlikely to lead to the reductions in recidivism associated with the more holistic treatment approaches. It also appears that involvement of families is an adjunct to successful treatment.”⁴²

Community-based interventions can be delivered at significantly lower cost than those relying on residential provision, and may be more or as effective.

Optimism about the future for young people with sexually harmful behaviour is also based on an understanding that the rates of transition from adolescent to adult sex offender are now thought to be much lower than previously assumed. The challenge for programmes for adolescents who sexually offend is therefore to provide “high quality assessment” and “appropriate intensity of intervention for higher-risk youth, while ensuring that valuable treatment resources are not wasted and that lower-risk youth and their families are not drawn into intensive, protracted, and often highly intrusive interventions.”⁴³

PREVENTING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION BY REDUCING THE RISKS OF BEING SEXUALLY EXPLOITED

To prevent the sexual exploitation of children it is necessary to understand the risks that make it more likely that someone will be a victim, and how risks and protection interact. These risks and protective factors operate at a range of levels – from societal and structural to individual, family and community. However, it needs to be remembered that many of these factors are linked. Many children’s lives are characterised by a range of risks that create complex, connected difficulties that demand a range of connected or coordinated opportunities and/or interventions to break the vicious cycle of disadvantage and vulnerability. Defining children by any one “label” is a gross distortion of their reality.

⁴⁰ Hackett (2004), “What works for children and young people with sexually harmful behaviours?”.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Nisbet, Ian, Rombouts, Sacha and Smallbone, Stephen (2005), “Impact of programmes for adolescents who sexually offend”, NSW Department of Community Services.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

Previous experience of sexual exploitation

Much of the work on sexual exploitation to date has focused on rescuing children from situations of exploitation, and supporting and facilitating their physical and emotional recovery. These projects recognise the importance of and potential for “preventing future exploitation” through supporting children to successfully and permanently exit a situation of sexual exploitation, on the basis that children who have been sexually exploited are at a much increased risk of being re-exploited in the future. The focus of the work is thus both recovery and successful reintegration⁴⁴.

There has been considerable debate about what is effective in facilitating the recovery and reintegration of children who have been sexually exploited. The data is limited; in most instances there has been no medium or long term follow up or tracking of the affected children and their communities; thus the data on the real impact in terms of risks of reintegration is very limited.

A qualitative research project in India, supported by the Oak Fellow on Recovery and Reintegration from UHI/Perth College, with the School of Women’s Studies at Jharkhand University, followed by a consultation with practitioners, identified some key recommendations for practice⁴⁵:

- Engaging with and listening to children to get their inputs into the development of programmes and policy. The absence of children’s voices in design, monitoring and evaluation of interventions was a significant weakness in ensuring that services responded to the needs of children and their families, and remained on track as the situation evolved;
- Developing relevant, real and sustainable opportunities for education, training and work, to provide alternative sources of income for children and their families. Many of the existing projects were criticised for their lack of relevance in terms of longer term livelihood and income generation opportunities; some had very high operating costs and were probably not scalable or replicable. Many bore no relationship to market realities and longer term job opportunities; and
- Working with communities to reduce stigma. For many girls, in many contexts, the community continued to blame the children for their abuse, and perceived them as “damaged”. One of the consequences of this was that the girl and her family search for a marriage as soon as possible. In one follow up study undertaken by Groupe Developpement, both the girls and their families saw marriage, as quickly as possible, as the best possible outcome. Given that the negative attitudes towards these girls continue to prevail in many communities and may well be shared by prospective husbands, there are clearly concerns about the nature of some of these marriage contracts⁴⁶.

More broadly, the work undertaken through UHI-Perth College as a follow up to the Asquith and Turner Report⁴⁷, has included a review of current practices focused on reintegration (“going home”), integration into new communities, safe accommodation, and education and training. Four working papers highlight what is currently being implemented. However, these papers emphasise the lack of research and rigorous evaluation, the absence of consensus on what constitutes success and almost no longitudinal studies to demonstrate the sustainability of changes in risk factors⁴⁸. This makes it difficult to compare findings, draw out learning and identify successful strategies to inform future development of practice and policy. Work on establishing an agreed framework for monitoring and evaluating practice is ongoing⁴⁹.

44 <http://www.childrecovery.info/> is a website, supported by Oak Foundation, aimed at expanding and exchanging expertise and insights from practitioners and researchers across regions.

45 School of Women’s Studies (2012), “Look at us with respect: Perceptions and experiences of reintegration: The voices of child survivors of sexual exploitation and practitioners in West Bengal and Jharkhand”, India: Jadavpur University.

46 *Ibid*.

47 Asquith, Stewart and Turner, Elspeth (2008), “Recovery and Reintegration of Children from the Effects of Sexual Exploitation and Related Trafficking”, Geneva: Oak Foundation.

48 The Child Recovery and Reintegration Network, The “what do we know about...” series, <http://www.childrecovery.info/Our-working-papers.175.0.html>

49 See: http://www.childrecovery.info/fileadmin/pdf/130116_M_E_Reintegration_Toolkit_Plan.pdf

Barnardo's specialist interventions with sexually exploited children in the UK have identified a range of factors associated with increased risks of being sexually exploited. Their interventions targeted reducing these risks and/or strengthening the protective factors. The outcomes included:

- A reduction in the number of episodes of going missing;
- Reduced conflict and improved relationships with parents and carers;
- Access to safe and stable accommodation;
- An improved ability to recognise risky and exploitative relationships; and
- An increased awareness of their own rights.

Taken together, they concluded that these outcomes represented a significant reduction in the risk of the ongoing sexual exploitation for the young people concerned⁵⁰. This might be both a secondary and tertiary prevention strategy, targeting both those who have already been exploited and those considered at high risk.

Oak Foundation, with the support of an expert advisory group and local research teams in three research sites (Bulgaria, Ethiopia and Nepal), commissioned action research, the Bamboo project, designed to find out more from children about if and how the different factors that may contribute to resilience interact with and influence risks of and recovery from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation⁵¹. The project is first and foremost about listening to children, to understand more about their experiences, to inform thinking and the development of interventions. The risks identified confirmed much of what is already known, and included:

- Disrupted families and weakened support networks, whether the result of children moving, family members migrating or the death of parents;
- Experience of abuse and its impact on self-perception and self-esteem resulting from and reflecting the negative perceptions of others towards victims of abuse;
- Experience of violence in families, communities and schools;
- Economic imperatives, and the lack of alternative means of earning money or supporting themselves;
- Being out-of school;
- Peer norms – feeling part of, and being supported by a group in which sexual exploitation was a common practice; and
- Targeting by exploiters.

The research also asked children about what had helped them overcome their experiences of abuse and exploitation. Most children cited informal sources of support as the most important; individuals in the local community who supported them, treated them with respect, provided basic needs and were often instrumental in confirming their worth and inherent dignity.

Understanding and addressing risks associated with domestic work

Children in domestic work face a combination of factors that make them incredibly vulnerable to abuse; isolation, dependence, power differentials, separation from family and other support networks, low status, low self esteem and lack of alternatives. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 17.2 million children are in paid or unpaid domestic work in the home of a third party or employer⁵².

50 Scott S. and Skidmore P. (2006), "Reducing the risk: Barnardo's support for sexually exploited young people, a two-year evaluation", Essex: Barnardo's, http://www.barnardos.org.uk/reducing_the_risk_report.pdf

51 More information available on the Oak Foundation Bamboo Project website: <http://www.oakfnd.org/node/1318>

52 International Labour Organization, "Child labour and domestic work", <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Childdomesticlabour/lang--en/index.htm>

This carries inherent risks of abuse and exploitation, including non-payment of wages, physical violence, emotional abuse and sexual abuse⁵³.

The Bamboo research project in Ethiopia and Nepal found that the experience of abuse and exploitation in domestic work was one of the factors that precipitated or contributed to the move into sexual exploitation. Children in Ethiopia commented on the lack of any alternative way of earning money once they left their work place, as a result both of the immense stigma they felt was associated with being a victim of sexual abuse, and their own lack of qualifications/marketable skills.

Research with children in domestic work suggests that the interventions which appear to be having the most positive impact for child domestic workers are those which seek to: “(1) maintain or re-establish contact between the child and her/his close relatives; (2) intervene directly with their employers in a non-confrontational way; (3) support the establishment and strengthening of groups of domestic workers to represent and help themselves; (4) encourage child domestic workers back to education and to retain them by, for example, making schooling more child-friendly, in particular, more girl-friendly”⁵⁴.

Experience of violence and other forms of abuse in early childhood

Several studies (generally from North America or Europe) have suggested that one of the primary risks associated with being sexually exploited is the experience of abuse in childhood, particularly sexual abuse (although it is also clear that only “a small proportion of children who are sexually victimized subsequently become involved in trading sex for goods or money.”)⁵⁵ Child sexual abuse, particularly severe forms, and the co-existence of physical abuse, is a significant risk factor for sexual revictimisation⁵⁶. Child sexual abuse is also associated with engagement in high-risk sexual behaviour, such as early age of sexual activity, multiple sexual partners and “selling or exchanging” sex⁵⁷. Studies suggest that the experiences are connected both through the psychological and emotional consequences of abuse, and the increased likelihood of engaging in high-risk behaviours – leading to “a vicious cycle for many youth.”⁵⁸

One study involving in-depth qualitative research with forty-seven young and older people (all involved from an early age in prostitution) described how in order to exit and recover from such exploitation, they had to overcome some very concrete difficulties⁵⁹. These may have preceded or happened alongside their sexual exploitation. They included financial difficulties and debt; drug dependency; single parenthood; lack of qualifications and training to enable them to look for alternative employment; housing problems; criminal convictions (through prostitution); and abusive partners and/or pimps. Furthermore, many experienced low self-esteem, depression and other mental health problems. The same challenges were also highlighted by the young people who participated in the Bamboo study in Ethiopia. The longer young people remained involved, the more entrenched became the patterns of behaviour that kept them exploited, making it difficult for them to find a way out, particularly when they had lost contact with family and friends and their most direct peer groups were also all involved in sex work⁶⁰.

Most studies highlight a range of negative developmental experiences that are present in the lives of many of the young people who are sexually exploited/engage in sex work in later life. These include family problems; arguments at home; abuse and/or violence; running away from home or from substitute care; truanting from school; peer pressure; drugs; and losing contact with family and social networks.

53 See: Blagbrough, Jonathan (2008), “‘They respect their animals more’: Voices of child domestic workers”, Anti-Slavery International, http://www.antislavery.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2009/t/they_respect_their_animals_more_08.pdf

54 Children Unite (2013), “Policy Briefing: Child domestic work and the 2013 World Day Against Child Labour”, 12 June 2013, <http://www.childrenunite.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Policy-Briefing-WDACL.pdf>

55 Lalor, Kevin and McElvaney, R. (2010), “Child Sexual Abuse: Links to Later Sexual Exploitation/High-Risk Sexual Behaviour and Prevention/Treatment Programmes”, *Trauma Violence Abuse* 11(4): 159-77.

56 Classen (2005), cited in Lalor and McElvaney (2010), *ibid*.

57 Spatz Widom, C. and Kuhns, J.B. (1996), “Childhood Victimization and Subsequent Risk for Promiscuity, Prostitution, and Teenage Pregnancy: A Prospective Study”, *American Journal of Public Health* 86(11):1607-1612; an interesting prospective study that followed over 1000 people over time.

58 Stoltz, *et al.* (2007), cited in Lalor and McElvaney (2010).

59 Taylor-Browne, Julie (2002), “More Than One Chance: Young People Involved in Prostitution Speak Out”, London: ECPAT UK.

60 See: Oak Foundation, The Bamboo Project on Child Resilience, <http://www.oakfnd.org/node/1318>

Separation from family, including those in state care

Children who are separated from their families face a heightened risk of being sexually exploited. This may be the result of the combination of difficulties and disruptions, including those experienced in the family of origin, possibly some form of abuse, the death of a parent or poverty. Children who migrate or move without their families are extremely vulnerable to sexual exploitation, in transit and/or on arrival. This might be due to both those early life difficulties that lead to the separation, and to the loss of a protective or support network. Children on the move, children in state care and children living and working on the street are all also targeted by exploiters, making these children especially vulnerable.

A significant percentage of women and girls currently involved in sex work or being sexually exploited will have been in state care at some stage in their lives. A Report from the UK Children's Commissioner suggests that existing literature on child sexual exploitation in the UK indicates that between 20% and 35% of sexually exploited children are or have been in care, i.e. they are massively over-represented in the numbers of sexually exploited children⁶¹. Work in the UK has highlighted the targeting of such children by potential exploiters, who are alert both to failings in the system, and to the ease with which these children, who mistrust or are alienated from most other adults, can be manipulated and exploited.

In addition, children leaving the care system in many countries have few sources of support. Services and support often stops when children leave institutions, or reach 18 years of age. This might be the result of gaps in education, lack of income and earning options, high risk behaviours and/or poorly developed judgements that would help them identify risks and distinguish between positive and exploitative relationships.

Being out of school

Recognising the range of risks linked to the lack of access to education, there is a substantial body of work aimed at promoting and sustaining girls' enrolment in school. Much of this work measures outcomes in terms of enrolment or school attendance; few programmes look in detail at if and how this impacts on the experience of sexual exploitation and other forms of violence. The Girl Effect website⁶² provides incredibly powerful data on the range of benefits for the individual, family, community and country that can be generated by improving girls' access to school. Statistics shows that if adolescent girls stay in school, compared to their out of school peers, they start sexual activity later, are less likely to be subjected to forced sex, and if sexually active, are more likely to use contraception. They are likely to marry later and have fewer children. As a primary and secondary intervention, there would appear to be some very clear benefits of getting and keeping girls in school.

The Berhane Hewan project in Ethiopia⁶³ showed significant impacts on the social, educational and health status of adolescent girls in a relatively short period of time. The programme included community engagement on issues around early marriage and education for girls, coupled with economic incentives that were provided to families who did not marry off their daughters during the project period. Given that early marriage is both abusive and exploitative, and linked with increased risks of other forms of sexual exploitation (as for many girls the only option for getting out of an abusive marriage may be through running away and having to find any means of earning a living on their own), this approach offers an interesting example of a secondary prevention intervention.

