Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Good practices in combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia



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United Nations

JAPAN
Official Development Assistance

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

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Official Development Assistance

ST/ESCAP/2187

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Good practices in combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia

[ST/ESCAP/2187]

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United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
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.....

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Thank you for your kind cooperation in completing and returning this questionnaire to us.

Preface

The incidence of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth is on the rise in Asia, demanding urgent action. In addition to thriving cross-border trafficking networks, which lure or force children into prostitution, young people are increasingly entering commercial sex work "willingly", unaware of the conditions in which they will work or what the mental and physical consequences will be. Socio-economic and cultural factors, such as lack of education, family breakdown, lack of economic opportunities, traditional beliefs and practices and poverty, make young people particularly susceptible to sexual exploitation. Children and youth in the region are also at risk of sexual abuse, usually by someone whom they know and trust. Young victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation face high risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, as well as developing mental and behavioural problems.

In 1997, for the first time, governments in the Asia-Pacific region joined forces to adopt ESCAP resolution 53/4 entitled "Elimination of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia and the Pacific." This resolution signalled

the firm resolve of the governments of the Asia-Pacific region to tackle the many challenges of preventing and combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation among its young citizens.

In response to the governments' call, the Human Resources Development (HRD) Section of ESCAP launched a regional programme focused on combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth through human resources development. Specifically, the programme seeks to raise awareness on the issue and to strengthen the capabilities of social service and health personnel to assist young victims and potential victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The programme covers 12 countries in South Asia and South-East Asia, namely, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China (Yunnan Province), India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

In the first three years of the programme, national-level research was undertaken to assess the psychosocial needs of the child and youth victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, as well as to explore the range of services available to them. A training course for psychosocial and medical service providers for sexually abused and sexually exploited children and youth was then developed, based on national training needs assessments. The regional programme has been supported by a consortium of donors, including the Government of Japan, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Government of Australia, the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the United Nations Population Fund.

As part of the programme's fourth year activities and in preparation for the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, this publication has been developed in collaboration with six partner organizations under the ESCAP programme, highlighting good practices in combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in their countries. These organizations are: INCIDIN Bangladesh, Bangladesh; Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children's Rights, Cambodia; Lawyers for Human Rights

and Legal Aid, Pakistan; Department of Social Welfare and Development, Philippines; P.E.A.C.E., Sri Lanka; and National Youth Bureau, Thailand. Some case studies highlight the activities of these organizations, while others highlight other organizations' efforts in their countries.[1]

These good practices have been chosen for their innovation and effectiveness in combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth, with special attention to the implementation of the Agenda for Action adopted at the first World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in 1996. The socio-cultural environments facing the organizations working to eliminate sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth are different; nonetheless, the basic features of the models contain valuable lessons for other countries that face similar challenges. It is the hope of the ESCAP secretariat and its partner organizations that the experiences shared through this publication will contribute towards furthering regional commitment and action to protect the human rights of our children and youth.

The ESCAP secretariat acknowledges with gratitude the generous financial support of the Government of Japan in providing the funds for this publication under the ESCAP project "Elimination of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth" (Phase IV).

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[1] Selected case studies in this volume were also presented at the East Asia and the Pacific Regional Consultation for the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, 16-18 October 2001, Bangkok. Thus, some of the case studies in this volume have also been included in the publication submitted to the Regional Consultation, entitled "Asia-Pacific Answers: Good practices in combating commercial sexual exploitation of children in East Asia and the Pacific".

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ESCAP Programme on Medical and Psychosocial Training of Service Providers

Subregions/ Countries:	Greater Mekong Subregion (Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Yunnan Province of China, Thailand, Viet Nam); South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka); and the Philippines[1]
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Area of work:	Recovery and reintegration

A. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

In 1997, governments in the Asia-Pacific region adopted ESCAP resolution 53/4 on the elimination of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia and the Pacific. The Human Resources Development (HRD) Section of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), as the United Nations regional focal point for youth affairs for Asia and the Pacific, assumed the responsibility of implementing activities in pursuance of this resolution.

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[1] A list of the partner organizations in the participating countries is attached at the end of the case study.

ESCAP is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region. It provides a forum for its 61 member and associate member governments to address a broad range of economic and social development issues in the region. The HRD Section of ESCAP focuses its work on capacity-building of the region's institutions and human resources, with a strong emphasis on the development of young people.

The HRD Section, since 1998, has been implementing a regional programme on combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in 12 countries of Asia. The programme focuses on the medical and psychosocial training of service providers, with the aim of assisting the recovery and reintegration of child victims into mainstream society. The programme accords with the priorities set out as part of ESCAP Secretariat's reform process. These reforms have identified sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth as a critical "emerging social issue" in the Asia-Pacific region which ESCAP must tackle.

The present case study describes how the HRD Section developed and implemented its training programme *ESCAP HRD Course on Psychosocial and Medical Services for Sexually Abused and Sexually Exploited Children and Youth* ("HRD Course"). The case study gives a preliminary assessment of the impact of the HRD Course, based on the results of a survey conducted among national counterpart organizations in selected participating countries in late 2000. The results of the evaluation suggested that the participants felt the course had contributed substantially towards enhancing the quality of services they provide for the victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Finally, the case study describes how the regional and subregional structure of the programme has been useful for addressing sensitive issues like sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT MODEL

1. What are the objectives of the programme?

ESCAP's regional programme has several major objectives, which include identifying the health needs of child and youth victims, and bringing the victims' plight to the attention of



policy makers. However, the analysis in this case study concentrates on one particular objective, which is "to strengthen the capacity of health and social service personnel through training to meet the health and social service needs of sexually abused and sexually exploited children and youth". The term 'sexual abuse' refers here to rape and incest; 'sexual exploitation' refers to trafficking, prostitution, and pornography.

2. Why focus on sexual abuse and sexual exploitation?

The rising incidence of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in the Asia-Pacific region has caused considerable alarm in recent years. Commercial sexual exploitation has received the most international attention and will be the focus of the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children to be held in Yokohama, Japan from 17 to 20 December 2001. However, the ESCAP regional programme chose to address sexual abuse as well since, as the qualitative research described below shows, abuse and exploitation are closely linked. Victims of incest are, for instance, at risk of entering commercial sex work due to a loss of self-esteem, and victims of sexual abuse and victims of sexual exploitation share common physical and psychosocial problems.

3. Why focus on recovery and reintegration?

Young victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation face a high risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and of developing many other physical, psychosocial and emotional problems. Victims have a pressing need for appropriate psychosocial and medical services. Such services are, however, rare in Asia. Assisting the recovery and reintegration of sexually abused and sexually exploited young people is extremely difficult. Donor organizations often do not consider recovery and reintegration programmes to be cost-effective, as they require large quantities of resources for each child. Few United Nations organizations or government agencies have been willing to work in this area, and thus it is one part of the Agenda for Action adopted at the Stockholm Congress that has not received substantial resources.

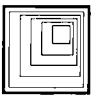
Qualitative research during the first phase of the ESCAP programme showed, however, that the need for rehabilitation and reintegration is urgent. Furthermore, studies have shown that victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation who have not fully recovered from the trauma have a strong tendency to become perpetrators themselves. This means that recovery and reintegration programmes not only serve the immediate needs of the young victims, but also help to prevent the perpetuation of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

4. Why focus on health and social service personnel?

Health and social service personnel includes staff at shelter homes, drop-in centres, and health clinics, as well as teachers and police. These people play a critical role in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and in the victims' recovery and reintegration into society. Health and social service personnel deal directly with victims through the provision of services such as education and health care, and are well placed to address their specific needs.

5. What were the key activities undertaken to achieve the programme objectives?

The programme has been implemented in several phases, in collaboration with the Section for International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH), from Uppsala University, Sweden. During Phase One, in 1998, qualitative research with sexually abused and sexually exploited children was conducted in each of the 12 participating countries in South-East and South Asia. For some countries, this was the first time research on sexual abuse and exploitation had ever been undertaken. During Phase Two, in 1999, workshops were convened to identify the training needs of social and health service providers. During Phase Three, which began in 2000, findings from the qualitative research and the workshops were used to develop a prototype human resources development training course for social and health service providers. This course was delivered to a core group of health and social service providers at a subregional



training session. The core group then began conducting national-level training courses for their peers, though in some countries the national-level training courses will not begin until early 2002. At the time of writing (2001), follow-up activities are being undertaken to provide further support for the participants of the national-level training courses.

C. EVALUATION

1. How did the programme ensure that it was meeting the needs of the target group?

The programme devoted the first two years to activities that focused on assessing the health needs of the young victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, in order to ensure the high relevance of the training programme's content for the target group.

The qualitative research on sexually abused and sexually exploited children in Phase One was based on a methodology developed by the Section for International Maternal and Child Health, Uppsala University, Sweden. National research teams were given training in data collection methods and participatory research with young people. The teams carried out their research through documentary analysis, observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews, group discussions and questionnaires. Altogether, 727 child victims under age 18 were reached, largely by using the "snowballing" method for identifying the informants. In addition, the researchers surveyed brothel areas, conducted undercover investigations, reviewed medical and police records, and consulted with care givers, brothel owners, and friends and relatives of the victims. The research teams also interviewed service providers to assess the gap between the needs of the victims and the available services, and the providers' capacity to provide such services. The results revealed that there were few services available for sexually abused and sexually exploited children and youth, and that where services existed, they concentrated on physical recovery, with little regard to psychosocial care.

The qualitative research was followed by national training needs assessment workshops, which involved groups of people providing services to victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The objective of these workshops was to identify areas in which further training for the providers was necessary. The participants drew up sets of ideal knowledge, skills and attitudes which they believed practitioners would need to help with victims' recovery and reintegration. The HRD Course covered issues such as children's physical and psychological development, the effects of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, drugs, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases. Participants were taught case management, counselling, and training skills. They were also shown how to maintain a professional attitude, including being open-minded, non-judgemental, respectful of a client's confidentiality, and gender-sensitive.

2. What was innovative about the programme?

The HRD Course was innovative in that it tackled a subject which had previously been neglected. The Course filled in gaps in participants' basic knowledge about the medical and psychosocial needs of sexually abused and sexually exploited children, and gave the participants the skills to design, manage and evaluate services for abused and exploited children. The Course also tried to bring together preventive and remedial measures in a way which would overcome existing professional barriers, and would encourage medical, psychological and social caregivers to work as a team.

Another innovative aspect of the HRD Course was its holistic approach to the recovery and rehabilitation of the victims. In addition to psychosocial and medical components, the Course also included issues, such as substance abuse and HIV/AIDS, which are associated with the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of youth. The eight major interrelated areas addressed by the HRD Course are as follows.



Module	*Name*	*Main content*
One	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Mechanisms that protect children and promote their health and well-being
Two	Child Health and Survival	Factors affecting infant and child morbidity and mortality
Three	Child and Adolescent Growth and Development	Normal patterns of physical, psychological and social development
Four	Medical and Psychosocial Effects of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation	Special health problems and care-seeking behaviour of sexually abused and sexually exploited children
Five	Special Health Concerns: Substance Abuse and HIV/AIDS	Relationships between sexual exploitation, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS
Six	Assessment and Treatment Issues	Basic helping and treatment skills
Seven	Preventive and Remedial Actions	Strategies for prevention, rehabilitation and case management
Eight	Care for the Care Providers	Challenges in care giving

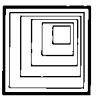
Module number eight, on "Care for Care Providers", was a novel and important part of the Course. Providing care to the young victims is taxing, particularly since sexual abuse and sexual exploitation touches many cultural and religious sensitivities, which makes work and open discussion difficult. Because they must confront these difficulties constantly in their work, service providers often find that they themselves need regular care in order to care for the young victims.

Another unique aspect of the HRD Course was the instruction on 'Training of Trainers'. This enhanced the ability of the core group of health and social service providers to train their colleagues at home.

3. What was the impact of the programme, and its sustainability?

Course evaluations completed by the national counterpart organizations indicate that the programme has had two major effects. First, the increased understanding of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and the specific skills which the participants received from the Course had enhanced their ability to provide high quality services and to train others. Second, personnel who attended the Course had begun to form a professional network which would be useful for information sharing, collaboration, and mutual support.

Many national counterpart organizations commented that the HRD Course enhanced the capacity of their personnel to help the children by teaching the personnel to view the children's problems holistically. Participants from the Philippines, for example, commented that the discussion on HIV/AIDS and "care for caregivers" led them to appreciate the complexities of the issues and the need for social responsibility. They noted that they have been able to apply the skills and knowledge gained from programme participation in their work place. The Filipinos also said that they felt sufficiently confident to conduct training at home on issues such as psychosocial intervention and strategies for working with victims. The national counterpart organization in Pakistan remarked that the subregional training session "clarified many myths and built capacity to have a more holistic understanding of the issue". An organization from Nepal said that the Course enhanced participants' understanding of counselling survivors of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. An organization from Sri Lanka said that the Course had "greatly enhanced the work and day-to-day activities encountered in the rehabilitation of sexually abused children". The participants felt that their attitudes towards sexually abused and sexually exploited children had changed considerably since the training. Finally, the Indian national counterpart organization stated that the subregional Course was "a major landmark in capacity building of the staff": it gave staff skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm to work toward elimination of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation more effectively and "aggressively".



