



ANNUAL REPORT

July 2023 - June 2024



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**ECPAT International
Annual Report**

July 2023-June 2024.

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ECPAT International

328/1 Phaya Thai Road, Ratchathewi,
Bangkok 10400, THAILAND

Tel:+66 2 215 3388 | Email: info@ecpat.org | Website: www.ecpat.org

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Mr. Guillaume Landry
*Executive Director,
ECPAT International*

The polarisation of politics and information is not without consequences in the fight against sexual exploitation of children. More than ever, children's rights defenders engaged in the ECPAT network and beyond have been facing severe limitations and repressive measures imposed on civil society organisations, jeopardising their vital role in promoting human rights, child protection and access to justice.

The limitations vary in form, from constraining on civil society organisations registrations to dissolution of civil society organisations and confiscations of assets, financial limitations, and censorship of donors in terms of restrictions on fundraising, limitations of addressing sensitive topics, as well as detentions, intimidation, and harassment.

Meanwhile, the role of civil society is crucial and cross-cutting. While civil society organisations often play a vital role in providing frontline services for – child victims, survivors, and families – rehabilitation and reintegration, they are also uniquely positioned to bridge communities, governments, and the private sector to collaborate and respond on prevention and response interventions.

In recent years, our network has witnessed alarming levels of shrinking in the space available for civil society organisations to play their role. Civil society has come under severe threat due to the weaponisation of children's rights, conflict, and curbs on democratic processes. Governments are undermining the efforts of those providing services to children, victims, and survivors through poor policy implementation or centralisation of existing systems. There has been a notable impact on child protection civil society

organisations regarding operation, knowledge/capacity transfer and employment opportunities. They also face limitations to their capacities, ranging from technical management, leadership skills, and fundraising to results management and internal governance issues. This limits services for children and diminishes employment opportunities for trained and experienced staff, impacting areas where public officials may lack competence. Finally, yet importantly, civil society organisations play a key role in service delivery when authorities are unable or unwilling to reach some target groups, particularly the most marginalised or vulnerable ones.

In the past three years, three of our members have been forced to shut down their activities or refused their registration renewal. They were located on three continents, demonstrating the global trend in this challenging environment.

In this challenging environment, movements like ECPAT are more necessary than ever, creating safe spaces for exchange, support, and visibility. Over the past year, we have expanded our reach, deepened our impact, and strengthened our resolve to protect the world's most vulnerable children. We have been at the forefront of innovation and resilience in our work, adapting to the evolving landscape of child sexual exploitation and seizing new opportunities to drive change.

One key illustration of this global leadership is the series of regional workshops that we continued to convene, with three more such gatherings that brought together 306 participants from 90 countries, including 130 senior representatives of local civil society organisations. These events are much more



than just opportunities for knowledge sharing. They are a testament to what makes ECPAT genuinely unique as a movement. Our regional workshops unite local actors, civil society organisations, and international stakeholders to challenge current strategies, learn from evidence and take collective action against child sexual exploitation. We proudly support environments where grassroots voices are heard, local realities inform global strategy, and our collective expertise influences systemic change accountable to children. These workshops personify the very essence of our

movement: global in scope yet deeply rooted in local action.

In the past year, ECPAT International has advanced the Global Boys Initiative, focusing on preventing the sexual exploitation of boys in all environments—both online and offline. Following the 2023 Global Boys Summit, we have set up the Global Alliance for the Protection of Boys from Sexual Violence (GAPB), a vibrant network of like-minded organisations that come together to stop failing boys and incarnate the change we need to stand-up for

them. This Global Alliance will play a pivotal role in addressing safety in online gaming spaces, sport settings and at home, ensuring boys have safer environments where they can connect without facing undue risks. By promoting best practices and enhancing the capacity of practitioners to adopt gender-sensitive approaches, the Global Alliance will expand to welcome new civil society members and strengthen its commitment to protecting boys from exploitation worldwide.

On a global scale, ECPAT brought the topic of child protection in travel and tourism to the UN General Assembly, launching a global call for placing child protection at the core of sustainable development and reshaping voluntourism practices, through robust child protection structures in travel and tourism. It was an honour to stand side by side with Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden twice this year, at the UN General Assembly and in Thailand, marking a historical collaboration of over three decades in Swedish leadership to break taboos and rely on decision makers to talk bold actions to stop the sexual exploitation of children.

In the digital realm, we spearheaded the #ChildSafetyON movement, where our members across Europe united to influence critical policy changes in the European Union. With powerful testimony from survivors in eight countries and collective evidence, these efforts have led to stronger protections for children against online exploitation. At the same time, in Asia, we engaged in in-depth discussions with key stakeholders, using evidence from the Disrupting Harm project to drive concrete actions and reforms. These dialogues have rallied a diverse range of actors around accountability and learning. Additionally, Irish Aid has initiated the first-ever regional study on how Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA) is impacting children in francophone West Africa,

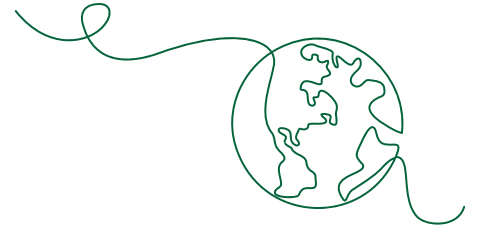
further expanding our understanding and response to this urgent issue.

None of what we do would be possible without dedicated staff, members, partners, and supporters. Going the extra mile, there have been so many examples where commitment and passion have led us to achieve more, as evident in the update of the Terminology Guidelines by a group of global agencies, experts and academics, by the sincere desire of dozen of grassroots organisations in Tunisia and Jordan to engage more on evolving trends in the way children are sexually exploited, or by the way children from Ecuador and Costa Rica were able to share their recommendations at the national level and the UN General Assembly on how developments taking place in the tourism sector can be safer and offer multiple opportunities to them.

Having recently affiliated new civil society organisations in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Cabo Verde, Timor Leste and Cambodia, the network is also growing stronger and more agile in promoting child-centred approaches, ensuring that the voices of children and young survivors are at the heart of everything we do. We will expand our initiatives to underserved regions with the greatest need for protection. And we will continue to lead the global conversation on child protection, advocating for more robust policies, accountability, and effective interventions.

With opposition to children's rights increasing under the cover of privacy, freedom of expression, conspiracy, and disinformation, we need to be strong, strategic, and empathic as a movement. I am proud of the dedication of our members. We are making a difference and need to be bold in the evidence we put together to rally forces in the evidence that children have the right to live a life free from sexual exploitation, everywhere.





INTRODUCTION

ECPAT International is a global network of civil society organisations with one clear goal: to put an end to the sexual exploitation of children in all its forms. In 1990, ECPAT was founded in Thailand as a grassroots movement against the commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourism. In the past three decades, ECPAT has become the leading international network, with 126 member organisations in 105 countries, all dedicated to protecting children from sexual exploitation and abuse.

We are committed to creating a world where every child is safe, empowered, and free from sexual exploitation. This is our mission, and we

will achieve it. ECPAT will achieve its vision of a future where children everywhere can grow up without the fear of exploitation, where their rights are respected, and where their voices are heard.