61 Office of the Children's Commissioner (2012), "Briefing for the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Education, on the emerging findings of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups, with a special focus on children in care", http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/o/occ_accelerated_report_for_the_secretary_of_state_for_education.pdf

62 See: <http://www.girleffect.org/explore/taking-the-girl-effect-to-scale/deck-assets-the-world-for-girls>

63 Erulkar, Annabel S. and Muthengi, Eunice (2007), "Evaluation Of Berhane Hewan: A Pilot Program To Promote Education & Delay Marriage in Rural Ethiopia", Population Council.

While the data makes the benefits of girls being in school very clear, it must also be noted that schools themselves, and the journey to school, can increase the risk of sexual violence. Efforts to reduce these risks, through community engagement and improved accountability for the behaviour of teachers and others within the schools (and in other organisations), have helped to deliver safer spaces for girls⁶⁴.

Being out of school is also associated with increased risks of becoming part of a gang. Recent work – particularly in South Africa⁶⁵ and the UK⁶⁶ – has highlighted the importance of gang membership, both as a risk factor for being sexually abused and/or exploited, and for becoming a perpetrator of sexual violence.

Poverty

Poverty is recognised as a major risk factor that works on a number of dimensions of risk, including child marriage, sexual violence, including sexual exploitation, but also inadequate care and increased risks of all forms of violence⁶⁷.

In many cases, the connections are simple and obvious. Children without an alternative means of generating an income to meet basic needs are at higher risk of being sexually exploited. Where parents have to work outside the home, in the absence of alternative forms of child care, even very young children can be left unsupervised. In other cases, the connections are more complex but the evidence suggests clear connections between significant child protection deficits or risks and poverty.

Much of the work undertaken on assessing and addressing some of the risky behaviours associated with economic drivers comes from HIV/AIDS related work. The exchange of sex for money or gifts in sub-Saharan Africa has been widely reported. It is generally interpreted as a consequence of women and girls' poverty and economic dependence on men⁶⁸. Many have noted that impoverishment makes younger women vulnerable to the enticements of older men or 'sugar-daddies'⁶⁹. Recent research in Tanzania⁷⁰ has highlighted how such behaviour can change social norms. This research identified how there is a growing acceptance and expectation that adolescent girls provide sex (to boyfriends) in exchange for financial and other benefits that are used for meeting basic needs, including school fees. The social norms (of at least certain reference groups) suggest that girls and young women might under-value themselves if they did not negotiate some form of remuneration in exchange for sex. In turn, families are informed and influenced by such norms. One consequence is that they often do not allocate any or sufficient family resources to their adolescent girls, assuming that their "boyfriends" will meet the shortfall. One of the consequences of this is the increase in the number of sexual partners, to maintain or increase the "gifts" or payments received over time.

Projects implemented by BRAC in Uganda, for example, have demonstrated that efforts aimed exclusively at economic opportunities have shown less positive and sustained change than those that combine health-related education with livelihood or life skills training. This suggests that there has been greater take up of the health-related messages when these are offered alongside opportunities for cash transfer programmes and other economic incentives such as income generation. Similarly, the impact of livelihood training was greater when given alongside information that helped reduce the girls' exposure to risky

64 See: <http://www.chsalliance.org/who-we-are>

65 Jewkes, Rachel, *et al.* (2009), "Understanding Men's Health and Use of Violence: Interface of Rape and HIV in South Africa", Pretoria: Medical Research Council.

66 Jago, Sue, *et al.* (2011), "What's going on to Safeguard Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation? How local partnerships respond to child sexual exploitation", University of Bedfordshire.

67 Marcus, Rachel (2014), "Child Protection Violations and Poverty in Low and Middle Income Countries", ODI, <http://www.odi.org/publications/9044-child-protection-violations-poverty-low-middle-income-countries>

68 For example, Dunkle, K., *et al.* (2004), "Gender-based violence, relationship power, and risk of HIV infection in women attending antenatal clinics in South Africa", *The Lancet* 363(9419): 1415-1421.

69 See for examples: http://www.unicef.org/mz/cpd/references/84-womenGirls_AgeDisparate.pdf

70 Wamoyi, Joyce, *et al.* (2010), "Transactional sex amongst young people in rural northern Tanzania: an ethnography of young women's motivations and negotiation", *Reproductive Health* 7(2).

behaviours⁷¹. These efforts, aimed at disrupting the cycle of early marriage, adolescent fertility and lower and uninspiring economic opportunities, which combine health related education and life or livelihood skills, appear to have had significant results in terms of economic behaviours, health outcomes and agency and aspirations. The evaluation noted a 76% decrease in the number of girls reporting having had sex against their will.

CONCLUSION: ISSUES, QUESTIONS AND POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. It is essential that children and young people are a key part of assessing what works for them, and helping the various stakeholders to understand why and how they can contribute to the change⁷². These voices need to be at the centre of the policy and professional debates about effective prevention and response.
2. Recognising the impact of different terminology does not address the problem. What steps need to be taken to generate some consistency or clarity to help with comparison and evaluation?
3. What is the relevance of data and the potential for learning across different manifestations of violence? Specifically, how distinct is the sexual exploitation of children from the sexual exploitation of women? Does the data derived from work on gender-based violence sufficiently capture the “deviant” behaviours around the demand for sex with children? Does this depend on the age of the children concerned? More explicit discussions, across sectors, are essential if future work is explicitly going to be grounded in good data.
4. In both strands of work discussed here that aimed at reducing i) perpetration and ii) the likelihood of being a victim, it is essential that the impact on both these dimensions of risk is more directly evaluated. The lack of evidence does not equate to a lack of impact; it simply means that insufficient efforts and/or resources have been dedicated to finding this out in ways that can stand up to external scrutiny or questioning. This includes the need to build or strengthen the evidence of what works, with whom, in which contexts, and on what issues; this is critical in informing future developments. It requires both qualitative and quantitative research to build a more complete picture of how and why things change. Is there sufficient interest in this or, if not, what are some of the strategies for engaging practitioners, academics and funders to work together on this?
5. Long term impact is necessary to see if behaviour change and changing norms are sustained over time. To be able to claim that positive change has happened, that a tipping point has been reached and that those changes can now be seen as sustainable in the long term, investment in longer term research is an essential starting point.
6. A connected theory of change would help to articulate some of the assumptions that are not currently made explicit or tested. It would also help in developing some agreed indicators and measures of what would be recognised as success. Again, this needs to be developed by more than a single sector.
7. No one sector will ever be sufficient to sustainably prevent sexual exploitation. Mechanisms for supporting cross-sectoral discussion and development need to be developed and supported if such conversations are to be more than a one-off event.

71 Bandeira, Oriana, *et al.* (2013), “Empowering Adolescent Girls in Uganda”, Policy Brief, Issue 4, January 2013, Africa Region Gender Practice and BRAC.

72 See: Oak Foundation’s Bamboo project in Ethiopia, Nepal and Bulgaria, and work by the NSPCC in the UK, http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/sexualabuse/sexual_exploitation_research_wda85130.html

8. Are specialist or more generic services more effective? Some of the complex challenges faced by young people trying to exit situations of sexual exploitation have been highlighted in research studies. One of the arguments supporting specialist interventions is this complexity and inter-connectedness of a whole range of issues. The generic services that might need to be involved, given the list of issues faced by children trying to exit situations of sexual exploitation, if all were provided through individual service providers, would require a huge effort by the children themselves. Specialist services, which may have the opportunity of the “one-stop” approach to multiple services, may make the task much more manageable and predictable.

However, specialist services presuppose that the child or young person identifies with the specialist’s mandate. In practice, many victims of sexual exploitation do not describe or define their experience as such; children describe these relationships in positive terms, calling their exploiters boyfriends, or sugar daddies, where the relationship is seen to be positive for both parties. Such perceptions have implications for service providers and if and how children can be reached.

Within mainstream services, the lack of “self-identification” (children not seeing themselves as victims of abuse and exploitation) is shared by many of the professionals involved. This may be a personal and professional limited interest in, or understanding of, the lives of these young people. They may share some of the prejudices of the wider community – assuming that these children and young people are making informed choices about their own lives. They may fail to piece together some of the different strands of evidence that suggest that exploitation is occurring or threatened.

Given that increased risks of being exploited are also linked with a number of other risky or concerning behaviours for young people, we might assume that a number of outcomes aimed more generically at promoting well-being and healthy and successful transitions for children and adolescents into adulthood would also be effective in reducing risks of being sexually exploited. While intuitively this seems right, there is little specific evidence from such interventions.

9. While many of the examples focus primarily on working with individuals, there are clear benefits of developing work that looks at some of the broader structural drivers that determine or perpetuate negative attitudes, or conversely contribute to positive and supportive responses. Often this may involve integrating some focus on sexual exploitation into other large scale interventions, e.g. those working on poverty alleviation. This may not entail new interventions; just new ways of assessing, monitoring and evaluating changes linked to reduced risk of perpetrating or experiencing sexual exploitation. What other sectors need to be involved and how might they be engaged?
10. Much of the earlier discussion on changing and challenging social norms is relevant to work aimed at reducing the risks of becoming a victim of sexual exploitation. Specifically, children who experience sexual abuse cite community attitudes that blame and stigmatise them as being some of the key factors that make their further victimisation and abuse more likely. Communities and societies that promote negative gender stereotypes, that link violence and sexual entitlement with ideas about masculinity, contribute to maintaining the harmful sexual behaviours and beliefs. Much more research needs to be done using a social norms approach to explore how these are maintained and how they might be changed.

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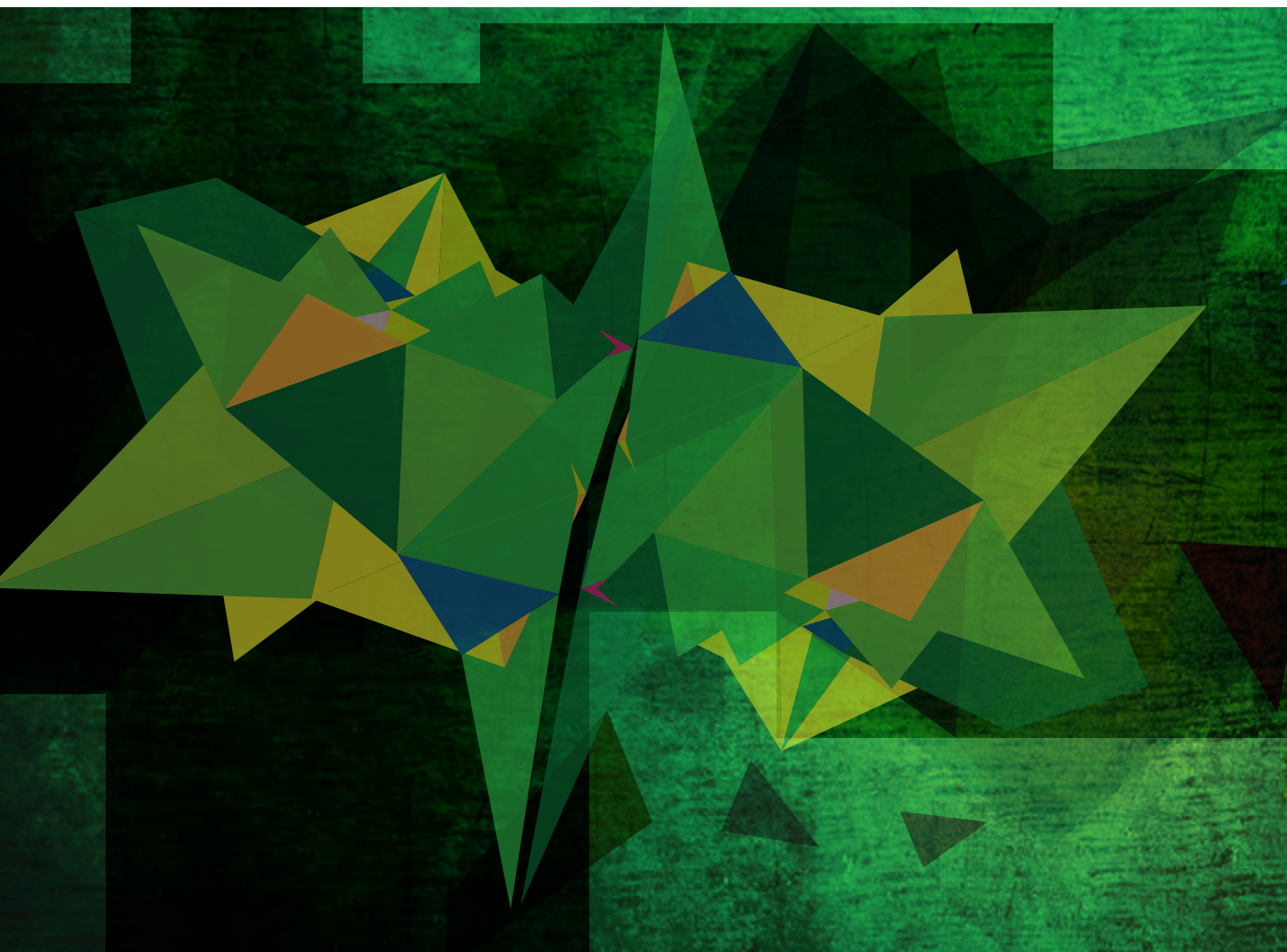
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Towards a Prevention Framework for Child Sexual Exploitation

by: Sallie Yea

INTRODUCTION

The prevention of the sexual exploitation of children (SEC) has been the subject of wide-ranging non-governmental and governmental interventions over the past twenty-five years, with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) forming an initial locus for actions. Prevention of SEC is highlighted in international human rights mechanisms and declarations, as well as in the mandates of

UN Special Procedures and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children. The CRC, the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC), and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children (Palermo Protocol), all require that States Parties take measures to prevent SEC. These measures include the adopting or strengthening of legislation and policies, promoting awareness-raising campaigns, establishing education and training programmes and conducting research.¹

While interventions aimed at SEC victim protection and recovery are endless,² in perusing the available literature, relatively little published work has appeared on the development of a prevention framework to guide interventions in combating SEC, including evaluations of their effectiveness and possibilities for replication as examples of good practice.³ More significantly, there has been little progress towards developing a similar framework to that which has been developed in relation to protection/recovery.⁴ Indeed, this situation tends to mirror that of the development of interventions in the related anti-trafficking sector, where it has been widely recognised that prevention work has not proceeded with the same degree of rigour or success as protection and prosecution interventions, despite the importance attributed to prevention work in international laws on human trafficking and child rights.