The capacity-building approach is aimed at ensuring sustainability. Through training, national counterpart organizations and their staff become better equipped to apply their knowledge and skills to local circumstances and needs. They also become less reliant on external donors. The Training of Trainers component enhances the participants' ability to train others, and thus multiplies the benefits of the Course over the long run.

The programme contributed substantially to strengthening subregional and regional networks of people working against the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth. The networks contribute substantially to the sharing of ideas. They also play a role in 'care of the care providers', with personnel providing mutual support to one another.

The regional and subregional scope of the programme was useful for diffusing suspicions and sensitivities. During its initial phases, the HRD Section's work faced resistance from some officials. Obtaining approval for the qualitative research and reaching agreement on the aims of the research were sometimes difficult. However, the fact that the programme was being executed in many countries indicated to governments that they were not being singled out, and allayed many of their worries.

These successes in encouraging governments to deal with issues of sexual exploitation and abuse have been one of the most important achievements of the programme. The programme's successes in involving governments and building political commitment to addressing victims' needs have contributed substantially to the programme's long-run sustainability.

4. Conclusion

During the four years it has been implemented, the programme has made important progress in the twelve participating countries. As one national counterpart organization noted, the programme has been "useful, helpful and progressive" and has worked "for the benefit of sexually abused and sexually

exploited children and youth". The HRD Course has made significant steps towards fulfilling its main objective: helping sexually abused and sexually exploited children and youth through upgrading the skills of medical and psychosocial service providers. Although it is still too early to make a full assessment of its impact, the HRD Course can provisionally be considered a success.

The programme has worked towards sustainability in many ways. For instance, the Training of Trainers component allows national collaborating organizations to replicate the HRD Course in their own countries, so that many more organizations can benefit. The success of the HRD Course shows the feasibility of constructing a model curriculum and adapting it to the specific conditions in each country. It also reaffirms the importance of involving the government, as it encourages political commitment and helps ensure that efforts to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth are sustained.

ESCAP recognizes the importance of work in this field within its mandate as the United Nations youth focal point for the Asia-Pacific region. The HRD Section of ESCAP is committed to continue its work for young people in the region, with particular attention to those who are facing especially difficult circumstances, by addressing issues for youth in a holistic manner, including sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and substance abuse.



Appendix:
List of National Counterpart Organizations

BANGLADESH

INCIDIN Bangladesh
1/9 Iqbal Road
Mohammadpur
Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
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Fax: (880-2) 811-2078
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CAMBODIA

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Fax: (855-23) 427-425
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Fax: (91-11) 464-1807
E-mail: icyo@iname.com

Sanlaap
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Fax: (91-33) 416-7294
E-mail: sanlaap@giasc101.vsnl.net.in

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

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Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
Pangkham Rd.
P.O. Box 347
Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic
Tel: (856-21) 213-005/222-776/8
Fax: (856-21) 213681/213287

MYANMAR

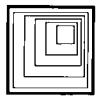
Department of Social Welfare
Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement
No. 64, Kabaaye Pagoda Rd.
Yangon, Myanmar
Tel: (95-1) 663970
Fax: (95-1) 650002

NEPAL

Child Workers In Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN)
P.O. Box 4374, Ravi Bhawan
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Tel: (977-1) 278-064/271-062
Fax: (977-1) 278-016/220-483
E-mail: cwin@mos.com.np
URL: www.south-asia.com/cwin
Fax: (977-1) 415-303

PAKISTAN

Lawyers For Human Rights And Legal Aid (LHRLA)
D1, 1st Floor Court View Apts
Opp. Sindh Assembly Building Court Rd.
Karachi, Pakistan
Tel: (92-21) 568-5824/519-902/567-4031
Fax: (92-21) 568-5938
E-mail: lhrla@fascom.com



PHILIPPINES

Department of Social Welfare and Development
P.O. Box 1622
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SRI LANKA

P.E.A.C.E.
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Tel: (94-1) 596-855
Fax: (94-1) 500-544/502-081
E-mail: peace@diamond.lanka.net
URL: www.lanka.net/charity/peace

THAILAND

National Youth Bureau
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E-mail: NYB-Thai@mozart.inet.co.th

VIET NAM

Department for Social Evils Prevention
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Hanoi, Viet Nam
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Fax: (84-4) 826-7099
E-mail: dopes@netnam.org.vn

Training at the Village-level: Awareness Raising to Prevent Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children in Cambodia

Country:	Cambodia
Name of the organization:	The Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children's Rights (CCPCR)
Address:	No 08, St. 311, Boeung Kak II, Toul Kork, P.O.Box 2487, Phnom Penh 3, Cambodia
Telephone/Fax	+ 855 23 363 316
E-mail:	ccpcr@forum.org.kh
Area of work:	Prevention

A. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. Organizational profile

The Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children's Rights (CCPCR) is a local non-governmental, non-profit organization established in Cambodia on November 20, 1994 by Mr. Yim Po, Executive Director, to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Its core activities are to promote and protect children's rights and to prevent sexual abuse, traf-

ficking, and sexual exploitation of all children, irrespective of nationality, social origin, language or sex, in accordance with the CRC. CCPCR has operated officially since March 1995 under an agreement with the Ministry of Interior and with the financial and technical support of the United Nations Cambodia Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (COHCHR). CCPCR's mandate includes the implementation of the Agenda for Action of the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Stockholm, 1996). It has been successful in implementing activities with the financial and technical support from many funding agencies such as the COHCHR, the World Food Programme, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for East Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

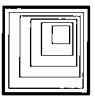
CCPCR's Central Office and Recovery Shelter are based in Phnom Penh, with branches in seven other provinces (Svay Rieng, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kampong Speu, Sihanoukville, Banteay Meanchey and Koh Kong). CCPCR also has two vocational training centres, one in Svay Rieng and the other in Sihanoukville, and a development centre in Kampong Cham.

CCPCR is comprised of an executive director, a consultant, two administrative personnel, a programme coordinator in the central office, two financial officers, 43 full-time paid staff, and two volunteer staff. The gender balance among staff is roughly even.

All staff are literate and have experience working in NGOs or as high-school teachers. Most staff are provided with the opportunity to strengthen their capacity through various local and international human rights courses, as well as meetings, workshops or seminars organized by affiliated organizations.

2. Goals

To implement the CRC and the Agenda for Action of the first World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, CCPCR has carried out its activities towards two long-term goals:



1. To promote and protect children's rights;
2. To prevent sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children of any nationality in Cambodia.

3. Impact

CCPCR has five major programme areas: (1) Prevention (2) Investigation and Rescue, (3) Recovery, (4) Reintegration, and (5) Development Centre for Young Girls.

1. *Prevention Programme:* The achievements of the prevention programme are described in detail in the following sections of this case study.
2. *Investigation and Rescue Programme:* CCPCR investigators' duties are to search sex establishments for minor sex workers; receive complaints concerning commercial sexual exploitation of children; investigate incidents; and provide legal protection to the children against the offenders. In cooperation with local authorities, CCPCR investigators have rescued many child victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, as well as at-risk children. In 2000, CCPCR rescued 217 at-risk children and child victims of rape, trafficking, violence and illicit detention, and 13 out of 30 offenders were prosecuted. CCPCR also receives children from other partner organizations into their shelters.
3. *Recovery Programme:* The rescued children are placed in CCPCR's Recovery Shelter or Vocational Training Centre. In the centres they are provided with accommodation, clothing, food, medical care, psychological counselling, literacy skills, holistic awareness, legal protection and vocational skills such as sewing, weaving, hairdressing and flower making.
4. *Reintegration Programme:* After staying in the centre for a few months, children may be reintegrated into their families and communities. In 2000, 105 children from the three centres returned to their families, 37 children went to work in various garment factories, and 7 children were sent

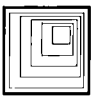
to centres run by partner organizations. 27 out of the 105 children who returned to their families, and 27 out of the 37 children who went to the factories, were each provided some seed money as a revolving fund to facilitate their reintegration process. A follow up evaluation found that the children's living status had improved after reintegration.

5. *Development Centre for Young Girls:* Rescued children in serious circumstances often cannot be reintegrated into their families in a short period of time. They are therefore placed in the Development Centre for Young Girls. In 2000, CCPCR sent 10 children to the Development Centre, to meet their medical and psychosocial needs. The girls are also provided with agricultural and animal husbandry skills to help them generate income when they leave the Centre.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Model profile

CCPCR's core activity is its Prevention Programme through Raising Awareness on CRC and Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children at the Community Level. Since 1996, in cooperation with local authorities, CCPCR has conducted this awareness-raising programme in seven targeted provinces, i.e. Svay Rieng, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kampong Speu, Sihanoukville, Takeo and Banteay Meanchey. These seven provinces are high-risk areas for the commercial sexual exploitation of women and children. The training sessions target local authorities, police, NGOs, teachers, monks, parents, children and people in the community at large. The three-day training sessions are conducted with local authorities to raise awareness on children's rights and to strengthen community capacity to prevent child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and to protect children in the community.



2. Problem addressed

Chronic war and civil unrest over the past two decades have given rise to extreme poverty among many Cambodians. According to a report of the Ministry of Women's and Veteran Affairs, the majority of the rural population in Cambodia live below the poverty line. Economic hardship is a root cause behind the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Most children, especially young girls, give up school at an early age to find jobs in city centres, to bear part of the family burden. Once they arrive in the provincial towns and cities, these children become extremely vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. Some children are also lured to the cities by their friends and neighbours, who promise to help them find well-paid jobs. Instead, these friends and neighbours sell them to brothel owners or procurers. Some others are sold to brothel owners by their new husbands, who come courting disguised as respectable men. Children from poor families and families with problems of domestic violence are particularly vulnerable.

In the era of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, many adults prefer to have sex with children because they believe that children are free of HIV/AIDS. This makes children even more vulnerable to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Seeing that most villagers in the rural areas are illiterate and unaware of the offenders' tricks, that children are too young to know about such tricks, and that most children in vulnerable families are at risk of becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation, CCPCR's awareness-raising programme at the community level works to reduce the at-risk conditions of those vulnerable children. It is hoped that after the training, the communities will have increased knowledge about the potential dangers facing children in their communities.

3. Model objectives/activities

The objectives of the awareness-raising training programme are:

- To disseminate information on the rights of the child as defined in the CRC;
- To disseminate information on the tricks offenders use to the people in the communities, to prevent children from being commercially sexually exploited;

- To follow up and investigate the root causes of child sexual exploitation at the community level;
- To provide at-risk children with vocational skills, as well as holistic counselling, so as to reduce their risk of sexual exploitation;
- To eliminate the dissemination of pornographic and obscene videos;
- To improve and strengthen existing community networks, so that when incidents of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation occur, villagers can make urgent interventions;
- To appeal to authorities and relevant institutions to punish offenders; and
- To secure cooperation with the government and local authorities.

In pursuance of these objectives, CCPCR has organized a training workshop in each district commune. Participation is usually limited to 35 persons per workshop, and comprised of commune headsmen, village chiefs, competent authorities, teachers and other prominent people in the commune. The most capable among the participants–usually village headsmen and teachers–are encouraged to organize and conduct a separate training workshop in their village for the community at large, with the facilitation of CCPCR trainers and coordinators. Local authorities and other prominent people in the communities also play a role in raising awareness in their respective villages, by speaking, for example, during village ceremonies about the ploys of the traffickers and about laws against kidnapping and trafficking of human persons, thus reminding villagers to pay more attention to their children. Sometimes the village headsmen go door to door, to discuss with poor families how they might protect their children.

The awareness-raising training is divided into three different stages:



1. Pre-assessment and invitation

Before holding the training workshop, the trainers conduct a three-day pre-assessment survey to decide whether the location qualifies as a target place. The trainers ask local authorities and villagers for information such as the number of sex establishments in the village, demographic and geographical background of the people, and the situation of the children. This information is used to determine the venue of the training workshop and to assess the ability and the needs of the target groups, what their suggestions are, and how they can cooperate with CCPCR. If it is determined that most people in the particular village are not aware of the ploys of those who lure children into commercial sexual exploitation, CCPCR contacts the commune headsman to ask permission to organize the workshop. CCPCR cooperates closely with local authorities to identify and invite the participants. If a particular location is not safe, CCPCR trainers invite local police to accompany them to approach the invitees.

2. The training workshop and village-level training

About one week after the pre-assessment and invitation stage, CCPCR trainers—usually in teams of two—conduct a three-day training workshop. The content of the training covers: (1) the concept of child rights and the CRC; (2) the roles of parents/caregivers and local authorities in implementing the CRC; (3) the ploys used by those who lure children into commercial sexual exploitation; (4) the laws against kidnapping and trafficking of human persons; (5) the difficulties child victims of sexual exploitation face; (6) the establishment of a community network to facilitate urgent community interventions to help at-risk and victimized children; and (7) the dangers of HIV/AIDS and drug addiction.