ECPAT engages in rigorous research, targeted advocacy, and capacity development with governments, NGOs, and the private sector to achieve this vision. We are confident that ending child sexual exploitation requires a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach. This approach must address the root causes of sexual exploitation while providing sustainable, child-centred, and child-led solutions.

KEY STRATEGIC APPROACHES*

1 OUR RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE-GENERATION PROCESS ARE SECOND TO NONE.

Our work is built on the generation of compelling evidence through rigorous research. ECPAT leads the way in global and regional studies that provide a clear understanding of the dynamics of child sexual exploitation. Our research provides insights generated with children and survivors that inform our advocacy efforts and shape effective policies and interventions. The research in sexual exploitation of children in humanitarian contexts highlighted the critical gaps in protection for children internally displaced or refugees as illustrated in Ethiopia, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Kenya.

2 WE ARE A POWERFUL FORCE IN ADVOCACY AND POLICY INFLUENCE.

ECPAT's advocacy efforts are driven by evidence and focused on creating systemic change. We engage with international bodies, such as the United Nations and regional organisations, to influence policies that protect children. Our evidence-based advocacy resulted in considerable progress towards the adoption of comprehensive frameworks in 55 countries.

3 WE CONVENE AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING AND COLLABORATION.

Evidence-based advocacy, collaborations and capacity strengthening are crucial elements of change. We facilitate learning and support our member organisations and partners' capacities to succeed in our joint mission. ECPAT creates spaces and provides opportunities for knowledge exchange that supports stakeholders' collective action to combat child sexual exploitation effectively. Our regional workshops are a unique aspect of our work. They bring together local actors, civil society organisations, and international stakeholders. These workshops facilitate collaboration, enabling the exchange of promising practices and developing collective strategies to protect children.

WE MUST COMBAT CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation is a global crisis that affects millions of children, often in the most vulnerable and marginalised communities. The impact of sexual exploitation is undeniably profound, leading to long-term physical, emotional, and psychological harm. Child sexual exploitation is a significant challenge that often goes unnoticed. To address it effectively, we must take coordinated and comprehensive action.

ECPAT is vital in exposing this pervasive issue and driving the global movement to end it. We know that protecting children requires more than immediate interventions. It also requires locally led, equitable approaches, developed with children and survivors, through gender transformative approaches to embed long-term, sustainable change. ECPAT is creating a safer world for all children by bringing collective action across multi-sectoral partnerships and advocating for more robust evidence, policies, and practices.

LOOKING FORWARD

We look forward to the next chapter of our journey and are more committed than ever to our mission. We continue to innovate, adapt, and expand our efforts to protect children from sexual exploitation. With the support of our global network and partners, we are working towards achieving our strategic goals and creating a world where every child is safe, empowered, and free from exploitation.

This Annual Report highlights our achievements and sets the stage for the future. This is a call to action for everyone who believes in our mission and is committed to joining us in the fight against child sexual exploitation. Together, we will make a difference.





WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO, AND OUR IMPACT



MISSION AND VISION

The vision of ECPAT International (ECPAT) is a world where all children enjoy their fundamental rights free and secure from sexual exploitation. Our mission is to push for the critical systemic and social changes necessary to end the sexual exploitation of children (SEC), with governments, intergovernmental institutions, the private sector, civil society, and the public, including children themselves.



CORE ACTIVITIES

ECPAT's core activities are built on three main strategies. We generate compelling evidence, lead evidence-based campaigns and advocacy, and convene a multitude of stakeholders alongside civil society organisations to collaborate, learn from each other, and take collective action. These activities are designed to address the root causes of child sexual exploitation and provide sustainable solutions.

We generate compelling evidence to bridge the gap between research, practice, and policy:

ECPAT conducts in-depth research to understand the dynamics of child sexual exploitation and to develop effective interventions.

We are committed to generating compelling evidence, which is fundamental to our work. We bridge the gap between research, practice, and policy by centring the experiences of children, including survivors and local practitioners. This evidence is vital for developing effective prevention and response strategies.

We lead evidence-based campaigning and advocacy to drive a movement across sectors, stakeholders, and geographies:

This involves engaging with international bodies like the United Nations and regional organisations to influence policy and practice.

ECPAT leads the way in evidence-based campaigning and advocacy, driving a movement across sectors, stakeholders, and geographies. We challenge existing narratives and advocate for child-centric solutions. We will empower members and partners through capacity-strengthening initiatives and foster horizontal learning, which is critical to this strategy.

We convene and create opportunities for learning, collaboration, and action for CSOs to tackle SEC collectively and effectively:

ECPAT is committed to strengthening the capacity of its member organisations and other stakeholders. This includes training, developing tools and resources, and facilitating knowledge exchange. ECPAT's commitment to mobilising a robust and informed network of child protection actors is evident in initiatives such as the Global Boys Initiative and regional workshops.

It is crucial to convene and create opportunities for civil society collaboration to ensure collective and effective action against the sexual exploitation of children. ECPAT raises the profile and credibility of the network on national and international platforms, fostering new collaborations and innovations.



SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES AND SUCCESSES

ECPAT has achieved numerous milestones and successes over the years, and we are proud of our ongoing commitment to protecting children from sexual exploitation.

We are integrating survivor perspectives:

“Oftentimes, organisations working with children do not take into consideration the opinions of boys and girls.”

Anelisse Marian Cruz Castro
Bolivia:

ECPAT International is leading the way in integrating child survivor perspectives to enhance support services and accountability. ECPAT facilitated consultations with 81 survivors and 412 frontline workers in 15 countries to capture their experiences of child sexual exploitation policies and services. These consultations led to the integration of survivor input into 10 national child protection plans and the Inter-Agency Coordinating Group Against Trafficking (ICAT)’s ethical guidelines for data collection, ensuring that these plans are child- and survivor-centred.

We are collecting survivors’ views and recommendations to improve support services with projects in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal, and upcoming in Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru in the context of the Venezuelan migration crisis. These efforts guarantee that survivors’ experiences directly shape policies and interventions, creating more responsive and effective support systems.

“Prioritize open communication with girls, creating a safe environment for reporting and supportive environment for victims and survivors.”

Pan African Advisory Board of She Leads
Call to Young Women:

We have increased access to protection and support services:

ECPAT has successfully mainstreamed cross-cutting promising practice approaches across all its projects. Its focus is on child- and survivor-centred approaches, addressing the gendered dimensions of child sexual exploitation, and ensuring locally led and equitable interventions. This has disseminated globally critical approaches to improve access to quality, child-friendly, and adequate protection, and support systems for children in risky situations and those who have experienced sexual exploitation. For instance, following the dissemination of the Disrupting Harm reports, the recommendations on protection and support services have been integrated into the Tanzanian national ministry of health’s educational and training materials to ensure health professionals are better equipped to protect children from harm, and in Indonesia, the recommendations have led to the development of a national roadmap on online protection through a presidential decree, and the revision of national standards and training for integrated services to protect women and children.

We are leading on addressing the gender dimensions of child sexual exploitation:

“The sexual exploitation of boys remains very hidden in Uruguay, but it exists and has different manifestations.” This will emphasize the need for targeted interventions that consider boys’ specific vulnerabilities.”