The aim of this paper is to work towards the development of a framework to enhance the effectiveness of interventions aimed at preventing SEC. The focus on prevention is sorely needed because, as suggested above, it tends to be less systematically treated in efforts to reduce SEC than efforts at either protection or criminalisation. The paper attempts to achieve this aim by considering the applicability of elements of prevention frameworks developed in relation to the public health sector, and through a consideration of various types of vulnerabilities that have led to SEC by drawing on diverse case studies globally to develop typologies. Arguably, and as has been recognised by others,⁵ SEC has not been addressed in a comprehensive and, more significantly, coordinated manner, which in large part explains the relative ineffectiveness of long-term prevention work in the field. For example, the key interventions around prevention to date have been based on either a criminal justice approach, which prioritises investigation and criminalisation of offenders (and possibly their rehabilitation), or on an awareness-based approach, which can be oriented to the general public or to target groups, such as tourists, educators and so on. While the effectiveness of these interventions and approaches on which they are based is variable at best, they do illustrate that there are significant gaps in approaching prevention in SEC more broadly and in providing a guiding logic and integrated approach to existing interventions.

A public health prevention framework model is particularly significant because it distinguishes between three (possibly four) levels of intervention: 1. Primary Prevention (that is, preventing SEC before it would otherwise occur); 2. Secondary Prevention (that is, preventing SEC in groups considered to already be high risk); and 3. Tertiary Prevention (that is, preventing further SEC offences through interventions which specifically target child victims and/or offenders). There have been attempts to apply this framework to related sectors aimed to enhance the rights and protection of children, such as child welfare.⁶

This paper begins with a brief review of recent studies of SEC, including CSEC, with the aim of drawing out the major risk and vulnerability factors influencing its manifestations, which ultimately will help to identify risk factors (which are central to conceptualise in the context of prevention work). Following this, the main elements of the widely-adopted public health prevention framework are introduced, and a prevention framework is proposed for SEC, drawing on and adapting this framework. Additional principles are then briefly outlined for the effective implementation of the framework.

¹ See Arts. 34 & 35 of the CRC, Art. 9 of the OPSC and Art. 9 of the Palermo Protocol.

² More significantly, there have been several efforts to develop a framework for victim protection and recovery drawing on ecological systems theories and concepts (particularly noteworthy is that developed by: McIntyre, Bonnie L. (2014), "More than just rescue: Thinking beyond exploitation to creating assessment strategies for child survivors of commercial sexual exploitation", *International Social Work* 57(1): 39-63).

³ Warburton, J. (2016), "Preventing the Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Mapping of Practice and Interventions", ECPAT *International Journal* No. 11, Bangkok: ECPAT.

⁴ Important exceptions are: Jones, Adele D., et al. (2014), "An Integrated Systems Model for Preventing Child Sexual Abuse: Perspectives from the Caribbean", Hampshire: Palgrave; Lucy Faithful Foundation (n.d.), ECSA Project, http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/ecsa_eradicating_child_sexual_abuse.htm

⁵ Barnitz, Laura (2001), "Effectively responding to CSEC: A comprehensive approach to prevention, protection, and reintegration services", *Child Welfare* 80(5): 597-610.

⁶ United States Department of Health and Human Services (n.d.), "Framework for Prevention of Child Maltreatment", Washington D.C.: US Do HHS.

A TYPOLOGY OF RISKS & VULNERABILITY FACTORS INFLUENCING SEC

The sheer range and diversity in situations of SEC globally render any task of generalisation difficult. Studies have shown various predictors (indicators) for the prevalence of SEC, including family background,⁷ ethnicity/ethnic minority status,⁸ school dropout and/or previous experiences of physical assault,⁹ socio-economic status,¹⁰ physical disability¹¹ and cultural norms and values.¹² These various indicators have been identified for different contexts, including Switzerland, the United States, South Africa and the Philippines. Rather than expounding on individual factors (as in the studies cited above), I extrapolate these various risk and vulnerability factors according to six types. These are: structural, situational, relational, environmental, personal (related primarily to potential victims) and demand-led factors (which relate primarily to potential clients, perpetrators and other beneficiaries, such as business owners and intermediaries/facilitators). These are of course arbitrary demarcations and others may identify additional categories, or amend the ones introduced here as required for different contexts and sites.

The impetus for including this section in this paper, and indeed the initial shaping of the typologies included below, stems not only from a review of recent studies on vulnerability factors in SEC, but also from a recently developed systems model for understanding risk and vulnerability factors (what Jones *et al.* call “social drivers and determinants” of SEC)¹³ and the risk/vulnerability approach developed for public health interventions by Begun (1993).¹⁴ Jones *et al.*’s model identifies several, specifically social drivers for preventing SEC. These include: environmental factors, such as the cultural sanctioning of the sex trade; social acceptance of consumerism and poverty; men and youth with sexually harmful attitudes; women who are disempowered and complicit; officials who, by inaction, denial and evasion, are collusive; gender socialisation, gender inequality and gender-based violence; lack of awareness of the seriousness of the effects of SEC; lack of collective outrage and community inaction; ineffective laws and policies; male privilege, reputation and status placed above the child; the social construction of childhood; and children’s disempowerment and status.¹⁵ Some of these factors are certainly “social” to the extent that they are the product of broader processes, values and attitudes which are socially constructed and enacted, and can be mediated by cultural values and norms (what we may term socio-cultural factors). However, some of these risk and vulnerability factors may benefit from further delineation, both within and beyond the socio-cultural realm.¹⁶

Begun’s (1993 & 1999)¹⁷ risk/vulnerability model posits that risk and vulnerability factors need to be reduced, while resilience and protection factors need to simultaneously be enhanced in prevention efforts. According to Begun, risk and protection factors are extrinsic to the individual (and have their origins in society or the surrounding environment/context), while vulnerability and resilience factors are intrinsic to the individual and are therefore personal. This is helpful in thinking about the six types of factors I have identified here. Legal factors, for example, would be extrinsic to the individual (and could, for example, enhance protection through enforcement, or increase risk through, for example, corruption and lack of enforcement). Similarly, prior experiences of abuse, including sexual abuse, can profoundly and quite clearly negatively increase an individual’s vulnerability to future sexual violence (as several studies have demonstrated), while a safe and nurturing home environment can enhance an individual’s resilience. These are clearly factors that are intrinsic to the individual. Thus, even if laws are adhered to, for example,

7 Langstrom, Niklas, *et al.* (2015), “Sexual offending runs in families: A 37 year nation-wide study”, *International Journal of Epidemiology* 44(2): 713-20.

8 Warner, Lynn A., Alegria, Margarita and Carino, Glorisa (2012), “Childhood Maltreatment Amongst Hispanic Women in the United States”, *Child Maltreatment* 17(2): 119-131.

9 Meinck, Franziska, Cluver, Lucie Dale and Boyes, Mark Edward (2015), “Longitudinal Predictors of Child Sexual Abuse in a Large Community-Based Sample of South African Youth”, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, DOI: 10.1177/0886260515596331.

10 Yea, Sallie (2009), “Exit, Rehabilitation and Return to Prostitution: An Examination of the Experiences of Domestic Trafficking Victims in the Philippines”, in Leslie Holmes (ed.), *Trafficking and Human Rights: European and Australian Perspectives*, London: Edward Elgar.

11 Muller-Johnson, Kate, Eisner, Manuel P. and Obsuth, Ingrid (2014), “Sexual Victimization of Youth With a Physical Disability: An Examination of Prevalence Rates, Risk and Protective Factors”, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 29(17): 3180-3206.

12 Dottridge, Mike (2002), “Trafficking of Children in West and Central Africa”, *Gender and Development* 10(1): 38-42.

13 Jones, *et al.* (2014), “Perspectives from the Caribbean”.

14 Begun, A. (1993), “Human behaviour and the social environment: The vulnerability, risk and resilience model”, *Journal of Social Work Education* 29: 26-35.

15 Jones, *et al.*, (2014), “Perspectives from the Caribbean”, 36.

16 Warburton (2016), “Preventing the Sexual Exploitation of Children”.

17 Begun, A. (1999), “Intimate partner violence: An HBSE perspective”, *Journal of Social Work Education* 35: 239-252; Begun, (1993), “Human behaviour and the social environment”.

certain individuals may still have high levels of vulnerability which can mitigate the positive effects of a protective legal context. Here I provide three examples of risk and vulnerability factors. Both Begun's and Jones *et al.*'s models help us think more systematically about risk and vulnerability factors and recognise their significance in considerations of any SEC prevention framework.

Socio-Cultural Factors: An unusual pattern of CSE is *bacha bazi*. This practice, which operates in parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, involves young boys who are dressed in women's clothes and made to sing and dance at weddings and other parties in front of an all-male audience. Apart from providing entertainment, the boys are often forced into providing sexual services for guests after the parties, to the highest bidder. This is often a much older man. In Pakistan, the practice of *bacha bazi* has been documented in a slightly different form, involving young boys being kept for sexual exploitation as sexual companions by "owners" (older men), but are not forced to wear women's costumes and perform at parties.¹⁸ According to Martin and Shaheen (2014),¹⁹ because this is a long-established cultural practice, it may be socially and politically difficult to address it in any comprehensive way, with many locals arguing that it is "culture, not crime".

Links to other risk and vulnerability factors: social acceptance, lack of political will (structural driver), poverty (structural driver).

Structural Factors: In the mid-2000s, Cambodian women and teenage girls began to be recruited by middlemen (and women) who arranged marriages for them with Chinese men living in China. Common occurrences in these marriages include high rates of domestic violence, marital rape and sexual abuse by in-laws and family friends, forced confinement and forced labour. NGOs in Cambodia have assisted over three hundred victims in the past few years, while they suggest that there are many victims who wish to leave these marriages but are unable to escape.²⁰ The women and girls recruited are all from impoverished communities and families, where they are expected to contribute to the family's welfare through their marriage migration. Despite the conferral of enormous amounts of foreign aid and, recently, foreign investment, Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries in Asia, marred by political corruption, nepotism and what is commonly described as a "rent-seeking" state.²¹ The structural context of political and economic malaise in the country, and the active exploitation of rural populations through land grabs and evictions have contributed massively to the vulnerability of girls to recruitment into these commercially brokered marriages.

Links to other risk and vulnerability factors: family breakdown (relational factor).

Relational Factors: Incest and witnessing or experiencing domestic violence were common experiences for over 40 per cent of the participants in my study of CSEC in Cebu, the Philippines (discussed in further detail below).²² In these cases, the girls were scared to remain at home and/or were traumatised as a result of what they witnessed in their domestic environments. Home became a site of anxiety and rupture, rather than support and protection. Most of these girls ran away with the intention of finding a job in another province or town, often with very little money and no safe networks to guide them. The breakdown of family relationships and exposure to abuse at home is crucial to understanding the high risk of sexual exploitation that children face.

Links to other risk and vulnerability factors: household poverty (structural factor); corruption of police force and other authorities (structural factor).

18 Human Terrain Team AF-6 2009, "Pashtun Sexuality", Unclassified government document, U.S. Army, available at: <https://publicintelligence.net/afghanistan-human-terrain-team-pashtun-homosexuality-report/> (accessed 29 August 2015); de Lind van Wijngaarden, J.W. and Rani, B. (2011), "Male adolescent concubinage in Peshawar, Northern Pakistan", *Culture, Health and Sexuality* 13(9): 1061-1072; Mondloch, C. (2013), "Bacha Bazi: An Afghan Tragedy", *Foreign Policy* (October 28), available at: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/10/28/bacha-bazi-an-afghan-tragedy/> (accessed 29 August 2015).

19 Martin, L. and Shaheen, M. (2014), "Crime or Culture: The revival of slave boys in Afghanistan: a UK perspective", *Criminal Law and Justice Weekly* 178 (March 29): 193-195.

20 Yea and Chab Dai (forthcoming), "For Better or For Worse: Marriage Trafficking of Cambodian Women and Girls to China", Phnom Penh: Chab Dai; United Nations Action Against Trafficking (UNACT) (forthcoming), "Report on the Marriage Trafficking of Cambodian Women and Girls to China", Bangkok: UNACT.

21 Rotberg, R. (2003), "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators", in *State failure and state weakness in a time of terror*, Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute Press.

22 Yea (2009), "Exit, Rehabilitation and Return to Prostitution"; Yea, Sallie (forthcoming), "Unaccompanied Child Migration and the Commercial Sex Industry in the Philippines", *Children's Geographies*.

What I wish to emphasise from the foregoing examples is that many of the factors identified through the cases presented as contributing to SEC can traverse the different typologies. In other words, a child who is sexually exploited may live in extreme poverty (a structural factor) and live in a family and community environment where there are high levels of interpersonal and domestic violence (relational factors). This situation appeared repeatedly among the girls discussed in the case study below, who were trafficked into situations of juvenile prostitution in Cebu, the Philippines. Children who are displaced through natural and man-made disasters experience multiple types of vulnerabilities, which include situational (location in a refugee camp) and relational (breakdown of family structure, often resulting in their being unaccompanied minors). It is important that identification of risk and vulnerability among children and teens be located within the typologies presented here. These can inform the development of appropriate prevention-based interventions based on the type of risk and stage at which the risk is experienced, as well as whether the risk/vulnerability factors are primarily extrinsic or intrinsic to the child.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH PREVENTION FRAMEWORK: A SEC APPLICATION

In this part of the paper I propose the tenets of a possible prevention framework for SEC, which is to be adopted and adapted under further discussion and refinement. The framework draws on the public health prevention framework originally developed in the late 1940s and refined by academics, practitioners and policy-makers in the intervening sixty years. It has come to be known more widely as the “levels of prevention” approach. As originally proposed in the arena of public health, primary prevention would include measures such as health and education promotion to the general population, generic health screenings, use of immunisations, attention to personal hygiene and so on. Secondary prevention would involve the identification of specific illnesses or conditions at an early stage, prompt intervention to limit or prevent disability or death and prevention of the spread of communicable diseases, among others. Tertiary prevention measures are those implemented after the disease or disability has occurred and been detected, and recovery has begun. Measures might include halting the disease or disability process and assisting the patient to obtain optimal health status through treatment and rehabilitation.