Participants are encouraged to share their ideas and past experiences in protecting the rights of the child in their own communities. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials are also used. For participants whose houses are far from the venue of the training workshop, CCPCR provides financial support to cover part of their food and travelling expenses.

At the end of the training workshop, the trainers evaluate the participants' understanding of the subjects. The trainers lead the participants in a role-play, to enable them to become trainers or to disseminate what they have learnt to their fellow villagers. The trainers also help formulate a timetable for the village headsmen, schoolteachers and *Achar Wat* (priests in the religious temples) to set the date for the village-level training.

Following the training workshop, CCPCR trainers observe and facilitate various sessions of the village-level training. Each session lasts for two to three hours, at a time convenient for the villagers. IEC materials (posters, brochures and booklets) are used in each session, and also distributed to the villagers. Videotapes on the commercial sexual exploitation of children are also shown to attract the villagers to attend the training, and to inform them about ploys of the offenders.

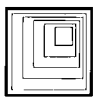
3. Follow-up and refresher course

Follow-up stage

Two to three months after the commune-level and village-level workshops, CCPCR provincial trainers conduct follow-up activities with local authorities and villagers to assess changes in attitudes among community members, including the authorities, towards child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. A questionnaire is used to collect data on at-risk children and child victims, to see whether the number of such children has decreased compared to the period prior to the training workshop. CCPCR trainers also ask villagers whether there have been any new incidents of commercial sexual exploitation of children and whether any children have left the village to find jobs in the city centres.

Refresher course

All participants from the training workshop at the commune level are invited to attend a one-day refresher course. The participants are provided with money to subsidize part of their food and travelling expenses. The one-day refresher course aims to strengthen the participants' capacity to ensure that they



can effectively use the knowledge and skills gained from the training workshop to better protect children and prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children. A student-centred method is used in the refresher course, to obtain information from the participants and to let them take part in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

The participants are encouraged to share the achievements and difficulties that they encountered during village-level workshop implementation. Both participants and trainers discuss problems that arose and try to find solutions. In case something cannot be resolved at the village level, CCPCR trainers note it down and later pose it to the government, partner organizations, and relevant funding agencies.

If a participant asks the CCPCR trainers to rescue a child at the refresher course, as often happens, the trainers ask the participant to write a report on the situation of the child and, whenever possible, they rescue the child. These children are accepted into CCPCR's centres or other centres run by partner organizations, where they learn life skills and vocational skills.

C. EVALUATION

1. Responsiveness/relevance

Through utilization of pre-assessment activities, CCPCR is able to target the right sites, i.e. where the risk of commercial sexual exploitation of children is extremely high. One aspect that is examined is whether the area has many at-risk children and child victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Village living standards and problems of gambling, alcoholism and pornography are additional factors that are taken into account when selecting a target site.

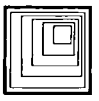
To encourage participation in the training workshop, CCPCR listens to the participants' preference in terms of where, when and how the training should be conducted, and who should be targeted. Training workshops are conducted during times

that are convenient for the participants, and CCPCR cooperates with local authorities to ensure the safety of the participants as well as the trainers. CCPCR also takes into consideration the distance from the participants' houses to the venue of the training workshop, and provides financial support to those who live far from the venue.

The community members' abilities, local context, and preferences dictate how CCPCR formulates the appropriate training workshop content. If there are many poor families, for example, CCPCR emphasizes precautionary advice, warning families to be wary of letting their children go find jobs in the provincial towns or city centres. CCPCR also develops IEC materials that take cultural and socio-economic factors into consideration. For instance, before publishing the IEC materials, the organization consults with relevant local partner NGOs in order to ensure that the materials will be acceptable to the public.

CCPCR works with local authorities throughout the programme, from inviting the participants to facilitating the training workshop. Before conducting the training, staff members contact local authorities at the district, commune and village levels for advice on how they should conduct the awareness-raising session and how the authorities could cooperate with CCPCR. The trainers introduce themselves to the authorities, explain the objectives of the organization, and interview the authorities to get a sense of their abilities and their needs.

The prevention programme aims to sensitise the community to child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and to reduce negative feelings towards child victims. In the training workshop, CCPCR teaches community members about confidentiality issues, and encourages them to respect the identity of child victims, and not to repeat details of the incidents to others. By doing this, CCPCR can build trust among the community members and thus encourage them to cooperate with the organization.



2. Sustainability

CCPCR is able to continually mobilize social, technical and community support for its programme through maintaining contact with the communities. It fosters partnerships with other NGOs that provide various kinds of support to CCPCR programmes, such as through information exchanges with NGOs by attending their seminars or inviting them to attend CCPCR's meetings. CCPCR also cooperates with the government.

During programme implementation, CCPCR obtains the cooperation of community members, as well as the local authorities. The target groups have a sense of ownership over the training, which helps to cement their commitment to combating the commercial sexual exploitation of children. To sustain long-term community support CCPCR periodically conducts follow-up activities at the project sites, to visit the villagers and to gather information regarding child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, as well as other kinds of child rights violations. Staff members also keep in touch with community members and local authorities to rescue at-risk and victimized children. CCPCR thus builds trust with the target groups and encourages their long-term commitment to combating child sexual exploitation. Even after completion of the training workshop and follow-up activities, the target groups often suggest to CCPCR that it extend the project activities and keep in touch with the communities.

Local authorities are mobilized to use their power to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation and to help at-risk and victimized children. Commune chiefs and village headsmen are included in all processes and are encouraged to use every opportunity to inform the people in their villages on the deceitful means used by traffickers, as well as to disseminate prevention messages.

National and local organizations are involved in the training workshops at all stages. They help facilitate the workshops and also participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes, through report writing, sharing of information, and initiatives to improve the programme activities. Other relevant NGOs contribute to the effort by incorporating the messages of the prevention programme into their activities.

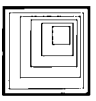
Such links with the communities, government and NGOs help to ensure the programme's long-term sustainability.

3. Impact

The programme has realized many of its desired outcomes. Children are more aware of the ploys of the traffickers and can better protect themselves. Child victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation receive support from the community, both in terms of counselling as well as material support. Some at-risk children gain vocational skills in CCPCR's vocational training centres so they can earn a better income, thus reducing their risk of being sexually exploited.

People in the communities can make better interventions to help at-risk children and to rescue sexually abused and sexually exploited children, as they are sensitized on the issues. They now pay more attention to the children in the community, and are able to intervene on their behalf. For example, in Mriem Khan Choeung Village, Mriem Commune, Romeas Heik District, Svay Rieng Province, community members responded to incidents of domestic-violence in the home of an at-risk child and two sexually exploited children. The villagers decided to make an urgent intervention to rescue the child victims of sexual exploitation by informing the local authorities so that the authorities could make a legal intervention to sue the offenders. They also notified the CCPCR investigator in Svay Rieng to follow up with the cases. The child victims were then sent to a nearby local health care centre.

Villagers have established networks in their own villages to monitor the commercial sexual exploitation of children. They have created a mechanism to inform local authorities, and sometimes they arrest the offenders themselves, if they witness incidents of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation. Community members cooperate with local authorities and other villagers to protect the children in their community. Law enforcement officers can also better perform their duties to protect children from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, thanks to the training and follow-up activities.



4. Conclusion

The prevention programme against child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation has so far been successful and is worth replicating elsewhere. Personnel, finances and activities of the programme were managed in a systematic way. Involving many target groups in assessing the outcomes of the programme has helped to ensure that its objectives are achieved.

Throughout the different stages of implementation, two key factors stand out as crucial to the success of the programme: (1) conduct of a thorough pre-assessment in order to assess the abilities and the needs of the target groups; and (2) implementation of the refresher course and other follow-up activities in order to cement the strengthened capacity of the target group, to assess the changes in attitudes among local authorities and community members, and to involve them in monitoring and evaluating of the programme.

In replication of the programme, some constraints may be encountered during project implementation, such as a lack of security at the project sites, training times that may not be convenient for the participants, the low level of education of the participants, and a general lack of interest in attending the awareness-raising training. Such constraints, however, can be overcome through careful programme design and implementation. The trainers must: (1) cooperate with local authorities to ensure the trainers' safety; (2) consult with community members to find out the busy seasons (e.g. harvest time), and avoid scheduling training workshops during that period; (3) use IEC materials such as illustrated posters and leaflets to help illiterate people to clearly understand the content of the training; and (4) obtain the cooperation of local authorities to invite the villagers to attend the training workshops, or show videos to attract the attention of the villagers.

CCPCR demonstrates that awareness raising at the village level can be an effective way to prevent sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children when local factors are carefully assessed and taken into account. By building the capacity of leaders and local authorities to spread prevention messages, the programme seeks to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children with the full support of the community.

Partnerships to Combat Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth in Pakistan

Name of organization:	Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid (LHRLA)
Address:	D-1, 1st Floor, Court View Apartments, Opp. Sindh Assembly Building, Court Road, Karachi 74200, Pakistan.
Telephone:	+92-21-5685824, 5219902 +111-911-922 (*Madadgaar* help line)
Fax:	+92-21-5685938
E-mail:	lhrla@fascom.com
Website:	www.lhrla.org, www.lhrla.org/Madadgaar
Area of work:	Protection

A. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. Organizational profile

Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid (LHRLA) was established in 1989 with the assistance of Edhi Trust, the largest private foundation in the country set up by a prominent Pakistani philanthropist. LHRLA is based in Karachi, the port city of the country of a population of more than 10 million. It is a non-profit, non-partisan and non-political organization of committed and dedicated lawyers providing free legal assistance to the needy and the neglected classes of society.

LHRLA is composed of nine full-time lawyers and thirty programme staff. There are also over 25 volunteers and three to four interns at any given time. In addition, LHRLA has an extensive network of resource people, including lawyers, psychologists, medical doctors, psychiatrists, and academics.

2. Goals

LHRLA aims to provide justice to as many people as possible through preventive, remedial and direct legal aid and free counselling. Through service provision and legal advocacy, it works to better protect the rights of the vulnerable, particularly poor women and children. It further works to strengthen civil society through institutional development and the creation of an enabling environment.

3. Impact

(a) LHRLA's major areas of activity

LHRLA works in several areas of human rights, including child abuse, trafficking in women and children, harassment of women, jail reforms and juvenile justice, and the rights of migrant workers. Some of these issues, such as trafficking and harassment, had been taken up by LHRLA for the first time in Pakistan. The organization works at both the micro (service-oriented) and the macro (policy-oriented) levels. At the micro level, LHRLA has provided free legal services in cases related to trafficking in women and children, child abuse, rape, torture, child custody, and divorce. It conducts research on trafficking in women and children, maintains a documentation centre, and disseminates information regarding incidents of physical and sexual abuse against women and children through the publication of analytical reports and dissemination to the media and the general public. In addition, LHRLA provides several types of training on human rights and surrounding legal issues to build the capacity of the government functionaries, as well as of civil society leaders.



At the macro level, LHRLA lobbies for reform against discriminatory laws. It also works with the government in the development of laws, such as the Juvenile Justice Ordinance, and jail reforms. It is working to develop special laws on trafficking, domestic violence, workplace and public place harassment, and to implement these laws through public interest litigation. LHRLA also assists the government in developing major policy documents, such as the National Plan of Action against commercial sexual exploitation of children, and the country report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in Pakistan.

(b) LHRLA's major achievements

Since LHRLA was established, it has recognized legal activism through legal aid and has provided free legal assistance and counselling to over 20,000 people, including prisoners, victims of trafficking, women prosecuted under discriminatory laws, and children being tried for juvenile offences. Overall, LHRLA has helped to achieve the release of more than 5,000 innocent persons from jail, mostly women and children.

LHRLA is credited with pioneering multiple key human rights initiatives in Pakistan, including the issue of trafficking in women and children and the effort to establish a juvenile justice system. It has worked tirelessly to internationalize human rights issues in the country and in South Asia by developing a network of like-minded organizations that lobby for policy reforms.

LHRLA has been especially active in bringing about much needed jail reforms in the country and spearheaded a successful campaign to establish the first Juvenile Court in Pakistan in 1993. It has worked with the Government of Pakistan for the formulation of the Juvenile Justice Ordinance and is currently helping to implement the CRC and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

B. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT MODEL

1. Model profile

Throughout its programmes, LHRLA works in partnership with government bodies and with civil society organizations, including community-based organizations (CBOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In this case study, the following three LHRLA programmes will be discussed:

(a) Awareness raising through Theatre Festivals

At the grassroots level, LHRLA organized a Theatre Festival in different parts of the country to highlight the issue of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation in collaboration with 11 local theatre groups, including children's groups.

(b) Service provision through referral service: Madadgaar

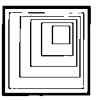
In partnership with other NGOs, care providers, and relevant government departments including the police, LHRLA, with the support of UNICEF, established Pakistan's first children and women help line and referral service, named *Madadgaar*, meaning "Helper" in Urdu.

(c) Policy input through collaboration with government

LHRLA also inputs into government policy on child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation through participating in a national research project to assess the status of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in the country, and in the development of the National Plan of Action against commercial sexual exploitation of children in follow up to the 1996 Stockholm Congress.