Diego Pailos,
Coordinator at
Gurises Unidos,
ECPAT member
in Uruguay:

ECPAT International has made huge strides in the Global Boys Initiative, which takes a stand against the sexual exploitation of boys in all its forms, both online and offline. The 2023 Global Boys Summit brought together 60 leading practitioners and policymakers from 30 countries, igniting a powerful dialogue on boys’ safety. An impressive 97% of participants reported increased knowledge on addressing risks boys face, and 94% established new partnerships, sparking collaboration and resource exchange. The summit resulted in the formation of the GAPB, emerging as a dynamic force, equipping stakeholders with cutting-edge tools and resources. This network is working to integrate boys’ safety needs into online gaming environments, which are spaces where boys find community but face significant risks.

Francesco Cecon, Head of the Global Boys Initiative at ECPAT International: “Online gaming environments can also be places where children can challenge gender roles and ideas of masculinity in a way that they cannot do in real life.”

ECPAT is also significantly enhancing the capacity of practitioners to deliver gender-sensitive services for boys. This is being achieved by sharing best practices that organisations are already adapting and applying. The Global Alliance has been further strengthened following the summit with the formation of a steering committee of key partners, including All Survivors Project, Equimundo, Family for Every Child, Physicians for Human Rights, Save the Children and Women’s Refugee Commission, proudly convened by ECPAT International. The Global Alliance is now expanding and soon accepting applications from new civil society members to build a dedicated community of practice to combat the sexual exploitation of boys.

We are leading a global movement on child protection in travel and tourism:

Dr Najat Maalla M’Jid, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children: “It is not possible to deliver sustainable growth and development without investing in integrated, child and gender-sensitive protection and violence prevention.”



In 2023, ECPAT members from 45 countries worked together to develop evidence and promote solutions to address the sexual exploitation of children in the travel and tourism context, including the phenomena of voluntourism, which culminated in the inclusion of ECPAT inputs and children's perspectives within two UN reports launched at the UN General Assembly. These reports, on child protection in travel and tourism, and regulating voluntourism, marked a significant step in implementing international standards and policies and taking practical approaches to placing child protection at the core of sustainable development and reshaping voluntourism practices.

“Volunteering is good. It is the unregulated, unskilled volunteering for tourism that is not, and it can be made better through regulation.”

Ms. Mama Fatima Singhateh,

UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children at the event organised by ECPAT around the UN General Assembly.

We've extended our work beyond the work with the travel and tourism companies to engaging informal sector, considering that informality is a constant characteristic of the markets in the regions. Although the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights apply to all businesses, the informal sector remains by large out of reach, while it has the potential to become an actor of change. We have engaged with transport sector and online booking

platforms to address the intersection of sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism and online. We are also leading a robust evaluation process to inform developments of The Code, considering the evolving business and children's rights framework.

We are strengthening regional networks:

Over the past year, ECPAT has hosted five regional consultations, bringing together hundreds of representatives from ECPAT member organisations, civil society, and policy partners to discuss regional trends and developments in SEC and support practice sharing. These consultations facilitated knowledge exchange, strengthened connections, and supported collective approaches to addressing the sexual exploitation of children. Participants confirmed they benefited significantly from the learning to adapt (or enrich) their practices and advocacy strategies. These consultations are critical to adapt to the changes, keep up with promising practices and respond to the evolving landscape of SEC through strengthened collaborations across multi-sectoral groups, at the local, national, and regional levels.

We are driving policy and legislative reforms:

ECPAT has driven legislative, policy, and regulatory reforms, resulting in tangible progress since July 2023. These reforms have unequivocally enhanced the safeguarding of children's rights and welfare, particularly in the context of online exploitation and sexual extortion. ECPAT supported legislative changes in 55 countries, such as the introduction of extraterritorial legislation in Ghana, criminalising online grooming in Paraguay, and the drafting of new laws to combat child sexual abuse material in Cambodia.

ECPAT International's findings on the impact of sex offender registration in protecting children from sexual exploitation, presented at the International Conference on Survivors of Rape in Lyon by invitation from Interpol, directly influenced the development of sex offender registry policies in the Philippines and Costa Rica.

We engage the private sector:

ECPAT is actively engaging the private sector to conduct due diligence, prevent and respond to child sexual exploitation. The Code is a multi-stakeholder initiative for protecting children in travel and tourism implemented through a practical set of measures and engagement with the communities on the ground. This year, 19 companies based in 10 countries joined The Code, increasing the number of active members to 309 companies. Furthermore, new Local Code Representatives representing civil society organisations from Canada and Côte d'Ivoire will drive the private sector engagement in these countries. We have been leading a major evaluation of The Code in selected pilot countries in the Americas and Europe, in consultation with other countries, to inform our strategies.

Project Qawaq, enabled Scotiabank Peru and CHS Alternativo (ECPAT's member in Peru), with support from ECPAT International, to lay the groundwork for an operational alert system for the flagging of financial transactions which facilitate sexual exploitation of children. Project Qawaq highlighted how organised crime monetises venue and street-based child sexual exploitation and launders it through the financial system.

Beyond The Code, ECPAT partnered with technology firms to develop child protection software used by 500 million users worldwide. Additionally, ECPAT led a coalition of 100+ companies to advocate for robust child safety features on digital platforms. This work demonstrates our unwavering commitment to assessing risks and impacts to protect children from exploitation across sectors.

We campaign for and with children:

ECPAT has amplified the voices of children and survivors in policy discussions, particularly around online child safety, through initiatives like Project BEACON to regulate technology platforms across all EU countries. ECPAT engaged in multi-sectoral dialogues with children, technology companies, national governments, and Members of the European Parliament. The project enables children and carers to share their insights with policymakers, influencing European Union (EU), international and national policies. Public awareness campaigns have also been instrumental in reducing stigma and promoting preventative education.

ECPAT led participatory, inclusive, and child rights-based approaches as key to influencing the discourse on sustainability, which tends to bring in limited perspectives and perceptions of those directly affected by tourism developments. With children from Costa Rica and Ecuador, ECPAT developed and launched a child participation model reflected in a briefing paper, toolkit and videos developed with children, popularised among tourism authorities and businesses for global upscale.

We are committed to driving innovation and learning:

ECPAT is at the forefront of innovative approaches to combating child sexual exploitation. Over the last year, ECPAT has published 23 reports and case studies to strengthen the evidence-base for advocacy and programming across a range of urgent priorities, including sexual exploitation of children in humanitarian contexts, travel and tourism, online gaming and national and regional trend analysis and promising practices. Through this process, ECPAT co-produced research with members in 39 countries. This evidence has influenced advocacy and action: for instance, ECPAT mobilised the financial sector to adopt alerts to detect suspicious transactions related to sexual exploitation and trafficking of children in Peru. ECPAT facilitated the convening of expert stakeholders to consider the integration of the needs of boys when seeking support and addressing safety and protection in online gaming environments. Learning from our experiences, ECPAT is also promoting and



piloting innovative approaches to engage with children and survivors to integrate their lived realities in research and advocacy while critically challenging adults and decision makers' perceptions of children's capacities and agency.

“Let’s design funding for projects driven by children and not design a project that fits the funding.”