Davidson²³ suggests that a fourth prevention locus is also integral to the success of prevention frameworks in public health. He calls this the “pre-primary, or adaptation stage” which refers to harmonious adaptation to the environment, which is wider in scope than primary interventions and where health is “linked to both the development of human society, as this society evolves in harmony with the evolution of the planet.”²⁴ Davidson uses the example of mal-adaption to climate change to illustrate these broader, pre-primary factors. Significantly, he suggests that pre-primary factors are important to extend the public health prevention framework because they remove the orientation of the framework to disease and replace it with an orientation towards well-being. The other extremely important addition Davidson made to the original framework, for our purposes of applying it to situations of SEC, was to recognise that prevention efforts always take place in a context, and that this will affect the scope, content and form of prevention measures (which relates back to our discussion in the previous section).

Recent adjustments to the public health prevention model have included recognition that interventions can fall into simple and complex expressions. Simple interventions may be defined as discrete activities only to alter the course of an event. If we consider SEC, a simple intervention may be the rescue of children from a brothel, or the installation of internet security measures for child internet users. Simple interventions, while important in an immediate sense, are often limited in their ability to address the causes of an event or process, and, as mentioned in the Introduction, many commentators have argued for the urgent need for comprehensive and coordinated efforts among stakeholders and between interventions to more effectively address SEC, with similar arguments also being made in the arena of public health. Complex interventions may be understood as a series of interconnected, integrated and intervening activities along a chain or process of self-propelling changes. Complex responses (as have also been applied to humanitarian crisis situations) are more desirable because of their holistic and integrated approach. In

²³ Davidson, W. (n.d.), “The Public Health Development Theory of Four Stages of Prevention”, available online at: http://www.academia.edu/894962/Principles_of_Prevention_The_Four_Stages_Theory_of_Prevention (accessed 23 August 2015).

²⁴ *Ibid.*

Cambodia, this author observed the coordinated relationship between international NGOs (such as the International Organization for Migration, or IOM), Cambodian consulates in China, the Cambodian anti-trafficking police unit and local NGOs in Phnom Penh. This complex approach to tertiary prevention of teenage girls and young women who had been trafficked for brokered marriages to China was relatively successful because of its good levels of co-ordination and co-operation among stakeholders.

The language of (pre)primary, secondary and tertiary interventions was extended and reformulated in 1987 by Gordon²⁵ who proposed the adoption of the more precise terms universal, selective and indicated interventions, which would facilitate a more explicit focus on population groups (the “targeted population approach”) to whom interventions were to be targeted (and how sizable these groups are). Also focusing on the populations targeted by different interventions, Frieden (2010)²⁶ suggested a five-tier pyramid framework, which enables users to identify the impact of public health interventions by mapping their reach (in terms of the size of the population affected by the intervention). Frieden’s²⁷ framework is also useful to the extent that, like Davidson,²⁸ he places emphasis on, “The fundamental composition, organisation, and operation of society from the underpinnings of the determinants of health....” The emphasis on socio-economic determinants is similar to Gordon’s pre-primary factors and, to some extent, speak to Jones *et al.*’s²⁹ emphasis on socio-cultural risk factors of SEC. According to Frieden’s³⁰ five-tier pyramid for assessing the impact of proposed health interventions, socio-economic determinants would be situated at the base (and would include factors such as the effect of socio-economic status on poverty, lower education levels and relative deprivation which, in the health sector, would lead to inequitable access to amenities such as sanitation, or increased risk of exposure to environmental hazards). As with SEC, the causal relationship with vulnerability or risk is not always straightforward – this is one of the difficulties with proposing (and funding) such broad-based measures. At the second lowest tier of Frieden’s pyramid are public health interventions that would aim to change the context of health (such as access to clean water). These determinants would normally be similar to primary risk factors under the health prevention framework. Protective interventions with long-term benefits sit at the middle tier of the pyramid (such as immunisations). These could be both primary and secondary depending on which group they target (the general population or groups already in risky health contexts). This tier is important in providing further depth to the public health framework because it recognises that some interventions could be either primary or secondary (or both) and that this will depend on the exact nature of the intervention itself. Direct clinical care (a tertiary intervention) sits at the fourth tier in Frieden’s pyramid, and counselling and education (secondary and tertiary interventions) sit at the top tier. As one moves up the pyramid to the higher tiers, the smaller is the population reached; the interventions are designed largely for individuals, rather than the entire population.

An application of the five-tier impact pyramid to SEC is a useful complement to the public health prevention framework because it enables us to think about the impact of different types of interventions in the four stages (from pre-primary/universal to tertiary/indicated). A SEC prevention impact pyramid is given below (Figure 1). Further, one of the additional strengths of this pyramid is its inclusion of broader, underlying social-economic and socio-cultural determinants (Davidson’s pre-primary factors and Jones *et al.*’s socio-cultural risk factors).

25 Gordon, R. (1987), “An operational classification of disease prevention”, in J. A. Steinberg, & M. M. Silverman (eds.) *Preventing mental disorders*, Rockville, MD: Department of Health and Human Services, 20-26; see also: Last, J.M. and Wallace, R.B. (1992), “Maxcy-Rosenau-Last public health and preventative medicine”, New York: The Guildford Press.

26 Frieden, Thomas R. (2010), “A Framework for Public Health Action: The Health Impact Pyramid”, *American Journal of Public Health* 100(4): 590-595.

27 *Ibid.*, 591.

28 Davidson, “The Public Health Development Theory of Four Stages of Prevention”.

29 Jones, *et al.*, (2014), “Perspectives from the Caribbean”.

30 Frieden (2010), “A Framework for Public Health Action”.

The public health prevention model has been adopted in related areas with some success, including in cases of alcohol and drug abuse,³¹ homelessness,³² violence against women³³ and mental health.³⁴ Here I advance a possible SEC prevention framework based on the model discussed above. Generic types of interventions of each stage (pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary) are represented in Table 1, below.

Table 1 – Generic Interventions for Prevention of SEC (not context-specific)

Stage	Intervention	Target Group
Pre-primary	Changing public attitudes about gender	General Population
Primary	Public awareness-raising about SEC	General Population
Primary	Development of appropriate laws and policies for combating SEC	Public Institutions
Primary	Community monitoring, policing and reporting	General Population
Secondary	Social worker visits to monitor poor/vulnerable households	Children at risk because of poverty or related factors
Secondary	Peer reporting in CSEC venues/sites	Children already entered into the commercial sex industry
Secondary	Free or subsidised schooling for disadvantaged children	Children at risk because of poverty or related factors
Tertiary	Counselling	Registered Offenders
Tertiary	Decent livelihoods training	Victims/Survivors
Tertiary	Safe reintegration	Victims/Survivors

Key:

Demand-based Risk Factor

Situational Risk Factor

Legal Risk Factor

Structural Risk Factor

Socio-cultural Risk Factor

Environmental/Relational Risk Factor

From this general framework, interventions could be enumerated in significantly more detail, which would be useful for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers alike. I suggest that the above framework could thus be disaggregated according to the type of vulnerability/driver (colour-coded in Table 1), as outlined in the previous section (see Table 2, below, for an example of this disaggregation).

31 For example, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (n.d.), “Preventing Alcohol Abuse and Dependence”, Washington D.C.: US Do HHS, available at: <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Social/Module3Prevention/mODULE3.HTML> (accessed 23 August 2015); Bush, I. (2000), “Prevention: A viable and critical component of intervention”, in A. A. Abbott (ed.), *Alcohol tobacco, and other drugs: challenging myths, assessing theories, individualizing interventions*, Washington, D.C.: NASW Press, 341-379.

32 Burt, Martha R., Pearson, Carol L. and Montgomery, Ann Elizabeth (2007), “Introduction”, *Homelessness: Prevention Strategies and Effectiveness*, New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc, 1-10.

33 National Online Resource Centre on Violence Against Women (n.d.), “A Prevention Primer for Domestic Violence: Terminology Tools, and the Public Health Approach”, Harrisburg, USA, available at: http://www.vawnet.org/applied-research-papers/print-document.php?doc_id=1313 (accessed 27 August 2015).

34 The Prevention Institute (n.d.), “Promoting Mental Health & Well Being”, available at: <http://www.preventioninstitute.org/focus-areas/promoting-mental-health-a-well-being.html> (accessed 26 August 2015); O’Connell, M.E., Boat, T. and Warner, J.E. (2014), “Defining the Scope of Prevention” (Chapter Three), *Preventing Mental, Emotional and Behavioural Disorders Amongst Young People: Progress and Possibilities*, Washington D.C.: National Research Council and Institute of Medicine.

Table 2 – Risk Factors of Prevention Interventions: Legal & Criminal Justice Factors

Risk Factor	Stage(s)	Intervention(s)	Target Group(s)
Police corruption and inaction	Secondary/ Tertiary	Identification of, and action against, corrupt police	Police Commission
Lack of active investigation	Secondary/ Tertiary	Capacity-building training of police in specific investigation techniques for SEC; development of dedicated bilateral law enforcement networks and agreements	Police; Attorney General's Departments
Gendered-based discrimination and attitudes towards women/girls	Primary	Gender sensitisation campaign	General Public; Schools & Other Institutions of Socialisation

Key:

Demand-based Risk Factor

Situational Risk Factor

Legal Risk Factor

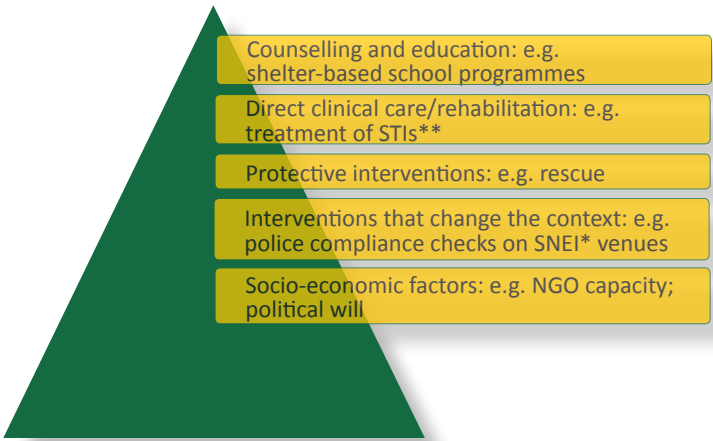
Structural Risk Factor

Socio-cultural Risk Factor

Environmental/Relational Risk Factor

Although Table 2 locates particular interventions clearly as belonging to a particular stage (such as primary), and type within the typology presented in Figure 1 (such as socio-cultural), it is important to retain some fluidity and flexibility in mapping. At least some interventions can be neither singularly demarcated as only primary (or pre-primary), secondary or tertiary, while some drivers fall into more than one type. Police corruption and inaction, for example, can be the result of lack of capacity (a socio-economic factor which needs to be remedied through funding and training), but it can also be a result of entrenched gender-bias and social tolerance/acceptance of teenage prostitution, for example (socio-cultural risk factor). Of course a range of contextual factors will affect the degree to which each of these suggested interventions can practicably be implemented, so an appreciation of the local, regional and/or national context in which interventions are developed is a crucial precursor to their effective implementation. Therefore, as Davidson³⁵ suggested, the context of any intervention is crucial to the possibility of its realisation, a point underscored in Frieden’s recognition of the importance of broad socio-economic factors, which will vary enormously between countries depending on their development levels and modes of governance, among other factors. After the above Tables have been completed, it is suggested that an impact pyramid mapping exercise also be undertaken. A general one is given in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1 – A Prevention Impact Pyramid for SEC



*SNEI Sex and Nightlife Entertainment Industry
**STIs Sexually-transmitted Infections

35 Davidson, “The Public Health Development Theory of Four Stages of Prevention”.

The value of such an impact mapping exercise is in its ability to estimate the reach (in terms of population) of different possible interventions. While all interventions are important if a comprehensive approach is to be adopted (rescue would be useless without subsequent recovery and the building of resilience through education, for example), funding and other considerations may exert an influence on the above, as donors often wish to see either large or very clear impacts for their dollars.

ACCOMPANYING PRINCIPLES

In order for the above framework to be effectively operationalised, a number of principles should be adhered to by policy-makers and practitioners. These include a commitment to: first, the development of policies and interventions which are evidence-based; second, gender and age sensitivity, which could lead to gender and age disaggregated interventions; third, participatory approaches to both research and the development of interventions; and, fourth, partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders working in related SEC areas of criminalisation and protection, as well as in related fields such as child trafficking and SECTT (Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism). In addition, as already laid out in the CRC, interventions should be child-centred and rights-based. Indeed, Rafferty (2013)³⁶ suggests a human rights-based approach as the conceptual framework for the development, implementation and evaluation of victim-focused prevention work.

First, evidenced-based interventions, as have been widely noted for both child protection and human trafficking, are crucial if interventions are to be effective in reaching target populations.³⁷ While the research required to support the development of appropriate interventions is sorely needed, conducting primary research with both vulnerable and exploited groups can be extremely challenging, as it is with researching demand.³⁸ Reid (2011),³⁹ for example, found that “caregiver strain” and maltreatment were likely (inter-related) causes of vulnerability to girls being sexually exploited. However, she could not make conclusive recommendations because of a lack of pre-existing data for analysis and the difficulty in accessing child victims first-hand. More explicitly, Lutzker (2006)⁴⁰ suggested that in a four-step systematic approach to prevention in public health, the first two steps should be data and research driven. Step one would involve surveys, surveillance systems and other data collection methods, while step two would involve more advanced research to identify the causes of a problem. While this is not the place for a detailed discussion of these challenges, the author encourages further dialogue on these challenges and creative pathways through them in order to enhance both the validity and quality of research in informing prevention work.