2. Problem addressed

Child abuse is a very grave problem, prevalent all over the world. Pakistan is no exception. In recent years the number of reported child abuse cases has risen sharply, thanks to the heightened public and professional awareness associated with



high media coverage and the activities of NGOs such as LHRLA. According to reports by national and provincial newspapers, 136 girls were raped and 193 minor boys sodomized between January and October 2001.[1] However, because abuse is often hidden from view and its victims are too young or fearful to speak out, experts suggest that its true prevalence is likely to be much greater than the number of cases newspapers indicate.

Child sexual abuse is also known to be closely linked to sexual exploitation of children, which has gained increased attention in recent years. While it is difficult to gauge the true magnitude of child prostitution, hundreds of children, both boys and girls, are involved. A large number of street children are involved in prostitution, and one estimate is that there are more than 10,000 children on the streets of Karachi,[2] who are vulnerable to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Trafficking of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation has also gained recognition as a severe problem.

Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children can lead to severe emotional problems. Yet, due to the taboos associated with the subject, it is difficult to increase awareness and encourage open acknowledgement of the existence of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The child victims themselves are too often unaware that their rights are being violated. Many children do not disclose what has happened to them, or do not do so for a long time, which delays their treatment.

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[1] The data was compiled at the research and publication centre of *Madadgaar*. The centre documents all human rights abuse cases—especially those against children and women—published or otherwise acknowledged in newspapers. To up-date the records staff members of *Madadgaar* daily monitor 22 newspapers in Urdu, English and Sindhi languages. With the help of this database, *Madadgaar* attempts to keep the public informed about the incidents of violence.

[2] Azad Foundation estimate.

To combat child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, public awareness of these problems must be raised. In a country where religious intolerance is growing, civil society institutions are not very strong, and little protection is offered to those working on these issues, collective efforts are crucial. Cooperation among organizations at different levels is necessary to raise such awareness, as well as to suggest the means for victims and at-risk children and their guardians to fight against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Government, NGOs, and society in general must be involved, as only limited services for child victims are available and it is impossible for any one actor to provide the full range of necessary services. Thus, multi-sectoral partnerships are essential in combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

3. Model objectives/activities

The objectives of the partnerships between LHRLA and other organizations are to:

- Raise public awareness on the issue of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children;
- Provide referral services to victims of abuse, so that they may access relevant services provided by government bodies and NGOs;
- Assist the government in the implementation of the CRC and CEDAW;
- Build the capacity of partner organizations, including government bodies; and
- Replicate partnerships in other cities.

Activities include the following:

(a) Awareness raising through Theatre Festivals

LHRLA organized a Theatre Festival in 1999 in different parts of the country to highlight the issue of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth, with the support of ESCAP and Action Aid, Pakistan. At the outset of the project, LHRLA approached NGOs, CBOs, and schools in Karachi to see their interest in the project. Representatives of the



organizations which showed interest were invited to a one-day training course in Karachi, where a well-known TV-programme director, scriptwriter and psychologist were present as resource persons. The psychologist informed the participants of the various aspects of child sexual abuse. Then the TV-programme director and scriptwriter worked with the participants on the process of creating a good theatre production. The resource persons also coached the group on techniques that could be used to refer to child sexual abuse in a manner acceptable to a society in which such discussions are taboo. The participants then began to develop the script for the play, and returned to their communities to rehearse. A similar process was followed in several other cities in Pakistan, utilizing LHRLA's NGO network.

Eleven youth theatre groups took part in this event, and many children and youth took the lead in producing the theatre presentations. All the plays presented in the Theatre Festival were prepared with special consideration for the respective communities as community members or children of the same locality designed most of the plays, which were then locally performed.

During the festival LHRLA interacted with different people, especially children and youth, and reached nearly 8,000 people, including children, parents and teachers. Through the theatre performances, LHRLA tried to disseminate information on child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, and gave the children and their communities ideas of how to protect themselves. To talk about sexual abuse with children in Pakistani society is taboo; thus, LHRLA had adopted an innovative way of communicating this sensitive issue. LHRLA worked with people of different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and did not observe any resentment from the audience.

(b) Service provision through referral service: Madadgaar

Madadgaar, Pakistan's first Child Help Line and Protection Service for Children and Women, was launched as a joint venture of LHRLA and UNICEF. It offers a variety of

services, including a help line, a referral service to more than 100 other agencies/organizations, and a documentation database of cases of abuse against children and women and of missing children.

The help line service is available in all five districts of Karachi, and consists of a referral system, devised by contacting service providers. A team of trained help line operators and programme officers assesses the nature of help warranted by the call and ensures assistance via referrals, which are available immediately. The help line functions 12 hours per day and a Universal Access Number hotline (a number that is always locally dialled, which will remain the same when the programme expands to other cities) is available.

Case #1: *Madadgaar* Referral System

The medico-legal officer at Abbasi Shaheed Hospital referred a case to *Madadgaar.* A six-year-old child, Mudassar[3], had been sodomized and needed psychological help and legal aid. Shaliyar, a neighbour, had given Mudassar two rupees to lure the boy into Shaliyar's house, where he sodomized Mudassar. After the incident, the child informed his father and uncle. They took him to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for a medical examination, where anal penetration was proved. The child was given medicine for the pain and referred to *Madadgaar.* The father filed an First Information Report (FIR) and afterwards visited the office and asked for psychological and legal assistance. On the request of the father of the aggrieved child, a psychologist of *Madadgaar* provided counselling to Mudassar, as well as to his father. Later the aggrieved party was referred to LHRLA for legal assistance, where they were provided with all possible legal support. The case is currently in progress.

A referral directory has been built based on an alliance with other stakeholders, to form a network of convenience for the victims. The alliance includes governmental and non-

[3] The names of the people in these cases have been changed to maintain their confidentiality.



governmental organizations, such as shelters (public and private), counselling centres, legal aid organizations, hospitals and clinics, educational groups, Citizen Police Liaison Committee[4], and loan-providing agencies. The organizations are categorized by the groups they target and the nature of the services they provide, namely, children, women, law enforcement, legal aid, health, and loan providing agencies.

Case #2: Liaison with the CPLC

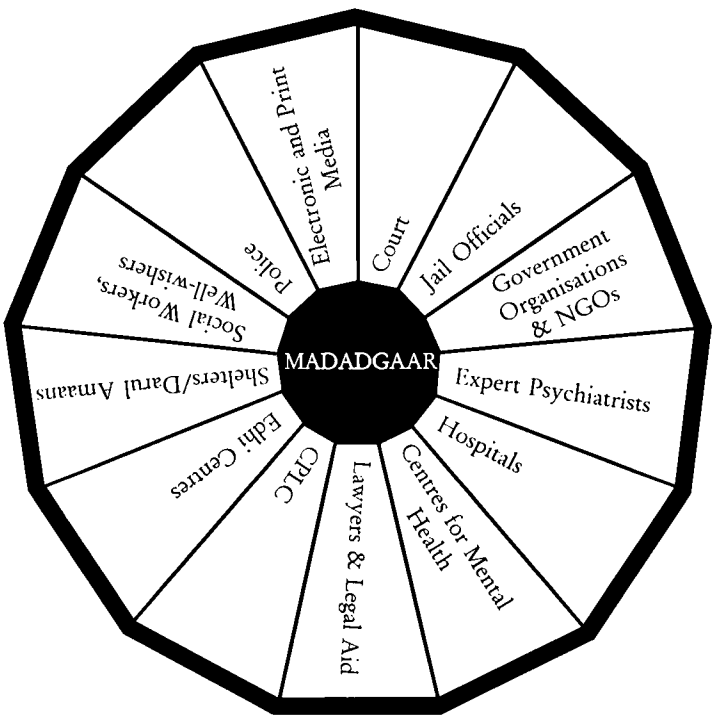
The Central Reporting Cell of the Citizen Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) received on 25 May 1999 a rape case involving a minor girl. According to the report, a six-year-old schoolgirl, Kinza, had been raped by her physical trainer, Nasir. Kinza, a student of Class 1, told her parents, who reported the matter to the CPLC and took their daughter for medical examination. The report of the hospital's medico-legal department showed proof that the child had been subjected to sexual intercourse. After receiving the case, the Central Reporting Cell referred it to CPLC East, which facilitated the registration of a FIR and followed up with the case. CPLC then referred the case to LHRLA for further legal proceedings. LHRLA took special interest in the case. The efforts of the network paid off, and the court convicted and sentenced the accused.

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[4] The Citizen Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) was established in 1989, based on the initiative of the then-Sindh Governor Justice (Retd. Fakruddin G. Ebrahim). It is primarily composed of citizens in the private sector and aims to serve as link between the police and civil society. The CPLC Central Reporting Cell was established at the Sindh Governor's secretariat in 1990, and since 1993, CPLC has expanded to police stations at the district level. CPLC addresses the concerns of the citizens by monitoring police activities and by cooperating with the police to bring about justice. Some of CPLC's functions are to: make certain that no FIR or complaint is refused; ensure that no person is detained at police stations unlawfully or without authorization; create confidence, remove the misunderstanding and narrow down the credibility gap between citizens and the police; and to apprise the local police of the local citizens' grievances, with a view to facilitate investigations into the causes and to suggest remedial measures.

The alliance was based on the institutionalization of pre-existing relationships between LHRLA and the other organizations, which had been fortified over years of working together. The formalization of the relationship was done through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between LHRLA and the individual organizations. The MOU details the understanding that the organizations, including LHRLA, will recognize the referral system and will receive referrals, regardless of whether they decide to accept the case or not. In the MOU, LHRLA also agreed to organize capacity-building programmes and workshops for the partner organizations.

Madadgaar's **Coordinating Wheel**



LHRLA is currently working towards replication of the *Madadgaar* help line in other provinces, in cooperation with government agencies. LHRLA will support the initial establishment of the service by providing technical assistance, such as by conducting a survey of available services, preparing a directory,



and providing training for the government agency and civil society group staff members who are to work on the help line.

Madadgaar also maintains a documentation centre including a large database on the physical and sexual abuse of children and women. For example, one database is on missing children, including more than 500 records of children who disappeared during the period from 2000 to 2001. The data is available to the public, and anyone can contact *Madadgaar* for information on a missing child.

Case #3: *Madadgaar's* Intervention & Investigation in a Missing Child Case

On 18 June 2001, a man named Saeed approached the *Madadgaar* office and sought help in search of his nephew, Hamza. On 3 January 2001 his family had gone to the Karachi zoo, where Hamza mysteriously disappeared. Saeed said that the family had reported the incident to the Garden Police Station, but the police had not yet found any clues regarding the boy's whereabouts.

After receiving the initial details, the *Madadgaar* team issued a press release to 40 newspapers, magazines and news agencies. The team also contacted Radio Pakistan, FM 100 and FM 101, and requested them to broadcast the details of the child. All the radio channels repeatedly broadcasted the information.

Madadgaar has a very good working relationship with government agencies, especially the police, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the Central Investigation Agency (CIA), as well as with non-governmental organizations. The *Madadgaar* investigative officer utilized these relationships, and was in constant touch with the other departments with the case was resolved. For example, *Madadgaar* was concerned that the child might be smuggled to United Arab Emirates for camel racing. Therefore, a team member was in contact with the FIA passport cell of Sindh and Punjab, and kept them informed about the child.

On 31 July 2001, Saeed called the *Madadgaar* help line # 111-911-922 and informed *Madadgaar* that the Garden Police Station had recovered the missing child from Manghoper and arrested the kidnappers. The recovery of the child was made possible after one person saw *Madadgaar's* advertisement in the newspaper and called the Garden Police Station and informed the police that he saw the child near his house. The police raided the house and successfully recovered the missing child, who had spent a total of 200 days in captivity.

(c) Policy input through collaboration with government

The present government of Pakistan has recognized the need to address the issue of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth, and has started working with civil society to combat these problems. This gives NGOs, including LHRLA, the opportunity to influence government policy. In particular, they are collaborating with the government in developing the Pakistan National Plan of Action to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children.

LHRLA also participates in government-sponsored research activities. For example, it took active part in national level research on sexually abused and sexually exploited children, their health needs, and services available to them. The research was spearheaded by the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD), Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education, and sponsored by ESCAP.

National Workshops Related to Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation

LHRLA, in collaboration with ESCAP and Action Aid Pakistan, organized a national workshop on "Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Pakistan", 28 to 30 April 2000. The workshop was the first of its kind in Pakistan and brought together people representing different sections of society to share their experiences and to exchange ideas on raising awareness of the issue in the country.

To follow up the concern expressed at the national workshops, namely, a lack of adequate services available to child victims, LHRLA and ESCAP also jointly organized an eleven-day training workshop, "National Human Resource Development Course on Psychosocial and Medical Services for Sexually Abused & Exploited Children and Youth", from 26 April to 6 May 2001. The training course broke new ground in Pakistan as the first effort made to educate and sensitize concerned people on such a sensitive issue as child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Through both the workshop and the training course, LHRLA sought to help build networks and to establish a feeling of mutual support among NGOs and government organizations, to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and to develop the capacity to assist child victims.