Cornelius Williams

ECPAT Board Chair:

We achieve our goals through collaborative efforts:

Collaboration is at the heart of ECPAT's approach. The organisation has formed partnerships with various stakeholders, including international bodies, governments, and NGOs, to drive collective action. During the year, ECPAT supported 15 joint initiatives between partners within and outside of its network. The Down to Zero Alliance, composed of Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia), Conexión, Defence for Children - ECPAT Netherlands, Free A Girl and Plan International working together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands is a prime example of how multiple organisations can collaborate to end the sexual exploitation of children by taking a multi-sector, multi-actor, and systemic approach, recognising the complexity of sexual exploitation of children and specific contexts in which it takes place.

ECPAT centres the experiences and voices of its members organisations, supporting local ownership and valuing local knowledge through ongoing discussion in communities of practice and regional meetings. 89 ECPAT members participated in ongoing thematic



discussions during the year, from peer-to-peer learning through the safeguarding mentorship programme to joint advocacy at the EU level with the commission, parliament, and council in Brussels through Project Beacon.

“Participation in events - it’s better if there is a child there, as peers find it easier to talk to peers.”

Child participant

from Hungary:

ECPAT supports member organisations to find synergies among their work and take collective action. ECPAT members from 45 countries across the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Africa worked together to develop evidence and promote solutions that address the phenomena of voluntourism, which resulted in the inclusion of voluntourism within the UN Special Rapporteur's latest report on the exploitation and sexual abuse of children in the context of travel and tourism.

IMPACTFUL STORIES AND CASE STUDIES

ECPAT's work is best illustrated through the stories of those it has helped and the tangible impacts of its initiatives. Here are just a few examples.

The Global Boys Initiative is a groundbreaking initiative. The Summit led to the formation of the Global Alliance for the Protection of Boys from Sexual Violence, which coordinates advocacy at different levels to raise awareness on the different complexities of the issue, while complementing advocacy to challenge power and gender dynamics that lead to issues of sexual violence against children and women.

As part of child protection in travel and tourism programme, in Phang-Nga, Thailand the capacity of travel and tourism businesses was strengthened, a child protection multi-stakeholder network to prevent and respond to trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children was established, and children were empowered.

The regional consultations in Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific, North, West, and Central Africa, and the Americas brought together diverse stakeholders to discuss and agree on the best strategies for addressing the sexual exploitation of children. These meetings have undoubtedly strengthened regional networks and supported the development of collaborative advocacy and practice approaches.

“Child protection is not just a moral obligation but also an essential pillar of sustainable tourism. It is our responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of children.”

Mrs. Apinya Chompumas,
the Director
General of the
Thai Department
of Children and
Youth:

CONCLUSION

ECPAT International's history, mission, and core activities prove its unwavering commitment to ending child sexual exploitation. ECPAT has achieved significant milestones and driven impactful policy, practice, and public awareness changes through strategic research, advocacy, and capacity building. The organisation's success is built on its collaborative approach, leveraging the strengths of its global network, and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders to protect children worldwide.

The stories and achievements in this section prove that ECPAT is a practical and critical player in the child protection sector. ECPAT will continue to innovate and adapt to emerging challenges, and its [dedication to safeguarding](#) children will remain at the forefront of its efforts.



COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

At ECPAT International, we believe that our mission to end the sexual exploitation of children is a collective effort strengthened by the voices and stories of those we work with and for. Our partnerships and collaborative projects are essential to achieving meaningful change. Here, we share some regional highlights and collaborative project successes that underline the importance of unity in our mission.

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

Over the past year, ECPAT International has successfully convened a series of highly impactful regional workshops, uniting local civil society organisations, international stakeholders, and governmental representatives in the fight against child sexual exploitation. These workshops have brought together 306 participants from 90 countries, with representation from over 130 civil society organisations. Each event served two purposes: it was a platform for knowledge sharing and it was a testament to ECPAT's unique approach – global in scope, yet deeply rooted in local action.

From 2023 to 2024, four regional workshops were held, starting in [Bangkok](#) (East and Southeast Asia & the Pacific), then Amman (Middle East and North Africa), Dakar (North West and Central Africa), and [San Jose](#) (the Americas). These events brought together key players to tackle the pressing issue of child sexual exploitation head-on. The focus was on harnessing the latest evidence and strategies to tackle this challenge, particularly considering the rise of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, streaming, and online gaming. The diversity of participants, including new civil society organisations and non-ECPAT members, undoubtedly enriched the dialogues and helped build multi-disciplinary collaborations, reinforcing the movement's strength and inclusivity.



Workshops facilitated in-depth discussions on regional-specific issues. In Dakar, representatives from 43 civil society organisations, including those from previously unrepresented countries like Algeria, Angola, and Chad, engaged in sessions covering trends in sexual exploitation, technology-facilitated exploitation, and access to justice. Similarly, in San José, cross-sector representatives from North, Central, and South America, as well as the Caribbean, discussed the growing involvement of organised crime in child exploitation for the first time. They used case studies like ECPAT's pilot project in Peru, which engaged the financial sector to detect and prevent payment services for child exploitation.

These workshops were conducted in a participatory format, with a focus on small group work and shared experiences. This approach fostered rich exchanges and strengthened ECPAT's connection with both members and non-members alike. The post-event evaluations were unequivocally positive, confirming the workshops' effectiveness in facilitating collective action and innovation.