Second, a brief review of some recent interventions around the prevention of SEC reveals a general absence of gender, aged and socio-economic status disaggregated measures. Thus, for example, awareness-raising about SEC and CSEC at schools is often presented in general terms to boys and girls without distilling particular vulnerabilities that may emerge based on gender. Similarly, awareness-raising about safe internet usage may be targeted to youth generally, but not take into account different levels of internet access as a result of socio-economic status. Alaggia (2005),⁴¹ in one of the few studies that attempts to build gender into the analysis of SEC, found that male children had far more difficulty disclosing experiences of SEC than females of a similar age and socio-economic context. McCormack *et al.* (1986)⁴² examined the highly variable rates of sexual abuse among girl and boy runaways, and adopted a gender analysis to the causes of these patterns. Far more in-depth research of this sort is urgently needed. What these examples illustrate is the importance of developing interventions that are sensitive to aspects of a person’s identity, including the intersection between these factors.

36 Rafferty, Yvonne (2013), “Child Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation: A Review of Promising Prevention Policies and Programmes”, *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 83(4): 559-575.

37 Todres, Jonathan (2010), “Taking Prevention Seriously: Developing a Comprehensive Response to Child Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation”, *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* 43(1): 1-56.

38 Yea, Sallie (ed.) (2013), “Human Trafficking in Asia: Forcing Issues”, London: Routledge; Reid, Joan A. (2011), “An Exploratory Model of Girl’s Vulnerability to CSE in Prostitution”, *Child Maltreatment* 16(2): 146-157.

39 Reid (2011), “Exploratory Model of Girl’s Vulnerability to CSE in Prostitution”.

40 Lutzker, J.R. (2006), “Preventing Violence: Research and evidence-based intervention strategies”, Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.

41 Alaggia, Ramona (2005), “Disclosing the Trauma of Child Sexual Abuse: A Gender Analysis”, *Journal of Loss and Mourning: International Perspectives on Stress and Coping* 10(5): 453-470.

42 McCormack, Arlene, Janus, Mark-David and Burgess, Ann W. (1986), “Runaway youths and sexual victimisation: Gender differences in an adolescent runaway population”, *Child Abuse and Neglect* 10(3): 387-395.

Third, several commentators have noted that, *“Too often, prevention strategies do not take into account and incorporate the views of children, or fail to empower children to meaningfully engage in prevention activities and decision-making processes.”*⁴³ Participatory approaches have been adopted widely in relation to children and youth participation in research and project/policy design, both as research subjects and active co-researchers.⁴⁴ Participatory approaches to development are considered particularly useful tools to involve children and youth because of their emphasis on the visual and the verbal, rather than the written word.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, there are particular ethical considerations that apply in cases where the active participation of children and youth is sought, which should not be ignored in pursuing the principle of participation.⁴⁶

Fourth, stakeholder collaboration and partnerships are important for two key reasons. First, they can feed into the effective development of appropriate interventions (by including a range of perspectives or experiences in relation to the problem) and second, because they can facilitate relations of co-operation in implementing measures (such as referrals). A comprehensive approach demands that such partnerships and collaborations are actively sought.⁴⁷ In research to inform the development of interventions, both the Delphi technique and participatory tools have the capacity to allow stakeholders to not only voice their perspectives and experiences, but also to benefit from the knowledge that others bring to the discussion.⁴⁸ The Delphi Technique has already been utilised successfully in primary mental health care work.⁴⁹

Ideally, these principles would be considered in the context of the prevention framework introduced above. A checklist of principles would enable those developing interventions to assess their design against these important considerations, as might be illustrated in Table 3, below.

Table 3 – Checklist of Principles for Developing Prevention Interventions in SEC

Principle	Yes	No	Partially
Is the intervention evidence-based?			
Have identity-related factors (gender, age, socio-economic status) been considered?			
Has the participation of children been sought?			
Have partnerships and collaborations with appropriate stakeholders in combating SEC been sought?			
Are the interventions child-centred?			
Are the interventions rights-based?			

For any question answered in the negative or “partially”, it is important that those designing interventions ask why the principle has not been adhered to and how this might (negatively) impact the effectiveness of the prevention intervention.

43 EAPRO UN (East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, UN) (2009), “Reversing the Trend: Child Trafficking in East and South East Asia”, p. 58, available at: http://www.unicef.gr/pdfs/Unicef_Trafficking_Report_Aug09.pdf (accessed 27 August 2015).

44 Treseder, P. (1997), “Empowering children and young people: Promoting involvement in decision-making”, London: Save the Children; Ward, L. (1997), “Seen and Heard: Involving Disabled Children and Young People in Research and Development Projects”, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation; Morris, J. (1998), “Don’t leave us out! Involving disabled children and young people with communication impairments”, York: York Publishing Services; Hart, R.A. (1992), “Children’s Participation: from tokenism to citizenship”, Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

45 Kane, E., Bruce, L. and O’Reilly De Brun, M. (1998), “Designing the Future Together: PRA and education policy in the Gambia”, in J. Holland and J. Blackburn (eds.), *Whose Voice? Participatory Research and Policy Change*, London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 31-43; Boyden, J. and Ennew, J. (eds.) (1997), *Children in focus: a manual for participatory research with children*, Stockholm: Radda Barnen.

46 Mahon, A., et al. (1996), “Researching children: methods and ethics”, *Children & Society* 10: 145-54; Alderson, P. (1995), “Listening to children: children, ethics and social research”, London: Barnardo’s.

47 Rand, April (2010), “It Can’t Happen in My Backyard: The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Girls in the United States”, *Child and Youth Services* 31(3-4): 138-156.

48 Geist, Monica (2010), “Using the Delphi method to engage stakeholders: A comparison of two studies”, *Evaluation and Program Planning* 33(2): 147-154.

49 Campbell, S.M., et al. (2004), “How do stakeholder groups vary in a Delphi technique about primary mental health care and what factors influence their rating?”, *Quality and Safety Health Care* 13: 428-434.

CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to lay the foundations for the development of a prevention framework for SEC. This is considered an urgent task because of the increase in child sexual exploitation globally, as well as the apparent diversification of its forms and sites, thus throwing into question the efficacy of both prevention and protection interventions aimed at addressing the problem. This suggests that existing interventions by local, national and international actors to prevent SEC may lack the effectiveness to tackle the problem in a comprehensive and systematic manner. It is in light of these trends that a prevention framework is proposed. Although there are several frameworks addressing the phenomenon of SEC, a review of these suggests that none are comprehensive and none focus principally on prevention.

To this end, the prevention framework proposed in this paper was developed through four inter-connected means, which could be developed as *stages* in applying the framework to real-life contexts and issues of SEC. First, a review of some recent trends globally through information provided in empirical case studies was utilised to draw out different types of SEC risk and vulnerability factors, drawing on Jones *et al.*'s (2014)⁵⁰ important work identifying and visualising socio-cultural factors. Six risk and vulnerability factors were identified and mapped (section one). Such a mapping exercise enables specific types of factors to be seen, and relationships between types of factors identified. Second, the paper drew on the four stages of prevention interventions developed in the public health framework and tabulated those in a generic form (Table 1). Following this, interventions of different stages could be further elaborated and coded so as to indicate their type (as in the example given in Table 2). Third, the paper suggested the inclusion of a five-tier pyramid which would enable those developing prevention interventions to see the reach (impact) of different interventions (Figure 1). Finally, underlying principles were advanced to help ensure that interventions are preceded and accompanied by appropriate and sensitive mechanisms to ensure their success (Table 3).

Recently, there has been a move towards internet-based exploitation; a heightened commodification of sexuality in youth cultures, particularly in areas of the developing world where global cultural and economic forces are taking a rapid hold; increasing levels of mobility within parts of the developing world, leading to a rise in tourism and travel, as well as internal and cross-border migration of youth; increasing incidences of civil conflict and man-made and natural disasters leading to hitherto unparalleled situations of vulnerability of children; and rising social and economic inequality in large parts of both the developed and developing world, which increases the vulnerability of children in manifold ways. These more recent trends sit alongside previously identified factors linked to SEC in a causal manner, including poverty, family dissolution and violence, government/police corruption and poor enforcement of laws, and the role of cultural and gender-based norms. These trends suggest that actions to prevent SEC are urgently required. The above has only sketched the contours of a possible prevention framework. Future work should aim to further develop the four stages in greater detail and on the basis of ethical in-depth research and stakeholder engagement in a wide range of situations and contexts, such as those given in the second part of the paper. Jane Warburton's recent (2015)⁵¹ paper on prevention has also looked in greater detail at many of the risk factors discussed here, and how they may be addressed by targeting different groups through targeted interventions. Such work is necessary to test and extend the framework presented here, to search for additional risk and vulnerability factors and linkages between factors, and ultimately to contribute to the safety and well-being of children globally.

50 Jones, *et al.* (2014), "Perspectives from the Caribbean".

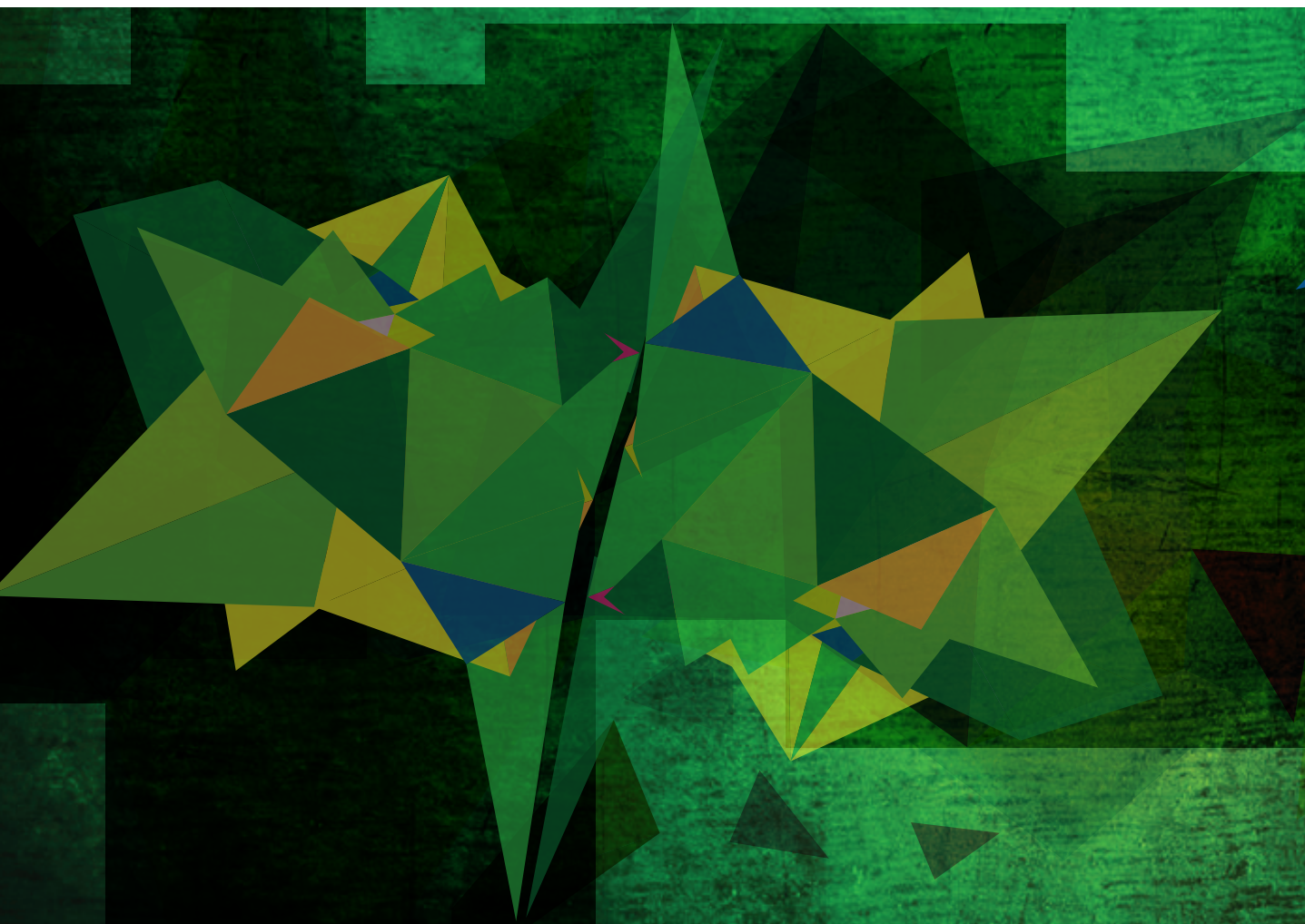
51 Warburton (2016), "Preventing the Sexual Exploitation of Children".

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Better Understanding for Better Prevention of the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism: An analytical framework for policy design

by: Emilia Pool Illsley

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, the First World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) was convened as part of a broader campaign that dealt originally with the sexual exploitation of children in tourism. To date, the link between tourism and CSEC continues to be acknowledged and while the

specific ways in which both phenomena interrelate are still debated, the issue remains a key concern in the field of child protection. In line with this concern, a diverse group of organisations partnered in 2014 to begin a Global Study on the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism (SECTT). The Global Study, led by ECPAT International and steered by Dr. Najat Maalla M'jid, former UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, is still underway, and its main findings will be presented in May 2016. This article, however, presents some of the discussions that have arisen from this process. In particular, the article presents a framework that was developed in the context of the Study to guide further enquiry and organise the available knowledge regarding SECTT.

The framework discussed in this article uses an institutional approach to identify key factors and patterns in SECTT. As such, it is based on the premise that SECTT can be researched using a social science approach and that it is – at least to some degree – systematic. In other words, that it is not fully unpredictable or irrational, nor only the result of psychological traits.¹ Thus, this framework argues that, in order to develop more effective policies, there is a need to carry out more research into the institutions that shape choices and define incentives regarding SECTT (understood not merely as organisations or formal rules, but more broadly as any human-made constraint that patterns behaviour).² A focus on the social aspects that facilitate SECTT implies a shift towards prevention, since its main aim is to identify changes in the environments, incentives and behaviours that facilitate SECTT, in order to prevent this crime from occurring in the first place.

There is a strong case to focus more efforts within child protection on prevention, certainly on moral grounds, but also on practical ones. The available studies on the matter reflect the extremely high and pervasive individual and social costs that such abuses carry.³ However, since most forms of child abuse and exploitation take place within complex environments, there is a need to develop better tools for their analysis. In order to effectively tackle any manifestation of CSEC,⁴ including SECTT, a more empirically grounded and comprehensive understanding of the issue is required. In other words, better prevention demands a better understanding. This framework seeks to provide a partial response for such need, to offer a structure to organise existing knowledge, guide future enquiry and incorporate new insights. However, a final word of caution is needed. The material presented here should be considered initial and tentative, the result of a review that was limited to the materials produced by the Global Study on SECTT. As such, it also hopes to be an invitation for others within the field to comment, question and improve the framework presented.