C. EVALUATION

1. Responsiveness/innovativeness

The collaborative activities between LHRLA and other organizations were all first attempts in Pakistan to facilitate and encourage dialogue on such sensitive issues as child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Such dialogue proved helpful in creating awareness. The partnerships have helped change the attitudes of the government and the society at large to acknowledge the fact that child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation exist in the country.

Constructive basic values of Pakistani society are prioritized in the programmes. In the Theatre Festival, for example, activities avoided being too controversial. Resource persons advised the participants how to convey their message effectively on such sensitive issues, as it is taboo to talk about sex with children. In developing training materials, care was taken to use words that would not be offensive in that culture, such as using the phrase "basic health education" instead of "sex education".

Children and young people are encouraged to take active part in the activities. In establishing *Madadgaar,* students from Indus Valley School designed the communication materials for the new programme and inputted on the selection of the logo. In the Theatre Festival, all the performances were undertaken with the help of children and youths.

Active partnerships with many organizations allow existing organizations to be mobilized towards the same goals of combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth. In the case of the Theatre Festival, it was done through mobilizing the creative talent of the young people and grassroots level organizations. In terms of the *Madadgaar* referral system, existing services for victims are accessed in a more integrated manner.

2. Efficiency

Through collaboration with organizations at different levels, LHRLA has been able to maximize the potential of each organization in the collaborative network to extend their

services. The *Madadgaar* referral directory and help line streamlines the process of finding care for the victims. It allows more victims to access the services they need in a timely manner, and saves the service providers search time. It also allows the service providers to help victims access a whole range of services at a low cost to the providers.

Working together with different actors helps make the programmes more flexible in meeting the needs of the victims and the public at large. In terms of the referral system, victims can access a wide range of services. Relevant organizations can be called upon to address specific needs, which is more viable than each organization attempting to provide all necessary services.

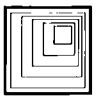
In addition, collaboration not only helps avoid duplication of efforts, but it also helps the replication elsewhere of successful models. Multiple agencies do not have to duplicate efforts in developing similar programmes; instead, they may choose to replicate an existing good model and make use of the existing expertise. Alternatively, they may choose to develop a complementary programme.

3. Sustainability

Partnerships help the member organizations to cope with difficult cultural contexts and to alleviate the common difficulties they face. By presenting a united front, organizations can strengthen their position in the eyes of the society, thus helping to provide physical security to their staff and the people in the communities, particularly children, with whom they work.

Different civil society institutions have assured LHRLA of their continuous support of its programmes. The Federal Interior Minister also expressed the Interior Ministry's intention to support the expansion of *Madadgaar* to all provinces of Pakistan by seeking cooperation and support from Chief Secretaries and Home Secretaries, among others.

The capacity of LHRLA staff and of partner organizations has been built up through the sharing of experiences and working together on common projects. Information exchanges among



the partner organizations, including government bodies such as police and the judiciary, keep everyone informed of the latest trends. The organizations invite the others to any training courses and workshops they hold, so the collaboration provides greater opportunities for capacity building. Such exchanges cement the partnerships, in which personal relationships are important.

Participation in the programmes also increases the capacity of children and youth. Young participants of the Theatre Festivals, for example, are now equipped with the tools and correct information to take action on awareness raising efforts. They gain experience in working on the issue, and are likely to become motivated to further promote children's rights and protection against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The partnerships have increased the participating organizations' commitment to combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth. Such commitment on the part of the government led to the development of the National Plan of Action. Because of their close relationships with the government, civil society organizations have made an important input to the development of the National Plan of Action, as well as now having an effective means of monitoring its implementation.

The adaptability of the model has already been proved by LHRLA's experience, as it has been applied in different communities with completely different cultural and ethical backgrounds. Because of its adaptable nature, LHRLA encountered no difficulty or resentment in the communities.

4. Conclusion

LHRLA has faced some challenges along the way, including being attacked by a conservative media agency. However, the fact that LHRLA is a well-known and well-respected organization for its professional services in legal aid and that it has access to the judicial system, has kept its reception in society generally good. To gain this type of reception, it has been important for LHRLA to work on maintaining good relationships with actors in different segments of society.

Holding various activities in the communities is important, but LHRLA believes in the necessity of offering services to the community members to truly gain their trust. LHRLA has also taken care to respect local values, in order to work effectively in a culturally sensitive context.

It is particularly important for organizations working on the issues to do so in partnership with the communities. An organization must build a feeling of trust with the communities it is working with, in order to be effective. When people trust the organization, they will listen and pay more attention to what it has to say. Theatre, in particular, has been found to be an effective and cost-efficient way to convey messages to large numbers of people. Theatre provides an excellent opportunity for children and youth to use their talents to express themselves, and to build their capacity to take a lead role in protecting their own rights. It also facilitates discussion among family members on the issue. In fact, the Theatre Festival proved to be such a success that LHRLA created its own theatre troupe and now includes theatre in all of its training programmes.

Another element that is key to successful social mobilization to combat child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation is the coordination of civil society institutions and the government. By involving society at large and striving to build an institution–rather than developing just one training course or setting up one telephone line–the movement gains in strength. Networking with other organizations has helped increase the strength of the efforts to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It also leads to sustainability by fortifying the commitment of partner organizations, and by helping to ensure the security of those involved in the programmes. Finally, the collaborative efforts contributed to building the capacity of many young people, who join the development sector after involvement with such programmes.

Local-level Initiatives to Combating Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation in Bangladesh

Country:	Bangladesh
Name of the organizations:	Jatio Krisak Sammitee (National Peasant Association), Adibashi Parishad (Indigenous Peoples Association), Ulka Shamaj Kallayan Shangha (Ulka Social Welfare Association), Nari Mukti Shangha (Association of Women's Freedom), Ekota Sex Workers Association, Women Coordination Committee, Pantata Bhumihin Samity (Pantata Landless Society), Gono Mukhi Shangha (Association for People's Emancipation)
Name of the contact organization[1]:	INCIDIN Bangladesh
Address:	1/9 Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
Telephone:	+8802-8118044
Fax:	+8802-8118393
E-mail:	incidinb@incidinb.org
Area of work:	Prevention, Protection and Reintegration

[1] INCIDIN Bangladesh is a research and advocacy organization working to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children in Bangladesh. INCIDIN has been serving as the National Coordinating Organization of ESCAP's programme to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Bangladesh since 1999. The present case study is an attempt to identify local level citizens' initiatives towards combating child sexual exploitation. As the local agencies included in this case study are not well known in national and international forums, INCIDIN Bangladesh has offered itself as a voice for these important actors. Researchers from INCIDIN Bangladesh worked over a period of three months together with these organizations in a participatory consultative process to prepare this case study.

A. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

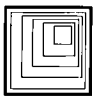
The organizations presented in the present case study are community-based organizations. These local organizations are generally self-organized, self-funded and usually unregistered with government agencies. This case study presents different activities of some selected local level organizations working to combat child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation at the grassroots level. Most of these initiatives are directed towards prevention of sexual abuse by awareness raising at the community level. Some activities are directed towards the protection of the rights of the abused children through mobilizing public support, legal assistance and institutional assistance.

The *Jatio Krisak Sammitee* (National Peasant Association) and *Pantata Bhumihin Samity* (Pantata Landless Society) are social activist groups of rural peasant and agricultural workers. Ekota Sex Workers Association, *Ulka Shamaj Kallayan Shangha* (Ulka Social Welfare Association) and *Nari Mukti Shangha* (Association of Women's Freedom) are self-help organizations of brothel-based sex workers[2]. The Women Coordination Committee is an organization of rural women. The *Adibashi Parishad* (Indigenous Peoples Association) is an organization of ethnic minorities. Finally the *Gono Mukhi Shangha* (Association for People's Emancipation) is a local club of urban youth.

Some of these organizations have been formed through the community members' self-initiative while others have been facilitated by NGOs. Nevertheless, all the organizations included in the case study, including those with linkages to NGOs (such as the Women Coordination Committee and *Bhumihin Samity*), are independently run local organizations.

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[2] The members of Ulka Social Welfare Association, Association of Women's Freedom and Ekota Sex Workers' Association have identified themselves as 'sex workers'.



Other than the sex workers' organizations, the organizations in this study do not specifically focus on working against the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children. However, all of these organizations tackle child sexual abuse and exploitation by addressing the broader issue of violence against women, including girls. The local level organizations also address the issue of child sexual abuse through general community activities.

These grassroots level initiatives are predominantly implemented by adults; children or adolescents are usually not included. However, many of the activities directly involve children, such as through education, games, and health and hygiene programmes.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODEL

The activities of the local level organizations can be classified into three broad areas: namely, prevention, protection and reintegration. Some of the identified good practices of the grassroots level organizations are presented in this section.

1. Prevention

Many local-level prevention activities help to develop greater community awareness so that children are not put at risk of sexual abuse, while others focus on direct rescue of at-risk children. Activities include the following:

a. Access to informal space (Adda)

The organization of sex workers in a Bagerhat brothel utilizes the local *Adda*[3] to express their concerns against recruitment of girls into the brothel. They also use the same connections to find out if such an event has taken place.

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[3] *Adda* is defined as the act of informally spending time with friends talking and gossiping.

Case#1: Adda as a source of sensitive information
Location - Bagerhat Nager Bazar Brothel

Sharifa, one of the leaders of Ekota Mohila Samity (an association of sex workers), reported two different cases where they were informed about the entry of under-aged girls into the brothel. Later the members of her association rescued the girls from the broker. Although the pimps try to maintain strict secrecy in bringing in girls to the Brothel, the association obtains information from inmates[4] who cannot hide information while chatting with peers. In one case, Kamina, an inmate, in an *Adda* tipped the others that a new girl was brought to the brothel and one Shamina Sardarni ("Sardarni" is the title of female brothel owners) was interested in buying the girl from the pimp and employing her. Based on that information, the association rescued the girl.

Informal discussion spaces also act as outlets of awareness and information for the organization of the sex workers. Through access to an informal source of sensitive information, these local organizations can prevent the children from being recruited by brothels.

b. Placing the issue of child sexual abuse and exploitation on meeting agendas

In *Gono Mukhi Shangha,* a local youth club, the leadership consciously introduced the situation of sexual exploitation to the agenda of its monthly meetings and worked towards developing a prevention strategy. In the privacy of their organizational space, the members felt comfortable sharing their views, and discussing sensitive issues openly. This is significant, given the prevalence of conservative social attitudes. The discussion among members also created a common understanding of the gravity of the problem and generated the need to gain more knowledge and to take initiatives to counter these crimes.

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[4] In this case study, "inmate" is used to refer to sex workers living in brothels. This is the term frequently used in Bangladesh.



Case#2: Building a mandate through organizational meetings
Location: Satkhira

In *Gono Mukhi Shangha,* a Satkhira-based youth club, the president of the club introduced the issue of sexual exploitation of children to the club's monthly meetings. The president said that initially, in their monthly meetings, they began to assess the situation of child sexual abuse while discussing the agenda of 'the current situation of the locality'. In the beginning, the leaders had to encourage the members to share information regarding child sexual abuse in the locality. After some months, the members began to bring up such issues themselves. In 2000, the office bearers developed a consensus to implement activities against sexual exploitation of local children.

c. Watchdog activities

Watchdog activities by local groups carry special importance in protecting girls and youth from sexual exploitation. *Gono Mukhi Shangha,* for example, has its own community surveillance team. The team selects areas such as bus stations, railway stations and river ports and keeps watch over the movement of young girls.

Case#3: Linking the elders' group with the organization
Location: Banisata, Dacope

In Banisata Brothel, Sahana and Rani said that as elders and senior inmates they watch the situation particularly regarding the entry of under-aged girls into the brothel. They try to persuade the owners not to house under-aged girls. Sometimes they are successful in preventing the recruitment of under-aged girls into the brothel. Shahana narrated one incident when a pimp brought a 13-year old girl named Mina[5] to Bania Shanta and locked her in one of the rooms. A group of senior inmates saw the incident and talked through the window with the captive girl. They learned that the girl came from Rampal, the neighbouring *Thana* (the second tier of the local-level administrative unit), and wanted to go back home. They informed the sex workers association and a trusted person was sent to that girl's house. The girl's father came to the brothel and they successfully released the girl to her father.

[5] The names of the children in all these cases have been changed to maintain their confidentiality.

In Bania Shanta Brothel, the association of the sex workers utilizes the "elders' group" as watchdog. (Here "elders" refer to senior sex workers). In the brothel community, these seniors have relatively more spare time (as they are either unemployed or employed in small trades such as shop keeping) and are traditionally observant of the neighborhood.

d. Social mobilization to combat violence against children and women

Social gathering and mobilization contribute to raising awareness, which leads to solidarity among social groups working to prevent the sexual exploitation of women and children. Such gatherings are organized to observe special days, or are held through conferences of rural women's associations and mobilization in response to violence against women.

Case#4: Public debate as a means of overcoming taboo
Location: North Chadpai, Union Chadpai, Mongla

Women Coordination Committee (WCC) leader Anjali emphasized the importance of women's gathering as a means of organizing preventive action against attempts of sexual exploitation. In her opinion, the observation of "Rural Women's Day" and "International Women's Day" built solidarity among WCC members and among the women of the community as a whole. On these occasions, the women leaders gave speeches on violence against women and sometimes on sexual oppression against women. Anjali noted that it sharpened the consciousness of women regarding discrimination and violence against women and girls. She cited an incident in which this enhanced awareness was put into practice.