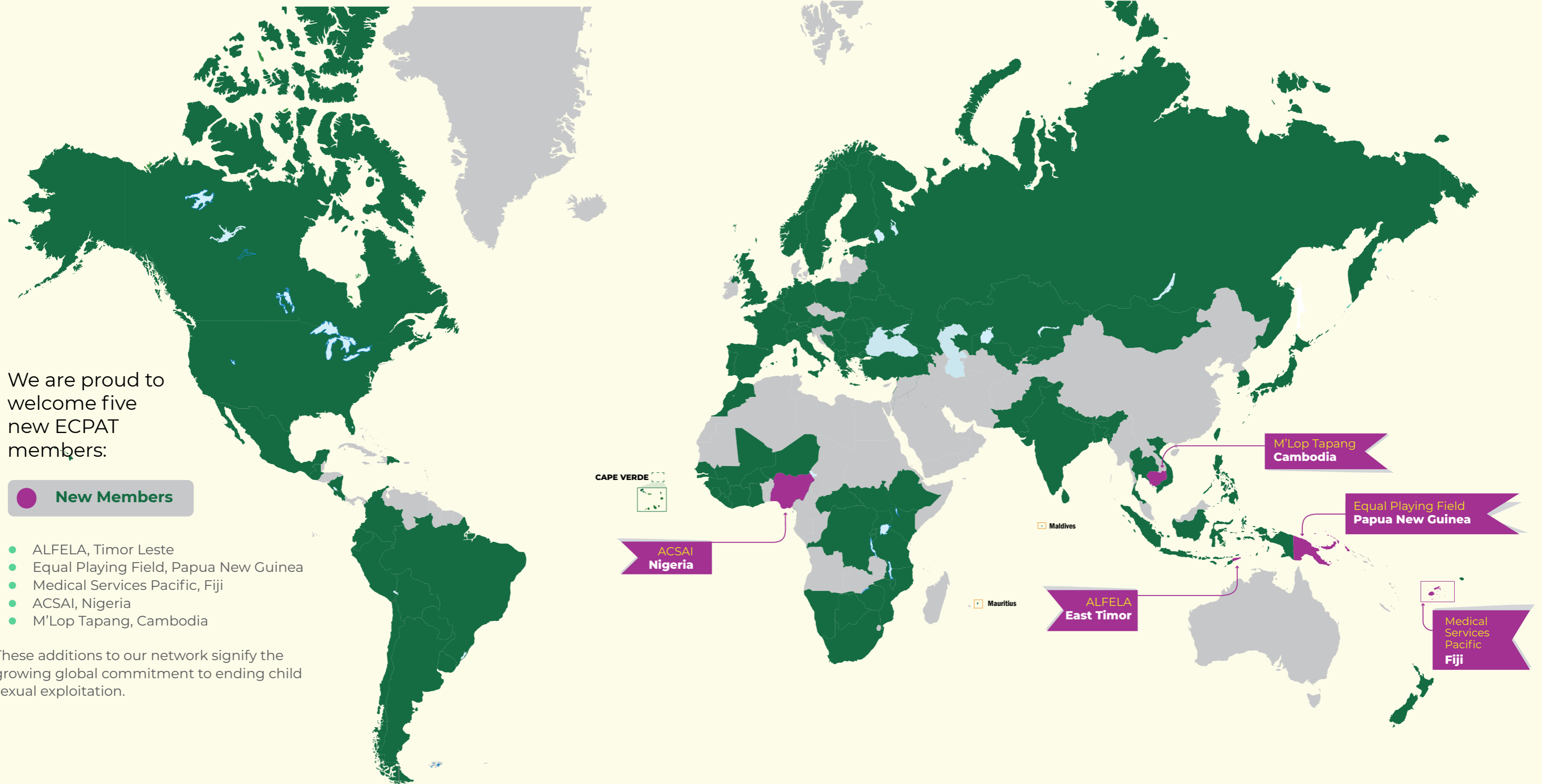


These regional workshops have also formed the basis for ECPAT's future strategies. ECPAT has reinforced its position as a global convener that facilitates important conversations and drives systemic change by bringing together local and international actors. These workshops will play a key role in defining ECPAT's strategic framework for 2026-2030. They will ensure that our work remains aligned with the most pressing challenges faced by children worldwide. ECPAT will continue to mobilise global efforts to combat child sexual exploitation in all its forms with three more workshops planned for South Asia, Central Asia, and Europe.



ECPAT MEMBERS 2023-2024

126 members in 105 countries



We are proud to welcome five new ECPAT members:

New Members

- ALFELA, Timor Leste
- Equal Playing Field, Papua New Guinea
- Medical Services Pacific, Fiji
- ACSAI, Nigeria
- M'Lop Tapang, Cambodia

These additions to our network signify the growing global commitment to ending child sexual exploitation.

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Regulating voluntourism and Child Safeguarding

In Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and The Philippines, ECPAT International joined forces with its members to translate the commitments made by the intergovernmental bodies, governments, and businesses towards improving child protection measures – specifically in relation to regulating voluntourism – into actionable and replicable models. The project Strengthening Child Protection System in the Travel and Tourism Context is implemented with the financial assistance of UBS Optimus Foundation.

Child participation in travel and tourism development

As part of the project “Building sustainable tourism destinations that protect children from sexual exploitation” in Costa Rica and Ecuador, ECPAT International has partnered with Fundación Paniamor (Costa Rica) and Fundación Quitu Raymi (Ecuador) to hold a series of child and youth-led workshops aimed at developing child participation models for application by governments and the private sector. The project “Building sustainable tourism destinations that protect children from sexual exploitation” was implemented with support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).



Creating protective environments for children in Thailand

The project is funded by the Government of the Netherlands and TUI Care Foundation through DCI-ECPAT Netherlands. The TUI Academy Thailand is co-financed by Fund against Child Labour, commissioned by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and is implemented together with TUI Care Foundation, Plan International, Defence for Children ECPAT and ROBINSON Khao Lak. In Phang Nga, Thailand, the “Together to End Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel & Tourism in Phang-Nga” project helps to strengthen the capacity of travel and tourism businesses, establish child protection network to prevent and respond to the sexual exploitation of children and empower children and youth to defend themselves against sexual exploitation, report cases and access services.

“We cannot be green without ensuring that all children are safe from exploitation and trafficking. Green Means Safe for Everyone and this Planet. Be Transparent, Eco-Friendly, and Child-Safe – That’s True Green Business!”

H.E. Wanchai Roujanavong,

Representative of
Thailand to ASEAN
Commission on
Children’s
Rights:

Implemented in partnership with ECPAT Foundation Thailand, Phang-Nga Children's Home, and DISAC Surathani, this vital collaboration engages with the local community and children from vulnerable groups, including out-of-school children, migrant and undocumented children, and children from fishing communities.

#ChildSafetyON Movement

Supported by over 400,000 people, this Europe-wide coalition advocates for strong policies to protect children online. Our efforts contributed to the extension of the EU's Interim Regulation on Online Child Protection until April 2026, allowing platforms to continue to detect child sexual abuse online.

VOICE Project

ECPAT International, Eurochild and Terres des Hommes Netherlands have joined forces to keep children safe online. The VOICE project gathered perceptions and behaviours of children and caregivers in 15 countries to inform the policy debate on safe digital environments. Key findings from the research show that children feel most responsible for their online safety and the need for comprehensive education on how to stay safe online. Findings also highlight the importance of considering children's perspectives in digital safety policies and for platforms and governments to take more responsibility in ensuring their privacy and protection online.

Down to Zero Alliance

ECPAT International, as a technical partner of DCI-Netherlands and as part of the Down to Zero Alliance (Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Plan International Netherlands, Defence for Children – ECPAT Netherlands, Free a Girl, CRC Asia, and Conexión) is working alongside civil society organisations in the Philippines, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic to empower children and communities in the fight against child sexual exploitation.

As part of this cooperation, ECPAT International advocates for laws, policies and systems that prevent and respond to sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism, as well as digital environments. Data collection and analysis provide valuable insights into the scope and complexity of the issues, informing evidence-based advocacy.

Roundtable Discussions on Child Safety in Online Gaming Environments

These discussions highlighted the impact of gender norms and the unique opportunities that online gaming environments can represent to encourage help-seeking behaviours for boys. Key recommendations include identifying good practices, mapping existing initiatives and engaging with the technology industry to create safer online spaces for children of all gender identities.