A FRAMEWORK FOR STRUCTURED ENQUIRY

The diagram below offers a representation of the analytical framework developed for the Global Study. This framework distinguishes three main areas for enquiry: the contexts of victims, the contextual factors that shape the decisions of offenders and the environments within which offenders commit their crimes. The latter is further divided into three relevant aspects: the legal environments (all relevant laws and their implementation, including efforts by non-state actors to collect information and ensure enforcement);

1 For this paper, we assume some degree of rationality governs the choices of offenders, and focus on the incentives that shape such choices. The study of criminal behaviour using rational choice theory has a long history. For an early approach see: Becker, Gary S. (1974), "Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach", NBER Series: Essays in the Economics of Crime and Punishment.

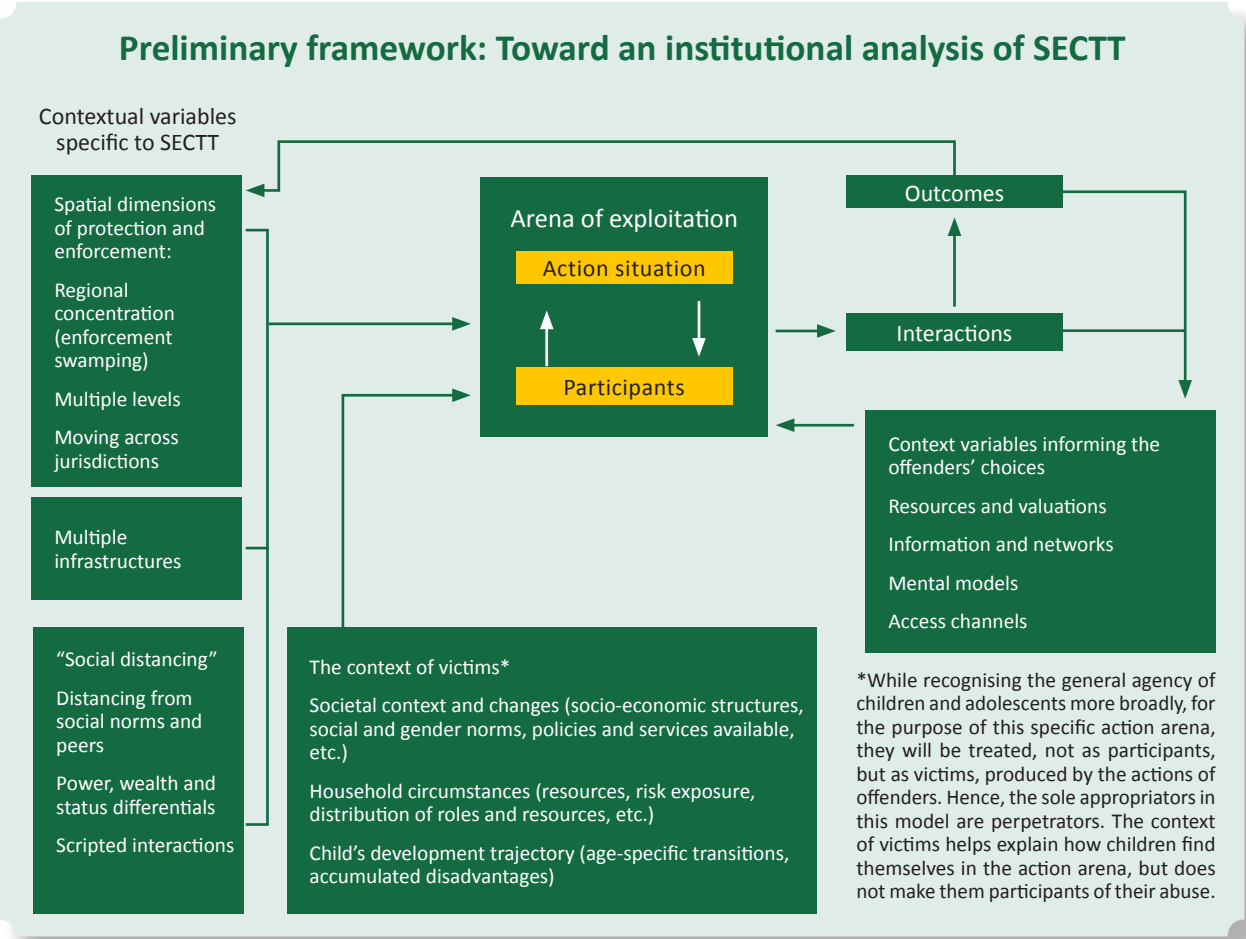
2 This definition of institutions was put forward by North. According to him, "institutions are the rules of the game in society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. In consequence they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social, or economic" [North, Douglass (1990), *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3]. Many authors linked to the New Institutional Economics school use institutional analysis for policy design. In particular, this article follows Elinor Ostrom's approach [see: Ostrom, Elinor (2005), *Understanding Institutional Diversity*, Princeton: Princeton University Press].

3 A widely acknowledged figure places the cost of one year of confirmed abuse cases in the US (including sexual abuse, as well as other forms) at 124 billion USD in lifetime losses [Fang, Xiangming, *et al.* (2012), "The Economic Burden of Child Maltreatment in the United States and Implications for Prevention", *Child Abuse and Neglect* 36 (2), 2012: 156-165]. The Adverse Childhood Experiences study has found impacts in terms of health, productivity and life expectancy, among many other dimensions of the lives of children and adult survivors (see: <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>). According to another 2012 study, the yearly calculated expenses derived from child abuse are above 80 billion USD in the US alone [Gelles, Richard J. and Perlman, Staci (2012), *Estimated Annual Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect*, Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America].

4 ECPAT International recognises four principle manifestations of CSEC: exploitation through prostitution, child sexual abuse materials, trafficking for sexual purposes and SECTT.

the infrastructure or settings used (including any site or physical location that is used to access or exploit children), and the patterns in the interactions established among offenders, victims and other actors (including formal roles and informal rules, issues of power and social identities). All of these aspects will be further developed in the following sections.

The framework was built with the aim of exploring SECTT from the perspectives of those individuals who commit and endure it, with the goal of exploring the choices, constraints, incentives and motivations behind their actions. Thus, it follows victims and offenders as they enter the stage where exploitation takes place; it uses their movements and travel, more generally, as a guide and “lens” to understand SECTT. In a nutshell, this approach highlights how, through travel, offenders can situate themselves within the same context as vulnerable children, while assuming specific identities and roles – as tourists or pseudo-carers, for example – that facilitate exploitative interactions. At the same time, their incentives differ from those at their places of origin, given their sense of anonymity and distance from their families, peers and social norms, as well as the real or perceived difficulties in enforcing regulations within the place of the offense, as well as across jurisdictions. Thus, offenders take advantage of the conditions that travel generates; they draw impunity, anonymity, power and access to children from travel.



This framework uses the distinction presented by Heerdink *et al.* in their contribution to the Global Study – among countries of supply (the country of origin of the victim), demand (the country of origin of the perpetrator) and victimization (the country where the child is exploited) – in order to draw attention specifically and separately to the context of exploitation, as well as to the contexts of victims and offenders.⁵

⁵ See Heerdink, Suzanne, Menenti, Laura and Dettmeijer-Vermeulen, Corinne (2015), “Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism: Governments’ Responsibilities as Countries of Demand, Supply and/or Victimization”, contribution to the Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism. This terminology refers to the countries of origin of both victims and offenders independently, moving away from terminologies that use relative terms defined from the perspective of the offender. By additionally distinguishing the country of victimization, it overrides the assumption that it is only offenders who travel, and frees the terms used from assumptions about the patterns of offense, thus avoiding the portrayal of some countries as countries of demand or of supply, which may lead to stigma and render cases that

The framework, however, moves beyond the focus of Heerdink *et.al.*'s paper on national borders to incorporate all forms of travel, including those within a given country. This is done, partly, because a key finding of the Global Study is that domestic travellers are significant actors in SECTT, but also because the focus of the study is on travel in all its forms. Travel as a human activity which includes, but is broader than, tourism or international travel alone, appeared to be analytically relevant for SECTT, and a broader framing sheds light on issues that a narrow focus would miss.⁶

CONTEXTS OF EXPLOITATION: LEGAL ENVIRONMENTS, LOCATIONS AND INTERACTIONS

Legal environments and enforcement dilemmas

The most thoroughly explored aspects of SECTT, and CSEC more generally, are those related to the implementation of the law, and most studies and reports conclude that impunity is a major driver behind offenses. At the same time, considerable efforts have been made to modify national laws, typify specific crimes and ensure international instruments, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC) are adopted. While these are all important steps to take, there are fewer insights available from empirical research into the practical application, effectiveness and efficiency of such legal regimes, which, if available, could help develop more grounded explanations for the high rates of impunity. In particular, based on the findings from the Global SECTT Study, two aspects seem relevant and could benefit from further research: the effects of a large number and a high concentration of offenses on enforcement; and the interactions among different bodies across levels and locations. This implies an analysis that looks at legal regimes in practice, rather than exclusively at written laws, and a more evidence-based and adaptive approach to policymaking. It also means looking at local dynamics, as well as at those at the national and international levels, in order to understand the everyday functioning of these legal regimes, and the interactions within and across different geographical scales.⁷

With regards to the first issue, there seems to be some degree of path dependence in the development of destinations, which leads some of them to reach undesirable equilibriums of high offense rates and low prosecution. This in turn may motivate people to offend once there, and draw others to travel to such destinations for the purpose of offending.⁸ In these cases, a focused – and even temporary – effort to increase the rate of enforcement can shift the equilibrium to a more desirable, higher rate of prosecution and lower rate of offense. Under these conditions, enforcement efforts can become a form of prevention: if they help to reach a more desirable equilibrium, they can reduce offenses in the long run, even without a sustained additional effort on the part of policing bodies. In the more successful cases, targeted efforts appear to have curbed the availability of children, at least in commercial locations.⁹

In the cases where some progress is reported, there is usually a combination of individuals and organisations taking action to produce and gather information on the crimes that are committed.¹⁰ At a local level, for example, CSOs, shelters and hotlines (often themselves run by CSOs), are often better

do not conform to the expected patterns of offense invisible.

6 There are documented cases of SECTT beyond conventional tourism, involving business travellers, temporary workers, military personnel and volunteers, often employed in establishments providing services to children (schools, orphanages, etc.). These cases were considered both in the Global Study and in this framework. The focus, however, remained heavily on those forms of travel that involve tourism and the tourism sector, recognising the key role these have played in combating SECTT, and its their importance for any attempt to understand the issue.

7 ECPAT International is looking into some of these aspects and challenges in its research into CSEC more generally, as well as on much of its work on handling evidence in cases of online exploitation. In 2016, ECPAT will publish a series of studies addressing potential improvements to procedural laws which will contribute to these discussions.

8 This has been modelled by Kleinman under the name of “enforcement swamping” [see: Kleiman, Mark A.R. (1993), “Enforcement Swamping: A Positive-Feedback Mechanism in Rates of Illicit Activity”, *Mathematical and Computer Modelling* 17 (2): 65-75] and seems to fit the development of certain locations, particularly those within South East Asia where Rest and Recreation stations were established during the Vietnam War [see Farrington, Anneka (2016), *Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism: Regional Report South East Asia*, Bangkok: ECPAT International, 23, 43].

9 IJM and APLE have reported declines in the number of children found in commercial establishments, such as brothels and massage parlours, where commercial sex is known to take place in Cambodia and the Philippines [See Farrington (2016), *Regional Report South East Asia*, 34-35, 43-44].

10 In Cebu City, Philippines, the reduction in the percentage of children exploited in commercial establishments has been (at least partially) attributed to IJM's Project Lantern [*Ibid.*].

situated to gather information, initiate demands and monitor judicial processes. These groups act in coordination with national and international organisations, such as police agencies, diplomatic officials and liaison officers. Additionally, private companies can play an important role in gathering information on offenders; for example, by tracing financial transactions or gathering internet search data. These cases reflect not only the importance of engaging multiple actors in these efforts, but also the many coordination challenges that arise in practice within these complex governance structures, where multiple actors interact, even within a country, in the production of information and protection. At the same time, since underreporting is a major limitation for enforcement, there is scope to ask how actors (and particularly victims) “see” the state, in order to explore more carefully their reasons for choosing not to report.¹¹

The issues derived from this multiplicity of decision-making centres are only exacerbated in cases of international crimes. Even if there is the willingness to investigate and prosecute cases at an international level, appropriate coordination among different agencies is necessary to ensure that cases can move from one jurisdiction to another without getting mired in the process. Without coordination, different states may typify crimes differently (with some excluding, for example, grooming), or develop legislation that imposes requirements (such as the double criminality requirement, the restriction of harsher sanctions in cases of recidivism to crimes that were committed both times within the same jurisdictions and statutes of limitations) and creates conditions (such as the possibility of being released on bail or facing shorter sentences under some jurisdictions) that complicate, and ultimately hinder enforcement efforts, and thus protection at an international level.¹² Finally, there are specific, relevant considerations that apply to travellers, such as typifying the intention to offend (a measure that can help to prosecute offenders before they travel or as soon as they land in the intended country of exploitation).

Without presuming to be exhaustive, some of the questions that arise from this discussion include the following: who is best placed to gather key information on offenses and risks?; at what scale and within what scope?; what agreements and communication channels need to be open to ensure information flows correctly across levels and organisations?; what incentives do potential informants have to report/not report?; do they trust the officers/state agents they interact with?; whom do they trust?; do victims and their families have effective channels to report and access protection?; what degree of control do they perceive to have over outcomes once they report? Engaging with these questions can help to understand the problems that arise from enforcement in practice, but also to design better responses for collectively producing the information and safety needed to prevent exploitative practices.