Lipika, a girl of a poor household, was targeted by a hooligan youth named Parag. When WCC members were informed about the potential risk of the girl being sexually abused, they organized themselves and challenged the young man. As a result Lipika was able to overcome the threat of sexual assault. Anjali explained that the village women were able to come together and challenge the man because of the repeated discussion in public spaces of the issue of sexual abuse. Such discussions helped them overcome their shyness and organize themselves for action.



Although the specific issues of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation are not directly addressed in most of these public gatherings, the issue of violence against women, which includes sexual violence, works as a pathway for raising community awareness and initiatives on sexual violence against children. The public discussion on sexual violence against women also works to break the taboo on discussing sexuality in public. This in turn helps community members become psychologically prepared to deal with the issues of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

e. Uthan Baithak for instant mobilization and sensitization of women

Utahan Baithak (courtyard-sitting) is an innovative style of organizing women's groups. Usually the members of the WCC live in clusters of homesteads in a village. Sometimes these clusters share a common courtyard. Thus, by informing one or two members, the rest of the WCC members can be called in for an immediate meeting in the courtyard.

Case#5: From Uthan Baithak to action
Location: North Chadpai, Union Chadpai, Mongla

Leaders of the WCC reported that their courtyard sitting has helped them to organize women and combat the sexual exploitation of children and youth. They described a situation in which the organization's members intervened and prevented an act of sexual abuse.

An adolescent daughter of a member of the WCC was encircled by a group of *Mastans* (miscreants) on the roadside. One WCC leader was informed of the situation and immediately called a courtyard meeting to brief the other members of the situation. The WCC members organized a silent procession and marched up to the place where the *Mastans* had encircled the girl. In the presence of the WCC, the *Mastans* were out-numbered and had to flee.

The *Uthan Baithaks* are also called to discuss issues of sexual violence against women and girls. This form of discussion held in the courtyard sometimes includes the presence of girls, who benefit from the opportunity to learn about such problems.

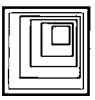
f. Building confidence of at-risk children

Some local-level practices also promote potential victims' self-confidence to face situations related to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The women leaders of local organizations are seen as role models by the local women, including young girls. The women leaders are respected by the young girls and have influence over them. As a result, when these leaders hear that a girl or a woman of the locality is facing a threat of violence including that of sexual abuse, they voluntarily offer their support and counselling.

> *Case#6: Confidence building through house visits*
> *Location: North Chadpai, Union Chadpai, Mongla*
>
> Two girls of Chadpai Union, Rashida and Anupa, once found themselves in an awkward situation, as targets of two young men, who expressed their love to the girls. The girls first ignored their advances and attended school, but the young men, with their gang, gradually increased their teasing. The families of the girls became afraid and they stopped their girls from attending school. The girls were even forbidden to go out of the boundary of the residence.
>
> The girls were depressed and traumatized. From a community source Anjali, one of the Women Coordination Committee (WCC) leaders, was informed of the situation. Anjali organized her group members and visited the two girls and counselled them. She also spoke with the parents of the girls.
>
> With the counselling and encouragement, the girls and their families became confident and they again sent their girls to school. The publicly displayed support of the WCC members also built social pressure against the youth group, which forced the young men to stay away from these two girls.

g. School for the children of sex workers in brothels

Two organizations of brothel-based sex workers, *Ulka* in Jatrabari, Dhaka and *Nari Mukti Shangha* in Tangail, run schools for the children of the sex workers in their respective



brothels. These organizations treat the children as their own and work towards ensuring their protection by expanding their life-options through education.

2. Protection

Some activities of the local level organizations help ensure that the rights of the sexually abused children to justice are secured. Examples of activities that protect the rights of child victims of sexual abuse include the following:

a. Salish[6] *(alternative method of dispute resolution)*

In general, *Salish* is organized with the consent of both the accused and the plaintiff. It occurs within the village and sometimes in the Union *Parishad* (the lowest tier of the locally elected body). Although only three parties are direct participants of the *Salish*—the accused, the plaintiff and the *Salishdar* (the arbiters)—indirectly, the whole community is linked with the *Salish.* The *Salishdar* takes testimony from both sides as well as the witnesses, before declaring the verdict.

> ***Case#9: Support of the local government***
> ***Location: Labsa Union, Satkhira Sadar Thana***
>
> Abdul Alim, the chairperson of *Labsa Union Parishad,* acted as a pro-child arbitrator in a village case involving a youth who attempted to touch a girl in public without her consent. The youth used to disturb the girl, aged 14, regularly. The incident took place while the girl was on her way to school.
>
> At the *Salish* the youth was found guilty. The father of the accused gave a *Muclecha* (a written guarantee) that the boy would not bother the girl any more. The process led to social humiliation of the offender and did not traumatize and stigmatize the girl.
>
> The local elected body, or Union *Parishad,* acted as the people's local-level organization with a dual authority. On the one hand it represented the will of the community; on the other, it represented the formal authority of local government.

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6 *Salish* is defined as informal arbitration for rural disputes.

b. Public demonstration

Local-level organizations utilize two predominant forms of public demonstration, namely, a procession/rally, or *Gherao* (sit-in/blockade). The experiences of the organizations in this study demonstrate that mass mobilization can be used for several reasons. First, in the case of a rape of an under-aged girl, it is used in order to ensure that the police investigation is fair and that the evidence of rape is properly maintained (with proper medical tests). Second, public demonstrations are used to ensure the safety of the child and the family concerned. Furthermore, demonstrations may at times be necessary in order to secure a fair trial and implementation of the verdict. Leadership and social networking play a vital role in organizing these protests.

Case#10: Mass mobilization for justice
Location: Godagari Thana, Rajshahi

A Santal girl of 16 years named Shanjamoni was raped by a Bengali. Being a member of an indigenous community, the father of the girl felt helpless in taking any steps against the perpetrator, the son of an influential family. The news of such brutality soon reached the members of the *Adivashi Parishad* community. *Adivashi Parishad* took this incident to the people. They mobilized people's sympathy for the girl, organizing 10 to 15 meetings in adjacent villages where indigenous people lived. They then held a public meeting in a school field where 250 to 300 people, both Santal and Bengali, gathered. They demanded that the perpetrator be arrested and a fair trial be held. After that meeting they sat in before the office of *Thana Nirbahi* (Chief Executive Officer of the Thana) and handed over their demands for a fair trial.

3. Social Reintegration

All the activities of the local level organizations that contribute to changing social attitudes that stigmatize victims of sexual abuse also contribute towards social reintegration of the survivors of sexual abuse. As discussed earlier in this case



study, the local organizations work towards raising awareness at informal discussion forums (such as *Adda*), organizational forums (such as monthly meetings), public mobilization and community discussions. The public demonstrations and other public activities, which mobilize support towards the child victims of sexual abuse, also help the process of reintegrating the child victims into their communities by enhancing social acceptance towards them.

C. EVALUATION

The activities of the local level organizations are particularly effective in terms of relevance and responsiveness, and sustainability.

1. Relevance/responsiveness

The local level organizations indicated that they are concerned with the following:

- Does the activity directly contribute to protecting children from the risks of sexual abuse?
- Does the activity rescue a child from exposure to sexual abuse?
- Does the activity increase children's access to community safety nets?
- Can the activity generate community support?
- Does the organization have the capacity and moral strength necessary to cope with opposition?

The local level organizations are both relevant and responsive to the community's demands as they undertake demand-driven activities. As the organization is born and raised within the community, it reflects the experiences and concerns of the community through its members.

From the case study two elements of local level initiatives that make them relevant and responsive have become clear: first, the local organizations respond to the needs of the children when

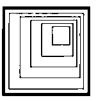
and as the need emerges out of the community context; and second, they are self-funded and self-organized initiatives of the respective communities. As a result, the community organizations need not be worried about cultural resistance from the community as an external organization might, even in dealing with a sensitive issue such as child sexual abuse. The experience of the sex workers association demonstrates that the local organizations hold a strong constituency among the community members, which enables them to both frame and implement community concerns.

The advantage of being part of a community is unique to the local organizations. Community members can directly access these organizations even for a "private" problem such as child sexual abuse, because they can reach the organizations informally and through a human network, which ensures trust. This approach has worked for the Santal community within *Adivashi Parishad,* an indigenous community that is isolated and receives almost no support from formal state institutions.

The relevance of the local organizations' activities stems from the efforts of local actors to utilize community members to achieve their goals. This is reflected in organizing *Uthan Baithak,* facilitating "elders' groups" and accessing information from informal sources, such as *Adda.*

Use of already existing networks, such as the *Uthan Baithak* give local organizations their capacity for quick mobilization, which is another unique feature leading to rapid responses to protect children from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The girls themselves can also participate in these types of meetings as they are held in the private space of their own homesteads. In this way the courtyard meeting serves as a space in which local organizations can respond immediately to community needs.

The local organizations can further contribute to the rescue of girls by playing the role of a watchdog. As local organizations are familiar with the local environment, they have insiders'



knowledge of the areas where the girls and women are at risk of being sexually abused. Moreover, as the members come from the locality, they can watch over the risk-prone areas without arousing any suspicion and without any protest from the neighbourhood.

2. Sustainability

One component of social sustainability is the peer connections in the local level organizations. Local initiatives are sustainable primarily because they have emerged out of the community context and have not been "planted" in it. The sustainability of the organization is also rooted in a variety of factors including: homogeneity of the members, voluntary commitment of the members towards societal transformation, self-financed management, consistent leadership, direct accountability of the leadership, community support and cultural harmony, and demand-driven agendas that reflect community concerns.

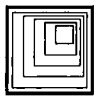
The regular organizational activities of the local organizations also contribute to changing community attitudes and thus providing a sustainable base for combating sexual abuse of children. For example, routine monthly and weekly meetings build organizational capacity and linkages among the local organizations by helping communities to move from denial towards action against the problems of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The public discussions on sexual violence against women work to break the taboo on public discussions on sexuality. This also helps the community members become psychologically prepared to deal with the issues of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation collectively. The awareness raising initiatives and mobilization activities contribute to changing the psychosocial construction of the communities, which in turn help to strengthen communities' self-initiatives to protect children from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

3. Conclusion

The primary strength of the local organizations is their closeness to the communities in which they work. The members come directly from the community, and these organizations have access to local networks and social spaces that external organizations cannot reach. It is this characteristic that gives the local organizations and their activities to combat child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation their high relevance and responsiveness, as well as social sustainability.

In Bangladesh, local level organizations thus play an important role in combatting sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, along with NGOs and government agencies. The activities of the local level organizations can be further strengthened through a supportive relationship with NGOs and government agencies, while maintaining the independence and informality of the local organizations that is valved by the community.



Annex

Brief Profile of the Organizations Highlighted in this Case Study

SL. No.	*Name of the Organization*	*Type of Organization*	*Area*
1.	Jatio Krisak Sammitee (National Peasant Association)	Organization of rural poor	Rajabari Hat, Godagari Thana, Rajshahi
2.	Adibashi Parishad (Indigenous Peoples Association)	Organization of indigenous people	Razabari Haat, Godagari Thana, Rajshahi
3.	Ulka Shamaj Kallayan Shangha (Ulka Social Welfare Association)	Social activist group of female sex workers	Mir Hazirbag, Jatrabari, Dhaka
4.	Nari Mukti Shangha (Association of Women's Freedom)	Social activist group of female sex workers	Kandapara, Tangail
5.	Ekota Sex Workers Association	Social activist group of female sex workers	Nager Bazar, Shatkhira
6.	Women Coordination Committee	Organization of rural women (Linked with NGO)	North Chatpi, Mongla, Bagerhat
7.	Pantata Bhumihin Samity (Pantata Landless Society)	Social activist group of rural (female) landless (Linked with NGO)	Mahupur, Tangail
8.	Gono Mukhi Shangha (Association for People's Emacipation)	A local youth club	Amtala, Katia, Shatkhira

A Multisectoral Approach to Case Management in the Philippines

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Area of work:	Coordination/cooperation

A. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. Organizational profile

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) was established in 1968. Although it has been restructured a number of times, its mission, which is to serve the disadvantaged sectors of society, has remained the same. After the devolution of social welfare services to local government units in 1993, the Department focused on policy and programme development. The Department covers 15 administrative regions, and has a total of 4,067 personnel. About 85 per cent of the managerial staff, and about 70 per cent of the total staff, are women. The Department has a Human Resource Development Office which provides in-house training.

2. Goals

The DSWD aims to eradicate poverty and to empower disadvantaged individuals, families and communities to improve their quality of life. The Department works with many other organizations, including local government units, various government agencies, people's organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other civil society groupings. The Department assists these organizations to implement projects and services for disadvantaged people.