CONCLUSION

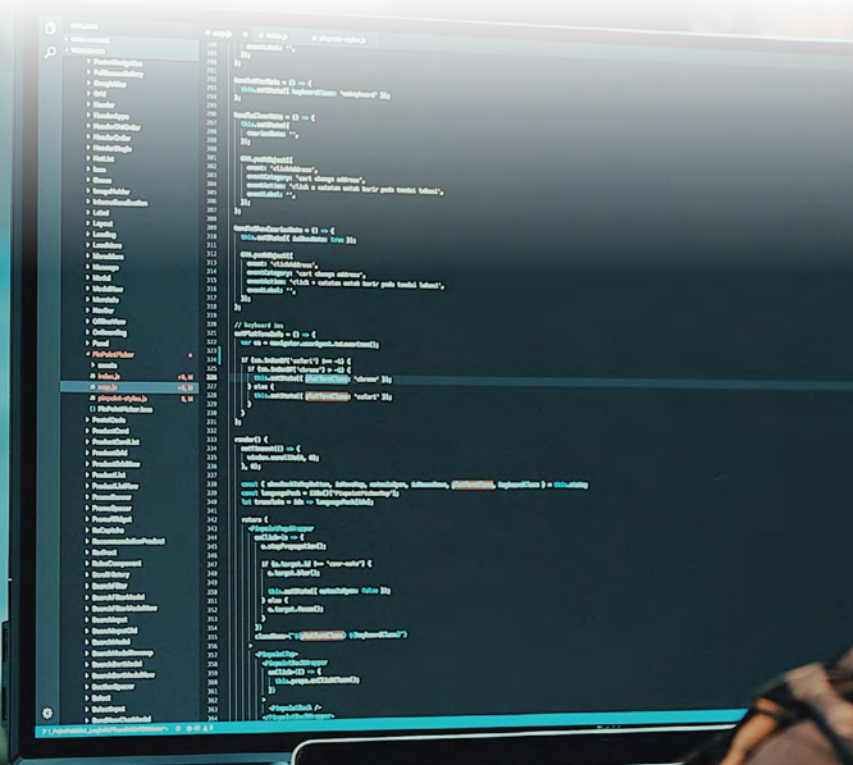
The stories and collaborations presented here illustrate the collective impact of our work. By bringing together diverse voices and forging solid partnerships, ECPAT International continues to make significant progress in the fight against child sexual exploitation. Our shared commitment and collaborative spirit are vital to achieving our mission and creating a safer world for children.

INNOVATIONS, LEARNING, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

At ECPAT International, we are relentless in our pursuit of ending the sexual exploitation of children. We are committed to continuously innovating and adapting our strategies to achieve

this. Over the past year, we have implemented several groundbreaking initiatives designed to address the evolving challenges of child sexual exploitation across the globe.



CHILD-CENTRED APPROACHES IN RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

“Some adults see us, as young people, as incapable of giving them advice about sexual exploitation.”

Child participant
from Hungary:

We have made a significant innovation in our approach to research and advocacy by committing to child-centred approaches. [This strategy guarantees](#) that the voices and experiences of children and young survivors are at the heart of our work. Integrating their perspectives into our research has led to the developing of more effective and contextually relevant prevention and response strategies.

“We all deserve to be heard, but there are also other groups of children and adolescents who do not have the opportunity to be heard.”

Child participant
from Ecuador:

Furthermore, our focus on child-centred approaches has led to the development of participatory methodologies that allow children to shape the interventions that affect them actively. This participatory approach empowers children and ensures our initiatives are aligned with the realities on the ground. We have created more sustainable and impactful interventions by fostering environments where children feel heard and valued.



THE GLOBAL BOYS INITIATIVE

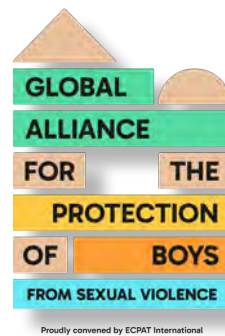
Another innovative effort is the Global Boys Initiative, which focuses on the overlooked issue of sexual exploitation of boys. This initiative has highlighted the unique challenges boys face and has driven the development of targeted interventions. The establishment and ongoing expansion of the Global Alliance for the Protection of Boys from Sexual Violence further strengthens our ability to advocate for the protection of boys as a child protection issue and as an opportunity to challenge male privilege and power dynamics.

“Online gaming environments can also be places where children can challenge gender roles and ideas of masculinity in a way that they cannot do in real life.”

Francesco Cecon

Head of the Global Boys Initiative:

The Global Boys Initiative also allowed ECPAT to further understand gender constructions and norms in preventing and addressing the sexual exploitation of children, and how to better tailor programmes that are sensitive to the specific challenges faced by girls, boys, and children of different gender identities.



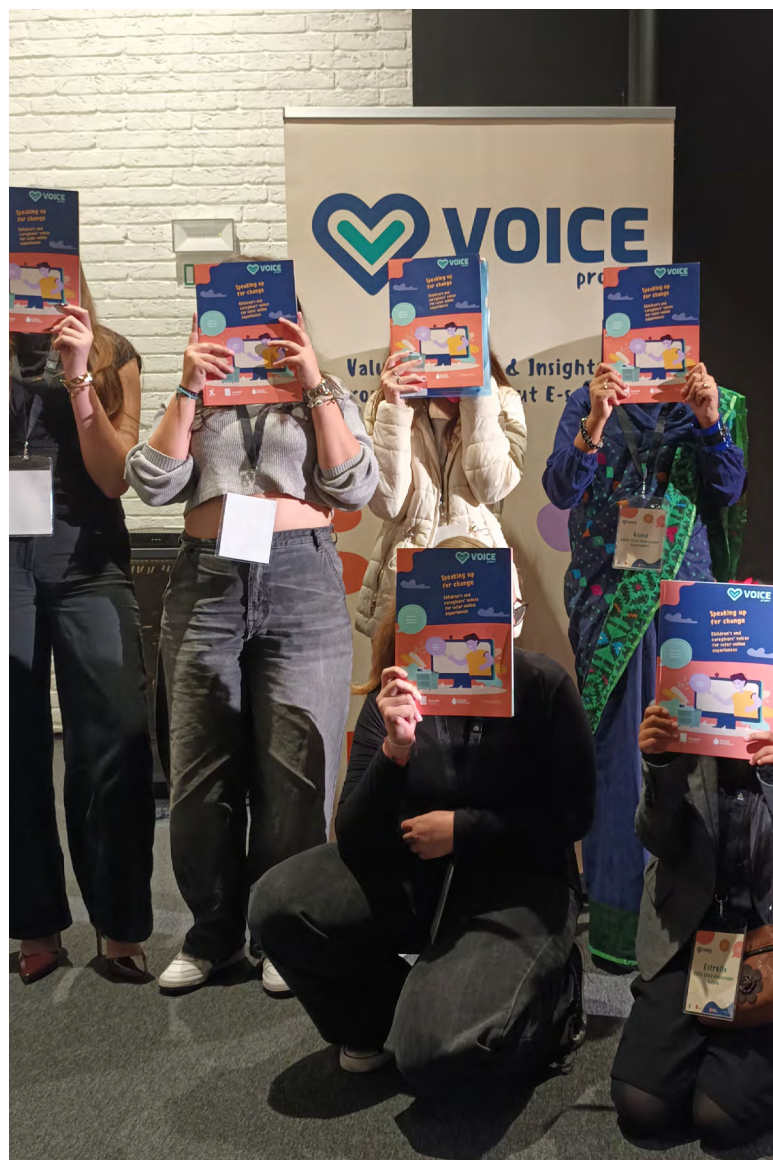
LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

ECPAT has pioneered efforts to enhance online child safety in response to the growing digital landscape. Through partnerships with key stakeholders, including tech companies and civil society organisations, we have developed innovative strategies to safeguard children in online environments. Our work with the #ChildSafetyON movement, a Europe-wide coalition advocating for robust online child protection policies, has been critical in ensuring children are safe online. The extension of the EU’s Interim Regulation for Online Child Protection until 2026 is a testament to the impact of our collective advocacy efforts.