Locations and infrastructures

Tourism development restructures destinations, physically and socially, to respond to the needs of its visitors and costumers. As a service oriented industry, its growth gives rise to large formal and informal service economies. Spatially, the growth of tourism relocates entire populations, creates visible separations within a territory and gives rise to new forms of infrastructure.¹³ These processes are central to the discussion in this and the following sections. However, travel has never taken just the form of tourism and, more recently, its patterns have diversified even further to encompass, among others, an increasing variety of short and long term forms of residence; temporary employment, including military missions and work in large development projects such as mines or oil rigs; voluntourism and other forms of niche tourism, often in remote locations; and a growing number and types of business travel. In order to meet the demand for travel, accommodation, food and entertainment that these generate, similar industries, economies and infrastructures to those of tourism emerge. Further, similar to those of tourism, there are documented cases of CSEC taking place in the locations designed to cater to these travellers. With its wider focus on travel and tourism, the Global Study found a wide range of settings being co-opted for the

11 For an example of the type of analysis suggested here see: Corbridge, Stuart, *et al.* (2005), *Seeing the State. Governance and Governmentality in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

12 At this level, the displacement effect is a major concern for the governance system as a whole, and is one of the key effects of a lack of coordination.

13 Human geographers, sociologists and anthropologists have contributed to our understanding of the spatial effects of large development projects and the reorganisation of transnational business. See, for example, the works of David Harvey, and Saskia Sassen.

purpose of exploiting children. Recognising how these different settings are used to gain access to children provides insights into the more permanent channels which offenders can temporarily enter to access and exploit children. A closer analysis can, in turn, serve to explore the ways in which these places facilitate abuse, and therefore, to design more grounded policy recommendations to prevent their co-optation by abusers.

The literature on SECTT has focused most prominently on the infrastructure designed to cater to tourists. Reports consistently point to hotel rooms and other temporary lodgings as preferential locations for SECTT. Other settings include child care institutions, such as schools and orphanages, which hire foreign staff and receive voluntourists; travel and road infrastructures, such as buses, trucks, roads, gas stations and road stops; military bases and camps; refuge and migrant detention centres; casinos, brothels and other venues associated with the adult sex trade and entertainment industry; and online platforms and electronic devices.

These settings provide points of contact with abettors of CSEC and vulnerable children (whether this is sought from the outset or not), but often also provide a reasonable explanation for visiting a place, the time and conditions to become familiar with a location, establish contacts, arrange meetings, etc. In this sense, they provide access, but also some degree of invisibility to offenders. Furthermore, these settings provide scripted (and unequal) interactions that can be used by offenders to initiate contact and strengthen their position and power. Using a theatre metaphor, the infrastructures provide the scenarios for individuals to perform specific roles. Each of these infrastructures will provide a different “script” for those present and will offer different elements that can be co-opted for the purpose of abuse. Understanding the characteristics of these settings and scripts can help shield locations (and, therefore, children) from commercial sexual exploitation.

Social relations in travel and tourism

There are a series of structural inequalities embedded in the interactions between travellers and locals that further facilitate SECTT. In the context of tourism and travel, interactions are marked by multiple forms of “social distancing”. Travel creates a sense of anonymity among offenders, of “freedom” from their peers, from their ethical and social norms and the formal and informal rules of their places of origin.¹⁴ This is not exclusive to international travel. Additionally, wealth differentials and unequal status, based on differences in age, sex, gender, ethnicity and class, are often exacerbated through travel. Finally, the assigned roles and explicit and implicit norms regulating interactions within specific settings, such as those of jobs in the interactive service sector, can also potentially increase disparities. The multiple infrastructures that offenders access encompass a range of possible scripts, from an expected display of force by policemen and military personnel in peacekeeping missions used to influence and “order” the behaviour of others, to the adoption of a nurturing and guiding role by teachers to foster the confidence and abilities of their students, to the role as a recipient of limitless attention from workers that is offered to tourists in luxury resorts to make them feel special and “cared for”. These roles create positions that offenders can exploit (knowingly or not) to increase their power and influence over victims, as well as over other actors within the contexts where exploitation takes place. These processes of “distancing” draw from and often reinforce distinctions based on class, gender, ethnicity or age, and thus increase the vulnerabilities of locals, particularly children and adolescents.

While tourism has proven to be a source of growth and employment for many, it has also “served to accentuate the inequalities that exist both between the traveller and local community members and likewise, between tourism operators, who may be well-off local or foreign business owners, and local community members”.¹⁵ The relative status and wealth of offenders with respect to victims exacerbates power differentials between them, an imbalance that is often worsened as a result of the changes brought upon local populations by touristic developments. Vulnerabilities are further deepened when formal

¹⁴ This was consistently reported across reports and regions in the Global Study on SECTT.

¹⁵ Farrington (2016), *Regional Report South East Asia*, 27.

and informal workers become financially dependent on the sources of income tourism offers, further creating the conditions for children to be sexually exploited.¹⁶ As expressed in the South East Asia Report: *“those who struggle to participate formally in the tourism sector, typically the most disadvantaged and the poorest of the poor, may find themselves mired in the exploitative shadow economies that, in response to demand, accompany tourism growth.”*¹⁷ In this sense, preventing CSEC also requires that a broader set of services are made available to protect vulnerable children within tourism destinations, as well as in other locations with large development projects or where large groups of travellers congregate.

Hence, travel brings together individuals placed into different, and unequal, social roles. These unequal encounters, which rest upon overlapping power differentials that create a deep vulnerability for children, are articulated through class, race, ethnicity, age and gender. They also rest on the specific roles that are scripted into the interactions of institutionalised settings, such as orphanages, schools, the service sector and military missions. They are further potentiated by the lack of accountability of offenders to their peers, who remain in the offenders’ place of origin. These interactions are facilitated by a series of infrastructures, which go beyond those traditionally provided to cater to tourists, and include military camps and bases, schools, orphanages, and entertainment and sex trade establishments. Exploitation is further fuelled by a lack of protection and effective enforcement, which is related to a series of factors, including the establishment of “tolerance zones” (where violations of the rule of law are overlooked), an overwhelming number of offenses that limit the effectiveness of police bodies, and the challenges for coordination faced by the complex governance structures in charge of protecting potential victims and enforcing the law. These overlapping factors create possibilities for offending that are specific to travel and tourism, and give rise to multiple contexts of exploitation which share a series of characteristics: a relative anonymity, access, power and impunity for offenders. The presence of such settings creates the conditions for a larger number of offenders, both situational and preferential,¹⁸ to make the choice of committing acts of CSEC, and make travel and tourism a specific area of attention when combating this crime.

VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CONTEXTS OF CHILDREN AND THE CHOICES OF OFFENDERS

The aspects explored above influence the types of arenas where SECTT takes place. However, it is the actors present in such arenas that animate the analysis. This section will look in more depth into the two main groups of actors that are present in these arenas of exploitation: victims and offenders. There is, nonetheless, an important distinction between how they are understood: in the case of victims, their contexts help to understand how they enter or are forced into the arenas where exploitation takes place; in the case of abusers, a closer look at their contexts highlights the importance of understanding their behaviours and decision making processes, looking at the role that their access channels and resources, their valuations, the information and networks they rely on and the ways in which they process the information available affect the context in which they commit abuses.

The contexts of victims

Victims of CSEC are created at the moment of abuse, by the actions of offenders and accomplices, but there are multiple dimensions of the children’s contexts that are relevant to understand what places them in the social arenas where abuse takes place. There is, however, no single story, no unique list of shared traits among victims. Instead of trying to derive specific criteria shared by victims across regions directly

16 Zambrano Moreno, L. and Abreu, I. (2016), *Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism: Regional Report Latin America*, Bangkok: ECPAT International, Ch 3 p 4.

17 Farrington (2016), *Regional Report South East Asia*, 28-29.

18 “The situational child sex offender abuses children by way of experimentation or through the anonymity and impunity afforded by being a tourist. He or she does not have an exclusive sexual inclination for children. Often, the situational offender is an indiscriminate sex tourist who is presented with the opportunity to interact sexually with a person under 18 and takes it. The majority of child sex tourists are situational offenders ...; the preferential child sex tourist displays an active sexual preference for children. He or she may still have the capacity to experience sexual attraction for adults but will actively seek out minors for sexual contact. The preferential child sex tourist will generally search for pubescent or adolescent children”. ECPAT International (2008), *Combating Child Sex Tourism: Questions and Answers*, Bangkok: ECPAT International, available online: http://ecpat.net/sites/default/files/cst_faq_eng.pdf, 12.

from the reports, this paper takes a step back, to tentatively explore different aspects of the environments in which children grow up that can, in interaction, create the vulnerabilities that place children at risk. The specific ways in which these combine can only be analysed within each case or region, to explain the local dynamics that facilitate abuse. The need for a more nuanced analysis of this sort is supported by the many cases that do not conform to the commonly identified victims' profiles or to the patterns of victimisation. In other words, not every case is primarily due to poverty, nor is direct coercion used in all cases. However, there are regional patterns that reflect how children's life courses (including gender and age-specific roles and expectations, and age-related transitions) are a key component to understanding children's vulnerability to CSEC in general, and SECTT more specifically.

Within each setting, gender norms in general, and gender and age specific roles and expectations within the household, deeply influence the lives of children. These norms and roles have an impact on the type of protection children are granted, their sense of duty and familial obligation and the specific practices, interests and conflicts they may be negotiating within their households and larger societies. Even within the same location, gender norms affect girls and boys in different ways. Constructions of both femininity and masculinity affect what is considered appropriate behaviour, what is encouraged and what is stigmatised. Other norms regulating the interactions between different generations within the household, age-specific roles and age-related transitions are also potential sources of risk and vulnerability. Additionally, young people must navigate the pressure to assert their identities as they transition to adulthood within a consumer society. The consumption requirements set to participate in such a society can increase the pressure to gain access to cash and goods, and the status associated with them, in order to accomplish socially respected identities. This pressure is exacerbated in the contexts of travel and displacement, which make inequality and relative wealth more prominent.

Social norms, therefore, can create vulnerabilities for children, limit what can be denounced without further victimisation, define the aspects of children's lives that are granted protection within households and communities, and the ways in which children are offered support by these immediate networks. Furthermore, as social structures change for different reasons, including those associated to development projects and the growth of tourism, the support systems of vulnerable children within their households and communities may be modified and undermined. Thus, these networks should be taken into account when assessing the impact of travel and tourism, and its related projects. There is a need to empirically research the individual and social transitions that affect the lives of children, in order to strengthen the support systems available to them. Considering that these are crucial for the prevention of situations that put them at risk of exploitation, there is a need to look more broadly at the types of support systems available for children and to explore the ways in which to provide adequate services to strengthen and complement these networks.

The choices of offenders

Many of the efforts to conduct research into the perpetrators of SECTT (and CSEC more generally) have focused on defining a profile (an age, sex, gender, nationality) of offenders. However, the results from the Global Study show that these are neither easy to define, nor static. There are great, and perhaps increasing, variations in the profiles of offenders.¹⁹ What is more, the contributions to the Global Study reflect that a large number of perpetrators would fall under the category of "situational offenders".²⁰ As a group that is neither specifically attracted to children, nor willing to engage in CSEC under every circumstance, there are aspects of their behaviour that cannot be explained solely by personal traits. This, therefore, calls further into question the attempts to explain the perpetrators' actions by defining their profiles. Without losing sight of preferential offenders and paedophiles (whose set of preferences we can assume to be unchanging and whose personal traits are very relevant to explain their crimes), this points towards a need to focus on behaviours and choices, rather than personal traits, as the units of analysis and explanation; and to look more closely at the contexts in which these crimes are committed. The institutional approach suggested in this framework is well suited to do so. It is, of course, important to consider that offenders

¹⁹ Hawke, Angela and Raphael, Alison (forthcoming), *Global Report of the Global Study on SECTT*.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

bring their own preferences and beliefs into the context where they exploit children, and their previous experiences influence their willingness to exploit children once an opportunity presents itself. If only the context was considered relevant, this line of analysis would assume that all people would, under certain circumstances, exploit children.

This framework identifies four aspects of the offenders' contexts and processes that can help explain their behaviours: the resources they bring into the arena of abuse and their (changing) valuations of different outcomes and trade-offs; the information and networks they rely upon; the mental models that they create to process such information and make choices; and the paths of access to children that are available to them. These help illuminate how offenders enter a specific arena, how they gain access to vulnerable children, and also provide insights that can help explore the progressive routes of abuse, as well as the linkages between current choices and the past experiences and outcomes of offenders as exploiters.

1. Resources and valuations.

Among the characteristics that enforcement bodies and researchers highlight are the resources that different offenders bring into the arenas of exploitation. Different lengths of stay, time devoted to research locations, frequency of travel, financial resources and skills can position offenders differently within these arenas, allow them to access more or less remote or closed locations and gain familiarity with different groups of people (whether or not they intend to offend). *“Long-term, embedded TCSO [travelling child sex offenders] obtain access to children through a variety of trust and status-based means but commonly infiltrate poor and remote communities by providing gifts, services and other forms of assistance, including financial”*.²¹ At the same time, there are aspects of the offenders' identities that may be reasserted through their practices while travelling, which may modify their valuations of different choices. Gendered work identities, as businessmen or soldiers for example, are reinforced during work travel both in formal events and through other socialisation practices. These identities, however, can extend beyond gender and work, and include ethnic and class dimensions. Some examples, such as the assertion of status by successful Japanese males by engaging in *enjokosai*, or the self-perceptions of wealthy Western tourist who see themselves as deserving special attention, emerge from the Global Study as factors that can lead to SECTT.²²

Since exploitation very obviously affects the physical and emotional well-being of its victims, the other-regarding preferences of offenders are analytically relevant to understand how they justify their choice of actions. In this sense, the enabling conditions derived from travel and tourism can help explain the prevalence of this manifestation of CSEC. The processes of “social distancing” mentioned above seem to make it easier for offenders to detach from their victims, to disregard the “other” in their evaluation of their actions, or to mentally “negotiate” (and negate) the damage by thinking the money provided is compensation, that they are helping victims gain much needed income, or that victims are used to it and are more mature than children in their country. Distance also reduces the “cost” of violating their own society's social norms, partly by the distance from peers and family who may not find out and thus not judge their actions. Therefore, offenders can use these arguments to cancel out the negative values assigned to exploitation in their own process of choosing, both compartmentalising and normalising their exploitative practices.²³

Finally, it is important to consider the ways in which the capacity to make decisions is bounded. Even if we assumed that offenders possess full information regarding the outcomes of their potential choices, they would still face a high degree of uncertainty, since there is only a probability of being caught, and their potential losses are subject to a large number of contingent factors. The difference in timeframes and probabilities of expected outcomes can also affect how outcomes are valued, which in turn has an impact on the choices exploiters make. Whereas whatever benefits exploiters may derive from their actions are immediate at the time they chose to exploit a child, the potential punishments are neither immediate nor

21 AFP (2015), “Thematic Paper. Australian travelling child sex offenders: Strengthening cooperation between law enforcement agencies and analysing trends”, contribution to the Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism, 1.