3. Impact

The Department has a number of successful and prominent programmes. The Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services, for instance, is a grassroots development programme aimed at enabling targeted families and communities to meet their minimum basic needs. It reaches about 400,000 poor families. *Lingap Para sa Mahirap Program* provides support for protective services for children and youth. It has reached 59,047 poor families. The Self-Employment Assistance-*Kaunlaran* Integrated programme is a community-based microfinancing scheme which assists people's organizations to set up socialized credit schemes. Altogether, around 650 schemes have been set up with a total of almost 18,000 members. The Early Childhood Development project aims to improve existing health, nutrition and early education services for disadvantaged children aged 0-6 years. At the start of the pilot phase in 1999, 10 local government units signed the Sub-Project Assistance Agreement, and 60 trainers and 219 service providers attended an integrated Early Childhood Development course.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT MODEL

1. Model profile

The Department of Social Welfare and Development's work on the problem of commercial exploitation of children is based on its Framework of Action against the Commercial and Sexual Exploitation of Children 2000-2004. This framework is based



on the "Person in the Environment" theory, which lays out a systematic approach for assessing the social functioning problems experienced by clients. It looks at all the forces affecting the child in the community, including channels of access and partnership, and programme areas, policies, strategies and services.

The framework treats the sexual exploitation of children as a complex social problem that cuts across the level of the individual, the family, the community, and society. Factors that contribute to the commercial sexual exploitation of children include poverty, family disintegration, urbanization, neglect by civil authorities, and globalization. Comprehensive action is therefore required.

In operational terms, the model encompasses the following activities:

- *Environmental scanning.* Information is collected and analysed concerning the political, economic, social, cultural, technological and physical attributes of the community.

- *Strategic planning.* Stakeholders construct a strategy to bridge the assessed gap between the child's present situation and his or her desired future, and to eradicate commercial and sexual exploitation.

- *Programme design.* Programmes include prevention, protection, recovery and reintegration activities. Child participation in the design is encouraged. Advocacy and communication strategies are used, and services provided are holistic and integrated.

- *Structures for cooperation and monitoring.* Mechanisms are set up to encourage inter-agency cooperation and coordination, and to allow monitoring, evaluation, and resource mobilization.

- *Implementation structures.* Help is sought from institutions at all levels of society, such as the family, the *barangay* (the smallest local government unit), government agencies, NGOs, and the media.

2. Problem addressed

During the 1960s, the presence of American servicemen in the cities of Olongapo and Angeles led to the establishment of sex shops. During the 1970s, so-called sex tours became popular among some foreign tourists, particularly paedophiles. The main destinations were Pagsanjan, Boracay, and Puerto Galera. Then in the 1980s and 1990s, the sale and trafficking of young women became widespread, with some women ending up as sex slaves in Australia and Northern Europe. Today, with the advent of the Internet, a new form of commercial sexual exploitation of children, known as 'cybersex', has arisen.

The Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action states that commercial sexual exploitation of children is "sexual exploitation of children for profit or commercial purposes; is perpetuated by adults against children who are below 18 years old; and takes the form of child prostitution, child trafficking and child pornography". Victims are at risk of substance abuse, physical violence, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and early pregnancy, while the psychosocial trauma that they experience can be irreparable.

Estimates from the Department of Social Welfare and Development, ECPAT and others suggest that the commercial sexual exploitation of children is increasing. The number of Philippine children involved is thought to have been about 20,000 in 1986 and about 100,000 at present. Reasons for the high prevalence of commercial sexual exploitation of children include poverty, family breakdown, gender discrimination, consumerism, tourism, out-migration, lack of political will, and weak enforcement of laws.

3. Model objectives/activities

This section describes the various groups and individuals involved in the campaign against the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and the functions which they perform.



The *Reporting Party* is anyone who suspects that abuse has occurred and who files a complaint to the relevant agencies. The reporting parties can be government officials, doctors, nurses, or simply concerned individuals.

Social Workers are the professionals who act as case managers and therapists for the children. Social workers are based at the special institutions for victims of sexual abuse and in the three social laboratories in the National Capital Region, Cebu and Davao. They help the children access service providers such as policemen, doctors, lawyers, psychiatrists and counsellors. They also bring the child to prosecutors and present them before the judge during court hearings.

A *Quick Response Team* is an inter-agency and interdisciplinary team composed of a police officer, a prosecutor, a doctor, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, and a counsellor. It is coordinated by a social worker. Its role is to provide immediate assistance to child-victims. These teams work in the major urban centres.

The *Social Laboratories* are therapy centres in the National Capital Region, Cebu and Davao. Children are brought to the centres by social workers, who are trained to conduct therapy sessions. Most of the children come from institutions of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, where they are undergoing treatment and receiving developmental services.

The *Council for the Welfare of Children* is the main agency responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating programmes addressing the commercial and sexual exploitation of children. It follows the Framework of Action described earlier. This agency is attached to the DSWD for supervision, and is comprised of collaborating and implementing agencies that are mandated to address the needs and problems of child-victims. It serves as the key link among the agencies, whose representatives sit on the council.

The *Department of Social Welfare and Development* provides protective custody and temporary shelter to abused and exploited children. The Department assumes overall leadership in mobilizing governmental and non-governmental agencies in the campaign against the commercial and sexual exploitation of children.

The *Philippine National Police* is a national agency responsible for the enforcement of laws, and for rescue and surveillance operations. A number of police officers are trained in dealing with child victims of sexual abuse. They work with the DSWD and local government units.

The *National Bureau of Investigation* conducts raids on clandestine brothels, and cooperates with the DSWD during investigations.

Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children are responsible for surveillance and coordination at the grass roots level. They are made up of community leaders and volunteers. They look out for cases of commercial sexual exploitation and convey the victims to the relevant authorities.

The *Commission on Human Rights* monitors child rights violations and provides legal and financial assistance to victims and their families. The DSWD cooperates with the Commission in cases involving violations of children's human rights.

The *Department of Justice Task Force of Children's Protection* takes charge of the investigation and prosecution of cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children. It is a special unit of trained public prosecutors that works closely with the DSWD.

The *Department of Labor and Employment* is responsible for protecting children in the labour force. It supervises industries and business establishments and prevents them from employing minors.

Some *Local Government Units* such as in Cebu and Davao implement programmes for victims of child abuse. The DSWD trains social workers from the local government units in how to deal with abused children and how to work with partner agencies.

Non-governmental Organizations such as Save the Children and Child Hope Asia implement programmes to protect children from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSWD accredits these NGOs so that they can work effectively.



The *Media* also play an important role. The DSWD has cooperated for some time with the media organization ABS-CBN. ABS-CBN has created an office, known as the *Bantay Bata* 163, which is heavily involved in the implementation of programmes for victims of child sexual exploitation.

C. EVALUATION

1. Responsiveness/innovativeness

Children have a say in the planning of activities for prevention, protection, recovery and reintegration. Children participated in a national consultation and gave suggestions which were incorporated into the plans. The children themselves called for increased participation.

To ensure the continued relevance and progress of the treatment strategy, programme monitoring and evaluation are conducted regularly by social workers. Social welfare analysts from DSWD conduct programme audits, and there are also programme monitors from the Council for the Welfare of Children.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development receives substantial advice from technical experts. However, other parties also make substantial inputs. For instance, the Council for the Welfare of Children serves as the secretariat, collects field data, sets polices, formulates plans, develops interventions, and coordinates the activities of the participating agencies. The Local Council for the Protection of Children and the *Barangay* Council for the Protection of Children are also important partners, which help serve as channels through which actors from the family level up to the national level can communicate and collaborate.

2. Sustainability

Technical and financial resources are shared between the national and local level. The national government provides funding support for the operation of the institutions and centres

that attend to the needs of child-victims. Local government units are responsible for the delivery of community-based services and for monitoring and follow-up, although it may be noted that many have difficulty performing the tasks expected of them.

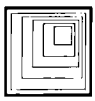
The commitment of the local government units is, nevertheless, demonstrated by the formation of the Local Councils for the Protection of Children. These councils introduce and enforce laws for the prevention of abuse and the protection of children, and they provide community-based services to the victims. Local leaders and volunteers of the *Barangay* Child Protection Councils have been trained to perform their mandated functions, as well as to handle cases of child victims. Both the local and the national institutions involved in the councils demonstrate a feeling of ownership.

The Human Resource and Development Office of the DSWD has a regular training programme for social workers and other people who are assigned to look after victims of commercial and sexual exploitation. Through these programmes, DSWD is able to develop the necessary human resources to sustain and expand its services. However, it is important to note that social workers can be harassed and intimidated if the perpetrator is influential. Protection for service providers handling cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children is still limited, as there is a lack of security arrangements for social workers who are advocates of the child-victim.

The DSWD also has a Bureau for Programme Development. The Bureau is responsible for the development of social welfare programmes and services. In coordination with the Council for the Welfare of Children, it mobilizes the technical and community support necessary to ensure that all programmes are sustainable.

3. Impact

Based on consultations with the stakeholders, the Council for the Welfare of Children reported the following difficulties in programme implementation.



- Indifference among families, communities and the public to the needs of the children;
- Lack of political will from influential people such as politicians, police, and judges;
- Weak enforcement of laws and slow disposition of cases;
- Inadequate programme interventions;
- Insufficient child participation;
- Inadequate money, facilities, and manpower;
- Lack of protection for service providers handling commercial sexual exploitation of children cases;
- Inadequate professional preparation among service providers;
- Insufficient coordination between and among agencies;
- No effective system for monitoring and evaluation; and
- Inadequate data on the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Over the coming years the programme will have to respond to these criticisms and to address other problems such as HIV/AIDS and gender discrimination. However, it must be recognized that progress has been made towards enhancing the quality of life of many sexually exploited children.

As of 1999, a total of 11,845 victims of child abuse and exploitation had been assessed and treated in DSWD centres and in communities. The Quick Reaction Teams described above have entered into an agreement with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, *Katarungan Para sa Kababaihan at Kabataan* ("Justice for Women and Children"), Child Justice League among others for the provision of legal services. In 1999, about 4,128 child abuse victims benefited from the services.

A social worker from the Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse stated that the number of children referred to the centre for therapy has been increasing. NGOs working with the Center have increased their advocacy and treatment work, and Personal Safety Courses, in Pampanga, Cebu, Pagadian, Samar and Aklan.

A girl known as Daisy from one of the social laboratories describes her experiences there:

> The social workers conducted a series of therapy sessions. The activities included in-depth and probing interviews, counselling to cope with problems, story telling, debriefing, and spiritual guidance. I was asked to draw a heart, a house and people inside. I was also asked to express my feelings through play and vent my anger on the punching bag and the anatomical dolls and other toys inside the laboratory. I was happy to relate that all these created a very positive effect.

The DSWD and its collaborating agencies also achieved an important success when they prosecuted and jailed a powerful congressman who raped a minor. Recently, a legal case has been filed against a School District Supervisor in Palawan for sexually abusing school children. These cases represent the accelerated rate of filing legal cases against perpetrators. According to ABS-CBN *Bantay Bata* 163, a total of 143 cases have been filed in court between February 1997 and June 2001 in the cities of Manila, Iloilo, and Davao. While the majority of these cases are still pending in court, 15 perpetrators have been convicted. Children have become less reluctant to report their abuse because they have seen that the government supports them.

There have, in addition, been amendments to legislation related to commercial sexual exploitation of children. An Undersecretary in the DSWD chairs a committee on legislative matters.

5. Conclusion

The Department of Social Welfare and Development has succeeded in bring together many different sectors and institutions to address the problem of commercial and sexual exploitation of children, and to provide for the children's basic developmental needs. The Department's experiences have shown that the following factors are required for successful implementation: strong political will, a responsive network, critical media, leadership by committed professional social workers, and an effective management and support system.



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7. Ms. Amor Buisas, Social Worker, Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse (CPTSCA). 150 Scout Fuentebella, Diliman, Quezon City.
8. Ms. May Calderon, Supervising Social Worker, Bantay Bata 163, ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc., Mother Ignacia Avenue corner Scout Albano Street, Quezon City.

9. Ms. Connie Salcedo, Program Officer, Council for the Welfare of Children.

10. Mr. Lepoldo M. Moselina, Chief, Child Protection Section, UNICEF Manila.

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A National Coordination Mechanism: The National Child Protection Authority of Sri Lanka

Country:	Sri Lanka
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Area of work:	Prevention, protection, recovery, rehabilitation participation, cooperation/ coordination
[1]Contact details:	
Country:	Sri Lanka
Name of organization:	P.E.A.C.E. (Protecting Environment And Children Everywhere)
Address:	166, Thimbirigasyaya Road, Colombo 5, Sri Lanka
Telephone/ Fax No.:	+ 94-1-596855
E-mail:	peace@diamond.lanka.net
Website:	www.lanka.net/charity/peace/

[1] This case study was prepared by P.E.A.C.E. (Protecting Environment And Children Everywhere). P.E.A.C.E. is a campaign launched in 1989 in Sri Lanka against the commercial sexual exploitation of children by both local and foreign peadophiles. Its goals are to raise awareness among communities and to influence national policy.

A. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. Historical development of the NCPA

Sri Lanka has always attracted tourists from various parts of the world. During the 1970's hotels and guesthouses proliferated, especially in the coastal areas, to accommodate the growing number of visitors. At that time, the growth rate of tourism was the highest in Asia with an annual growth of 27 per cent.