We have also explored new ways to engage children, parents, and educators in conversations about online safety. The VOICE Project, for example, has been instrumental in gathering insights from children across 15 countries about their online experiences. This project has revealed essential trends, such as the need for more accessible ways to secure online accounts and the gaps in communication between children and their caregivers regarding online safety. These findings have informed our advocacy efforts and have led to the development of novel resources to support safer online experiences for children.

“Safeguarding children’s online experiences is not just a responsibility – it is a collective imperative.”

Amy Crocker
former Head of Child Protection and Technology at ECPAT International:



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Despite these innovations, we must acknowledge that the fight against child sexual exploitation is fraught with challenges. We have successfully addressed one of the key challenges we faced: ensuring that our initiatives are sustainable and scalable across different contexts. The Disrupting Harm project's successes from previous years continue to guide our work on identifying the inherent complexities of addressing online child exploitation in regions with varying levels of internet access, legal frameworks, and cultural norms. This has clarified that we need adaptable, locally led solutions tailored to specific environments.

Our experiences implementing child-centred approaches have also clarified that we must ensure that child participation is meaningful and not tokenistic. We have made significant strides in involving children in our work, but there is still much to learn about creating spaces where children can genuinely influence the

decisions that affect them. We have refined our approaches to child participation thanks to invaluable feedback from our partners and the children we work with. We have learned that genuine engagement requires listening to children and actively supporting them to lead and shape the interventions that impact their lives.

Integrating multi-sectoral collaboration is another challenge that must be overcome. We have seen the benefits of working with diverse stakeholders. However, coordinating these efforts across different sectors and regions remains a complex challenge. The success of the Down to Zero Alliance is proof of the potential of these collaborations. The Alliance is combating the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism by bringing together civil society organisations, governments, and the private sector. We must ensure that these partnerships are effective, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of the communities we serve.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS



ECPAT International is focused on several key strategic goals that will guide our work in the coming years. These goals are informed by the lessons learned from our past initiatives and are aligned with our Theory of Change, which provides a structured framework for achieving long-term impact.



SCALING CHILD-CENTRED APPROACHES

We will continue to scale our child-centred approaches, ensuring that children's voices remain central to our work. This includes expanding the use of participatory research methods and supporting child-led advocacy initiatives. We will empower children and young survivors to be active agents of change in their communities and beyond. We will invest in building the capacity of our partners to implement child-centred approaches, ensuring that this strategy is embedded across all levels of our work.

Expanding the Global Boys Initiative

Building on the success of the Global Boys Initiative, we will address the gender dimensions of child sexual exploitation and abuse. We will deepen our partnerships with organisations focused on gender and child protection and develop added resources and training programmes for practitioners working with boy survivors, to challenge rigid gender norms and deliver gender sensitive services. The Global Alliance for the Protection of Boys from Sexual Violence will be instrumental in these efforts, providing a vital platform for joint advocacy, knowledge exchange and collaboration.

Creating robust child protection structures in travel and tourism

Building on the global call for action from the UN General Assembly, ECPAT continues the engagement with key actors in the travel and tourism industry – including informal sector, online platforms, and transport sector as well as vocational education sector - to place child protection at the core of sustainable development and reshaping voluntourism practices. This includes building collective action based on global, regional, and country-level strategies, and drawing from best practices and practical experiences.

Strengthening Multi-Sectoral Collaboration

ECPAT will also lead the way in strengthening multi-sectoral collaboration to address the complex nature of child sexual exploitation. We will continue our work with the private sector, particularly in the tech and travel industries,

to implement child protection measures. We will drive systemic change and ensure child protection is a priority at all levels by forming strong partnerships with civil society organisations, governments, and international bodies.

To tackle the sexual exploitation of children, we need a joined-up and thorough approach that involves everyone in society. We will continue to build and nurture partnerships that bring together diverse stakeholders. We will also investigate new collaboration models, such as public-private partnerships, to leverage the strengths of different sectors and achieve common goals. We will foster a culture of shared responsibility to create a global movement united in its commitment to protecting children.

Innovating in Online Child Safety

As the digital landscape evolves, we must adapt our strategies for protecting children online. ECPAT is committed to leading the way in this field. We will continue to demand stronger online safety regulations and work with tech companies to design platforms prioritising child protection. Furthermore, we will launch new initiatives to educate children, parents, and educators about the risks of online exploitation and how to stay safe in digital spaces.

We will develop new tools and resources to help children navigate the digital world safely. We will also continue to engage with policymakers and tech industry leaders to ensure that child protection is a priority in the design and regulation of online platforms. We will stay ahead of emerging trends and risks to create a safer digital environment for all children.

As the travel and tourism context evolves, ECPAT addresses child protection issues through the engagement of the transport sector, online platforms, and shared economy, as well as throughout the value chain of the industry, that involves informal economy.

Exploring New Regions and Contexts

Finally, ECPAT will expand its reach to new regions and contexts, particularly in areas where child sexual exploitation is under-researched or poorly understood – and we will do so with authority. Ongoing initiatives continue to provide invaluable insights into the challenges faced by children in distinct parts of the world. We will use this knowledge to ensure that our future work is informed, and no child is left behind.

We are expanding our work in regions where the risk of the sexual exploitation of children is high but where resources and interventions are limited. This includes areas affected by conflict, displacement, and poverty, where children are most vulnerable. We will fill critical gaps in child protection and contribute to global efforts

to end the sexual exploitation of children by bringing our expertise and resources to these contexts.

ECPAT International's resilience and adaptability are the keys to our success in the fight against child sexual exploitation. We continuously innovate and learn from our experiences, allowing us to refine our strategies and respond to emerging challenges. We know where we are going, and we are going there. We will build on our successes, address the challenges head-on and continue to work towards a world where all children are free from exploitation and abuse.

This section of our Annual Report highlights our achievements and sets the stage for the future. We are unwavering in our commitment to protecting children and ensuring their safety and well-being. As we look ahead, we are confident in our progress and determined to make an even more significant impact in the work that still lies ahead. Together with our partners and stakeholders, we will continue to break new ground in the fight against child sexual exploitation.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP: DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

The unwavering support of our donors—ranging from individuals to foundations and governments—has been nothing short of extraordinary this past year. Our total income was USD 5,251,043, while our expenditure reached USD 5,081,408. Every single cent was carefully directed toward impactful programmes that drive lasting change. In a year defined by collaboration, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters who make this work possible.