22 See Pruneda, O. and Yeo, S. (2016), *Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism: Regional Report East Asia*, Bangkok: ECPAT International and Farrington (2016), *Regional Report South East Asia*.

23 This is highlighted in all regional reports, as well as by experts working directly with convicted offenders.

certain, which can lead exploiters to further underestimate and discount the risks and potential costs of their behaviour.²⁴ The particular heuristics used to process the information they have gathered to define their choices is worth exploring, and can offer important insights for the development of preventive policies. This also means that if the saliency and type of information that offenders base their choices on is altered, their valuations may also change. While notices and advertisements alone may not suffice, a credible warning that offenders will be prosecuted can reduce offenses.

2. Information and networks.

There is a need to understand in more depth the role and form of operation of networks of offenders and accomplices; the flow of information. Given the hidden and criminal nature of CSEC, gathering information is costly and risky. The information available to offenders is imperfect and often travels through informal networks, as word-of-mouth information.²⁵ In an environment where there is risk involved, networks and guarantors offering protection play an important role. This creates higher transaction costs, but also an opportunity for rent seeking behaviour on the part of intermediaries, who then have a stake in sustaining and promoting CSEC. This trait can also help explain the “specialisation” that is discussed in many of the reports, which indicate that particular types of offenders and offenses are clustered within specific locations; and is consistent with the increased demand (even among situational offenders) in places where an “economy of scale” has developed. Both intermediaries and other offenders can thus function as gatekeepers, but also offer paths to access children and locations and can provide more accurate information to fellow offenders. These networks can also reinforce the belief that the risks offenders face are low or nonexistent; a collective framing that is confirmed when they continue to offend without consequences. Within these structures, different offenders follow different strategies and, depending on their networks and locations, will be presented with different scenarios to offend. Further, the presence of new technologies and changing patterns in travel increase the information available to offenders and the possibilities to network, and reduce the costs of gathering information and risks of being caught. Understanding these patterns and flows of information will help to devise strategies to disrupt them, and hinder the capacity of sexual exploiters to offend.

3. Mental models/processing for selecting specific actions.

Whether they have a specific intention to exploit children from the outset or not, offenders come into the arenas where exploitation takes place with a mental model of the situation they are facing, their risks and potential outcomes, their goals and means to accomplish them. These models are refined through experience, as offenders gain a better picture of the structure of these situations, gather more information and become more deeply embedded in particular contexts and networks of exploitation. On the one hand, their assessments of the risks they face may be reappraised based on previous experiences. On the other, after entering these arenas of exploitation, offenders can become aware of new avenues and these can in turn become more accessible to them. Offenders can also refine their strategies (and their guesses about the actions of others) through practice, since “learning is enhanced in situations that are often repeated [and] interactions with the same set of individuals enable an individual to obtain a better estimate of the strategies that specific others adopt”.²⁶ Finally, by embedding themselves in these communities of offenders, the cultural norms and beliefs that justify the offenders’ behaviours are reinforced (even if the person can compartmentalise, and only applies these norms and beliefs to the specific settings).

These processes of learning, refining and desensitisation are represented by the feedback loop in the conceptual map that links interactions and outcomes to the contexts of offenders. These processes are accelerated by the multiplication of the available infrastructures, the changes in communication and the possibilities of travelling, since they can lead to more exposure and easier access to information to inform

²⁴ These aspects of bounded rationality have been studied within behavioural economics by authors such as Khaneman, Tversky and Thaler as part of a descriptive model for decision making termed “prospect theory.”

²⁵ There are multiple implications to information spread informally. The patterns of dissemination it follows and the ways in which it is taken into account are different from those of public information.

²⁶ Ostrom, E. (2005), *Understanding Institutional Diversity*, 106. Ostrom refers to the strategies of others that affect outcomes for the individual in situations that face coordination dilemmas. Here we refer to this type of learning (for example, offenders can gain a better sense of how police forces may respond) as well as to learning and copying strategies of other offenders.

and refine mental models. In this sense, it is important to communicate effectively with the industries involved in communications and travel to look for shared strategies to minimise the risk to children. At the same time, efforts to shield locations from exploitation and to protect children can also have an indirect preventive effect, by reducing the exposure and information available to offenders and their networks.

4. Access.

Linked to the issues previously discussed in this section, the particular trajectories of offenders appear to be central to understanding the progression of their crimes. Hence, it is important to understand how offenders (particularly situational offenders) first enter into a situation where they chose to engage in CSEC. According to Better Care Network,²⁷ research shows that opportunistic or situational offenders almost always first access victims in a public place.²⁸ At the same time, it is important to understand if there is a progression in the strategies they use and, if so, how this progression occurs. This information is key to developing better strategies to disrupt their progression. More generally, the reports reflect various forms of specialisation. For example, *“anecdotal evidence points to different modi operandi for Asian and Western child sex offenders. Asian offenders tend to access children via facilitators who arrange for children to be brought to a hotel or private residence, whereas Western child sex offenders are often more visible in that they are more likely to make direct contact with children in public places. In 2014, virgin women and girls were still a sought-after commodity in Cambodia, particularly amongst Asian offenders”*.²⁹ In order to target interventions, it is important to identify the different patterns in the mode of operation of different groups of offenders; contingent, for example, on the city or region where they are operating, the presence of economies of scale (such as large sex trade industries) and the networks they rely upon or the infrastructures they use. Taking this into account, the increased facility with which people can travel, settle in different locations and access information and materials online are all factors that support the concern that these increased opportunities may lead to more instances of SECTT in a larger number of places.

BACK TO TOURISM AND TRAVEL: WHAT CAN THE SECTOR DO?

While this analysis was based exclusively on the review of materials written about SECTT, many of the aspects highlighted here could apply to the various manifestations of CSEC. In a more extended version of this framework, I suggest that this is due to both the blurring boundaries between manifestations and the broader focus on travel (rather than solely tourism) that the Global Study favoured. While this broader focus may appear to lose the attention given in previous works to the role of the tourism industry, it also responds to the changes the industry itself is undergoing. With the development of Information and Communications Technology (ICTs), of cheap travel alternatives and improved access to remote locations, travel has become a more pervasive and less regulated human activity. Additionally, as I hope to have shown, there are important aspects of travel itself, even when it is not associated to tourism, which generate the conditions and vulnerabilities that facilitate SECTT. Thus, by favouring this broader focus, both the Global Study and the framework can assess these aspects (of travel as a human activity, technological changes and tourism) independently.

However, this approach still recognises the great responsibility and key role that the sector and the industry can play in combating SECTT. There are multiple ways in which the tourism sector can contribute to child protection and SECTT prevention. Among others, it can:

- Incorporate prevention measures into new development projects. This can be done, for example, by carrying out thorough impact assessments and establishing child protection systems at the planning stages of tourism development.

27 Better Care Network (2015), “International Volunteering and Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Residential Care Centres”, contribution to the Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism, 4.

28 World Vision (2014), “Sex, Abuse and Childhood. A study about knowledge, attitudes and practices relating to child sexual abuse, including in travel and tourism, in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam”, 60.

29 Farrington (2016), *Regional Report South East Asia*, 37.

- Make SECTT prevention an integral part of tourism management. It is only possible to ensure that protection systems will be sustained and sufficient funding for preventive measures will be secured if SECTT remains a key concern of the public tourism sector.
- Shield all settings from exploitation. This should be part of the required assessments for new development projects. When new places are opened to tourists and travellers, the potential risks to children, and the actions to prevent harm to children, should be assessed. There has been significant progress among various hotel chains and other companies, which have signed The Code, regarding this issue. However, with a wider range of accommodation options available, and new significant players (such as online booking sites, and even search engines), there is also a need to expand current efforts and to complement them with more innovative alternatives. This effort must be extended to other industries that participate in travel and tourism, such as financial institutions, airline companies and even businesses whose staff travels for work.
- Hold travellers accountable. Companies should take responsibility for their travelling personnel of all ranks (including CEOs and other high-level officers). This can be done through multiple procedures, such as police clearances or codes of conduct.

HOW DO WE PREVENT SECTT?: SOME BROAD LESSONS FROM THIS FRAMEWORK

As stated before, this framework aims to be the beginning of a conversation about key factors, appropriate prevention entry points and best responses. As such, rather than producing specific policy recommendations, it aims to be a tool that can be used in policy discussions, tried, tested and improved. However, there is a series of general lessons that can be drawn from this effort:

Everyone has a part to play

As discussed in the previous section, curbing SECTT requires the participation of a wide range of actors, beyond the state or the tourism industry alone. This means recognising the importance of new actors, but also looking at the ways in which, often inadvertently, others who could help prevent and block offenses have not lived up to this role. By incorporating the potential roles of these different actors, which include governments, CSOs, families, the tourism industry, companies responsible for businesses travellers and even fellow tourists, it is possible to design more comprehensive responses and to tackle coordination problems when they arise.

Institutions matter

This is a central message of the framework. SECTT crimes cannot be reduced exclusively to mental illness, nor can they be curbed exclusively through policing. As an instituted behaviour, a reduction in SECTT requires institutional change. This may not sound new to those working in the field. After all, much effort has been placed in modifying laws, developing appropriate protocols and establishing hotlines and shelters. However, legal change alone is not enough. In order to design adequate responses, we need to understand the social contexts that facilitate, and even foster, offenses. This means focusing on settings and situations that are in place even before an offense has occurred. Institutions shape incentives and influence decisions and, as such, they can be used to prevent SECTT.

ICTs must be part of the solution

The field of travel and tourism has changed and continues to change rapidly. ICTs in particular have been a major driver of change. Hence, ICTs can and must be part of the solution to SECTT. This means involving a wider range of actors – from search engines to financial institutions – in developing the adequate responses to prevent SECTT and to shield these instruments and channels from being co-opted by offenders. Through the use of ICTs, more innovative solutions can be found to gather data on offenses, track transactions linked to SECTT and disrupt the activities of networks and offenders.

We must tackle anonymity

To the extent that a sense of anonymity increases the rate of offenses, it must be curbed. This requires concerted efforts to produce information on offenders and crimes; to make offenders visible. It also implies engaging those actors who can act as safeguards for children and report offenses, as well as developing adequate, creative and safe channels for reporting. While these are, for the most part, protective measures, the effect of reducing anonymity is preventive as well, inasmuch as it affects the choice to attempt to offend, as much as the capacity of offenders to do so effectively.

Place children at the heart of both analysis and policy design

There is a need for a better understanding of SECTT, of its causes and effective prevention and protection measures from the perspective of victims and children at risk. Since much information has been produced by policing bodies, there has been important work done to understand the perspective of offenders (and, from a policing point of view, this makes a lot of sense). However, particularly if proper prevention systems are to be designed, there is a need to develop approaches that are accessible to children at risk, that take into account their worldviews and the reasons that led them to be caught in the dynamics of exploitation, that are sensitive and adapt to their needs, and understand the barriers that prevent them from seeking help. In order to build these, it is important to analyse SECTT from the perspective of the victims, for which we need to also “follow” the trajectories of victims. This has a very practical implication, and is meant to be a practical recommendation, rather than a moral appeal. The better the perspectives of children are understood, the more we will understand how to produce effective prevention systems to manage the risks present in the context of victims and potential victims.

CONCLUSIONS

In the last two decades, many initiatives have addressed the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. A vast amount of legislation has been produced, and policies and programmes have gained the support of governments, NGOs and the private sector. From the available research, there seem to have been some successes, particularly in locations where SECTT has been acknowledged and addressed by a wide range of actors, such as the cases of Cambodia and the Philippines mentioned above. However, with a growing number of potential locations to visit, a wider and more intensive use of ICTs, and an increasingly mobile population, the opportunities for exploitation seem only to be growing. In such complex environments, initiatives must be well designed and targeted to be effective and, in order to achieve this, our understanding of the issue must be improved. Hence, we need to look more closely at the evidence regarding interventions and gather empirical data on SECTT itself. This means going beyond attempts to measure the number of victims (a piece of information that has proven to be notoriously difficult to gather), and look instead at processes and interactions; focus our efforts on understanding the enabling factors within each environment, and the effects of laws and policies in practice. Since the factors that produce vulnerability and impunity do not act in isolation, but rather interact, perpetuate and strengthen one another, there is a need to design more holistic and wide-reaching approaches to prevention. Effective prevention involves ensuring children receive enough support and can access services before becoming victims of SECTT; it also means ensuring that incentives should be set against offending. This cannot be accomplished by laws alone, or by a single actor; it requires responses from hiring firms and hosting companies, and strengthening the capacity for communities to report without consequences to their safety or income. The framework presented here is an attempt to aid in this process, by providing an outline to help guide and organise the analysis within specific locations, and point to potential initiatives and measures to improve the situation in practice.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Jane Warburton

Jane Warburton has worked to protect children living in especially difficult environments for almost forty years, in a number of different capacities; project implementer, programme designer, trainer, researcher and advocate.

Sallie Yea

Sallie Yea has a PhD in Human Geography/Development Studies from Monash University (2000). Since then she has been conducting research on the inter-related subjects of gender and development, human trafficking and vulnerable/failed migration, especially in the Asian region. Sallie is currently a Lecturer at the School of Geography and Environmental Science, Monash University, Clayton VIC. She can be contacted at: salliellao@gmail.com

Emilia Pool Illsley

Emilia Pool Illsley was a research intern and consultant for the Global Study on SECTT at ECPAT International. She can be contacted at: emiliapool@gmail.com



ECPAT International

328/1 Phayathai Road
Ratchathewi, Bangkok
10400 THAILAND
Tel: +662 215 3388, +662 611 0972
Fax: +662 215 8272
Email: info@ecpat.net | media@ecpat.net
Website: www.ecpat.net