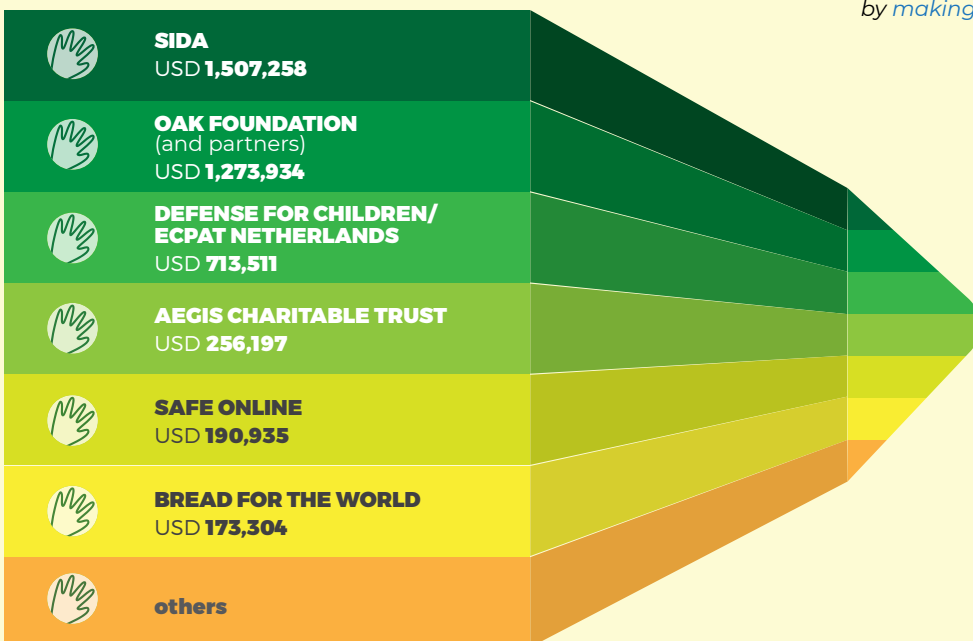
We would like to extend our gratitude to our largest contributors, led by Sida, for their generous contribution of USD 1,507,258, which has been crucial in expanding our initiatives globally. Similarly, the Oak Foundation (and partners) provided an invaluable USD 1,273,934, while Defence for Children/ECPAT Netherlands contributed USD 713,511. We are also grateful to the Aegis Charitable Trust (USD 256,197), Safe

Online (USD 190,935) and Bread for the World (USD 173,304) for their invaluable support.

While these major donations have been vital, we are clear that every contribution, no matter the size, is essential to our collective mission to protect children and end sexual exploitation. Your continued support is what makes us able to deliver tangible results and help children and young people thrive in safe environments.

We value your partnership in this work and your commitment to our shared vision of a safer world for all children. Your contributions are more than just financial – they are a testament to the power of collective action. Together, we are making real strides toward our goal of eradicating child sexual exploitation. With your continued support, we will reach even greater heights in the coming year.

Largest contributors:



JOIN US

in our mission to create a safer future for children
by *making a donation today*



Total income:
USD **5,251,043**

Total expenditure
USD **5,081,408**



CONCLUSION AND OUR CALL TO ACTION

“We need a renewed and relevant agenda for action.”

Dr Najat Maalla M’Jid
UN Special
Representative of the
Secretary-General
on Violence Against
Children:

As we look back on the past year, ECPAT International’s mission to end the sexual exploitation of children is more important

than ever. We are committed to protecting vulnerable children around the world. To do so, we innovate, collaborate, and persevere in the face of complex and evolving threats. We have made significant strides in safeguarding children but are not yet done. The global landscape of child sexual exploitation is changing. Our work must adapt and grow to meet these new challenges head-on.

Key Achievements and Impact

This report set out how ECPAT International has advanced its mission over the past year. We have led the way in child-centred approaches to research and advocacy, ensuring that the voices of children and young survivors guide our work. Initiatives like the Global Boys Initiative have revealed the specific vulnerabilities of boys, allowing us to implement targeted interventions that address their needs. We have proven our ability to protect children in an increasingly digital world by enhancing online child safety, through the #ChildSafetyON movement.

Our collaborative projects and initiatives, such as BEACON, The Code and the Global Alliance, prove the power of partnerships. These initiatives have led to tangible improvements in child protection policies and practices and have reinforced the global movement to end child sexual exploitation. By uniting diverse stakeholders, we have forged a formidable front against exploitation. We have demonstrated that we can drive systemic change when we come together.

The Urgency of Continued Support

We must continue to support this vital work. While we celebrate these accomplishments, we must also acknowledge that the fight against child sexual exploitation is ongoing and requires sustained effort. ECPAT International’s work is only possible thanks to our supporters’ dedication, generosity, and active participation. These individuals, organisations, governments, and partners share our vision of a world free from exploitation and abuse.

Your support is essential, not just appreciated. Your support allows us to continue our vital work, expand our reach to protect more children, advocate for more robust policies, and develop innovative solutions to our challenges. Your involvement is crucial to achieving our mission, whether through donations, partnerships, or advocacy efforts.

We are looking forward to the future: Our Call to Action

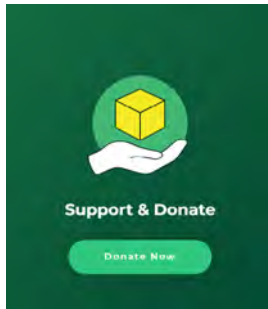
As we look ahead, ECPAT International is more committed than ever to building on the successes of the past year while staying agile and responsive to the ever-changing landscape of child sexual exploitation. We have ambitious goals for the future. We will scale our child-centred approaches, expand our initiatives to new regions and contexts, and continue to lead the global conversation on child protection.

We cannot achieve these goals without your continued support.

Join us in this fight now. Your involvement makes a difference. Whether you give money, partner with us, or speak up, your support is vital. Act today and help us protect more children. Let us ensure they can grow up safe, empowered, and free from exploitation.



Here is what you can do to help:



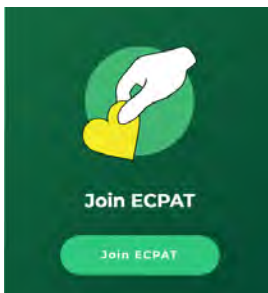
1. **Donate today.** Your financial support is essential. Your donations allow us to continue our vital work on the front lines, reaching more children and expanding our impact globally. Every donation, no matter the size, makes a difference. Your contribution today will help us protect children and build a safer world for future generations.

[Donate now](#)



2. **Stay informed** and advocate for change. If you cannot donate now, you can still play a vital role in our mission. Stay informed about our work, initiatives, and learn how you can advocate for child protection in your community.

[Read our recent articles](#)



3. **Partner with us.** Join us in strategic partnerships to drive systemic change by leveraging resources, expertise, and influence. Collaborate with ECPAT International in ways that suit you. Do you represent a corporation, a foundation, or a community group? Contact us to find out how we can work together. Together, we will amplify our impact and protect more children.

[Contact us](#)



4. **Raise awareness.** Use your voice to demand more robust protections for children. Spread the word about our mission to your network, get involved in the conversation about child safety, and make sure others know they can join the fight against exploitation. Public awareness and advocacy are the most powerful tools for creating lasting change.

Final Thoughts

As we bring this year's report to a close, we do so with gratitude for our support and a renewed sense of purpose. The progress we have made is proof of the power of collective action. There is still much work to do, but we will do it. Your continued involvement is vital to our mission. With your help, we will continue to push forward, overcome new challenges, and achieve a world where every child is safe from exploitation.

Thank you for standing with ECPAT International. Your commitment, whether through donations, advocacy, or partnership, makes us successful. Together, we will create a safer, brighter future for all children.

Let us continue this journey together, united in our resolve to end child sexual exploitation and build a better world for the next generation.



328/1 Phaya Thai Road,
Ratchathewi, Bangkok,
10400, Thailand

Telephone: +662 215 3388
Email: info@ecpat.org
Website: www.ecpat.org

For more information :