By 1991, UNICEF figures indicated that child prostitution (especially of boys) had assumed serious proportions in Sri Lanka, with estimates of up to 30,000 children involved between the ages of 7 and 18 years.

Recognizing the physical and psychosocial hazards to innocent child victims, P.E.A.C.E. and other concerned activists, including UNICEF, ESCAPE and Sarvodaya, began lobbying in 1991 for amendments to existing national laws in the country to better protect children. However, their first few years of advocacy did not lead to significant government action against the commercial sexual exploitation of children, due to concern over the potential negative impact on tourism and foreign investment.

It was not until 1994 that the political scene began to respond to the issue. In April of that year, the Chief Minister of the Western Provincial Council, Hon. Mrs. Chandrika Kumaratunga, the present President of Sri Lanka, took up the issue of child commercial sexual exploitation by foreigners and conducted a meeting on the matter with NGOs and relevant government officials, including the Western Provincial Minister of Tourism and Social Welfare. This was the first political intervention against commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and child abuse in Sri Lanka.

Subsequent to the meeting, P.E.A.C.E. was requested by the Chief Minister to organize seminars sponsored by the Western Provincial Council to raise awareness on CSEC. Two seminars were held in Kalutara, a vulnerable area for CSEC. Research on all forms of child abuse, including sexual abuse and CSEC,



by professionals also emerged at this stage, including one led by Professor Harendra de Silva, a paediatrician with relevant research experience, and current Chairman of the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA).

The next step was legal reform in the area of child protection. In October 1995, the Act of Amendments to a more than century-old Penal Code was brought to the Parliament and unanimously passed. Among the amendments were mandatory sentences and stronger punitive measures against such crimes as sexual assault and incest.

In 1996, Sri Lanka was invited to participate in the first World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm. A delegation comprised of government officials and NGO representatives was led by the Minister of Religious and Cultural Affairs and the Minister of Buddha Sasana. One particular local newspaper article on the Congress caught the eye of the President, who decided to take further action to protect children.

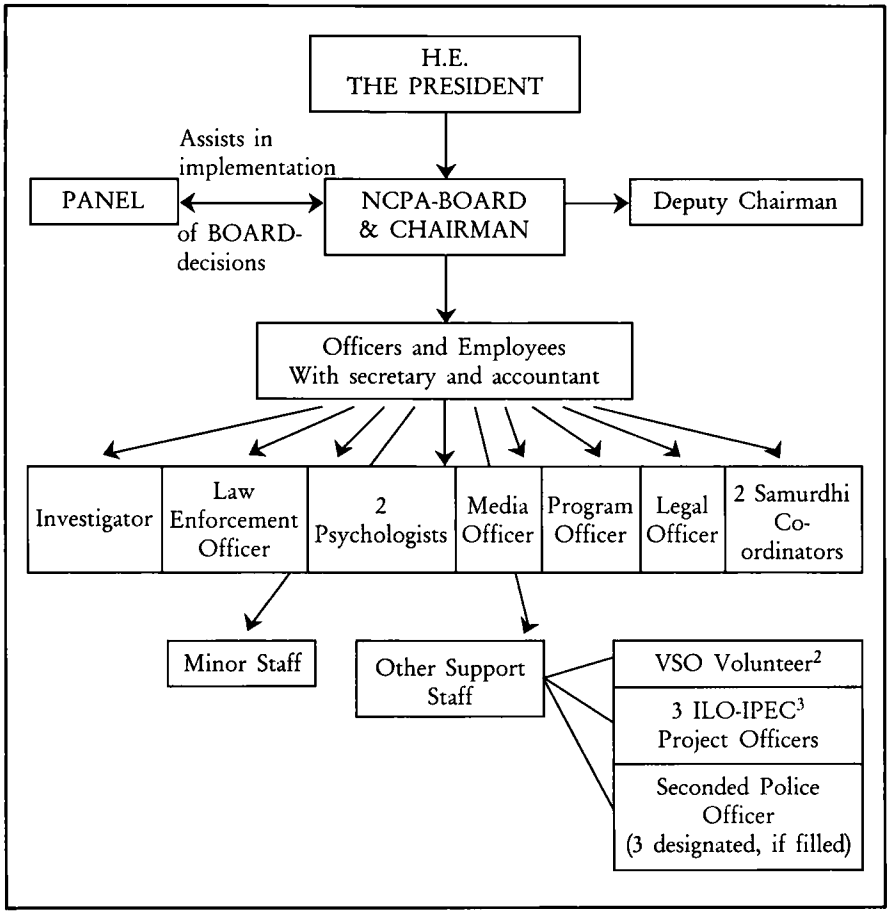
In February 1997, the President of Sri Lanka chaired a meeting with government agencies, United Nations agencies and NGOs to discuss the type of actions necessary to end all forms of child abuse, including CSEC. Suggestions included proposing stricter laws than in the 1995 Amendments, improved law enforcement, and the establishment of a statutory body with powers to ensure the protection of children. The need for a central authority to protect children from all forms of abuse was strongly agreed on by child activists, mainly to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A Task Force was appointed by the President to look into the best interests of children and make official recommendations.

The Task Force was headed by Professor de Silva and included representatives from the Attorney General's Department, the Legal Draftsman's Department, the Ministry of Justice and several other ministries relating to children's affairs, attorneys-at-law, medical doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists and psychological counsellors, the Deputy Inspector General Crimes, the

Director of Police Child Protection Bureau, the Deputy Solicitor General, UNICEF and representatives from two NGOs (P.E.A.C.E. and Sarvodaya), and UNICEF.

On the recommendation of the Task Force, a special bill to form the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) was presented in Parliament (Act No. 50 of 1998), and the NCPA was established in early 1999.

2. Structure and size of the NCPA



[2] Voluntary Service Overseas

[3] International Labour Organization, International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour



The NCPA Board is directly under the purview of the President of Sri Lanka. The Chairman of the Board is Professor de Silva, who also chaired the Presidential Task Force on Child Protection. The members of the multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral NCPA Board include the adviser of the President on Social Infrastructure, teaching staff of the University of Colombo, the Deputy Inspector General of Crimes, the Senior Superintendent of Police, the Additional Solicitor General, a lawyer, a psychiatrist, national child-focused NGOs (P.E.A.C.E., ESCAPE, and Sarvodaya), UNICEF, the Secretary or Additional Secretary of the Ministries of Education & Higher Education, Social Services, Labour, Justice, Defence, Health, Women's Affairs, the Department of Probation and Child Care, the Deputy Legal Draftman and the Commissioner General of Labour. The gender balance is around 40 per cent women and 60 per cent men (variable according to Cabinet reshuffling).

The panel that assists in implementing the decisions of NCPA consists of senior administrative officers from the Ministries of Social Services, Labour, Justice, Defence, Health, Women's Affairs, Tourism and Media, and the Department of Probation and Child Care.

Approximately 90 per cent of NCPA's total budget has been donated by embassies based in Sri Lanka and other international agencies and organizations. The allocation from the National Budget for the year 2000 was Rp. 10 million (approximately US$108,000 at November 2001 exchange rate), and Rp. 5 million for 2001 (approximately US$54,000). NCPA generates additional funds through selling New Year's and Christmas cards with evocative messages on child abuse, and compact discs with songs on various child abuse themes.

The goal of NCPA is the elimination of all forms of child abuse including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The mandate includes a broad range of authority, objectives and functions. These include advising the government on national policies and measures regarding the prevention and treatment of child abuse as well as the protection of children; creating awareness on the right of the child to be protected from abuse;

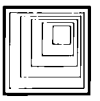
consulting and coordinating with relevant ministries, local authorities, and public and private sector organizations on measures for the prevention of child abuse and the protection of victims; recommending legal, administrative and other reforms for the effective implementation of national policy; monitoring implementation of the law and the progress of all investigations and criminal proceedings in child abuse cases; recommending measures in relation to protection, rehabilitation and reintegration into society of children affected by armed conflict; taking appropriate steps for the safety and protection of children in conflict with the law (juvenile justice); receiving complaints from the public relating to child abuse; advising and assisting local bodies and NGOs to coordinate campaigns against child abuse; coordinating, promoting and conducting research on child abuse; coordinating and assisting the tourist industry in preventing child abuse; preparing and maintaining a national database on child abuse; monitoring organizations that provide care for children; and serving as liaison to and exchanging information with foreign governments and international organizations.

Strategies adopted to achieve the targets of NCPA fall into four broad, overlapping areas:

1. Awareness creation aimed at the general public, children and relevant professionals;
2. Skills development for professionals who deal with child abuse;
3. Protection and rehabilitation of child victims, including street children, juvenile justice, and children affected by war; and
4. Legal reforms and monitoring of law enforcement.

In addition, NCPA serves a coordinating function and conducts research on sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children.

NCPA covers all of Sri Lanka in targeting children who are at-risk, including street children, children in areas affected by civil war, children in rehabilitation centers, and those engaged in hazardous forms of labour including commercial sex work.



B. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODEL

It is difficult to gauge the true extent of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation in Sri Lanka. The need for intervention to prevent CSEC was first prompted by the identification of the problem of paedophile tourism in Sri Lanka, which largely targeted boys. At the same time, children are also victimized by local abusers.

NCPA's activities are ethically sound. All members of NCPA, officers and employees are requested to sign a declaration of secrecy, thus pledging confidentiality on all matters connected with NCPA. NCPA does not release any information pertaining to cases and court proceedings to the media as a policy; it maintains good media relations by offering interviews and press releases regarding its programmes as a means of advocacy and awareness raising.

NCPA's head office monitors activities carried out in each district through its district committees. NCPA prepares quarterly reports on each programme and general annual reports, which are reviewed by the Board.

1. Awareness raising

NCPA's major achievements are in the areas of: 1) awareness creation among the general public, children and their caretakers; 2) skills development of professionals, and 3) legal reforms. These activities lead to better prevention and protection, as well as improved treatment and rehabilitation of child victims. The groups that are targeted under the awareness campaign are: 1) children, who are encouraged to say "no" to elder persons that try to abuse them; and 2) parents, who are made aware that abusers could be family members and persons in regular contact with children, such as school principals, teachers, hostel masters and matrons, prefects, coaches, and priests.

NCPA has launched poster campaigns on such themes as different forms of child abuse, the rights of the child, bullying and its adverse effects, and unwanted physical contact ("Say no"). Over 20,000 posters on each theme were printed in the country's three languages (Sinhala, Tamil and English). Some of the posters were issued to schools through the distribution system of the Department of Education, making use of existing infrastructure, which increased dissemination of the messages to the target group. NCPA regularly receives telephone calls and letters from schools and the general public asking for the posters.

NCPA produces various types of information materials for education and awareness raising purposes. For example, a handbook on child abuse for medical officers written by the Chairman was published and distributed among doctors and medical students. The objective of the project was to alert doctors to the physical and situational indicators of child abuse. A booklet on "Corporal Punishment and Children", aimed at teachers, was published in all three languages and circulated through the distribution system of the Department of Education.

Efforts have also been extended to the audio-visual realm. An album containing 18 songs on various aspects of child abuse has been produced on compact disc and cassette, targeting the different socio-economic and cultural hierarchies in the country. Leading artists were invited to contribute to the project, and all provided their services free of charge. All proceeds from the album sales are donated to the NCPA fund. A video has also been produced, and other songs are being produced in VCD format.

Furthermore, several media programmes, interviews, and discussions have been launched on television and radio channels, Newspaper articles have also been published with the participation of the Chairman and other members of the NCPA Board and staff.



NCPA encourages children to engage in awareness raising activities. Child participation has been encouraged through the activities of School Child Protection Committees. These committees have been established in seven schools in the district of Colombo at the pilot project stage, and involve children, parents and teachers. An example of an activity that was implemented through the School Child Protection Committee was the celebration, in 2000, of the universal Children's Day as the National Children Festival. Children from different socio-economic, cultural and situational backgrounds took part in these festivities. The theme was "Towards a human society through children's participation."

2. Skills development of professionals

A variety of skills development programmes have been carried out for High Court Judges, Magistrates, State Counsels from the official bar, NCPA attorneys, psychologists and psychiatrists. In 2000, two workshops were conducted for medical professionals including judicial medical officers, paediatricians, house officers and general practitioners on identifying and reporting evidence from abused/traumatized children. Two workshops were held for senior police officers on conducting surveillance and investigation of suspected paedophile activity and child abuse. Moreover, NCPA has set up with the support of Save the Children Fund, Norway, a special unit called the "Cyberwatch Unit" to track Internet-related sex crimes involving Sri Lankan children. NCPA staff and police officers working at the Children and Women's Desk were trained on video recording procedures and interview skills at NCPA's Video Evidence Recording Unit.

Through mobilising health care officials at the request of NCPA, a chapter on child abuse was developed by the Department of Health for inclusion in the "Manual for Health Workers."

3. Legal reforms[4]

In 1998, amendments were introduced to the principal enactments of the Judicature Act No. 2 of 1978, the Code of Criminal Procedure Act No. 15 of 1979 and the Penal Code of 1889 at the recommendation of the Presidential Task Force on Child Protection. These ammendments included recognition of new offences, imposing minimum mandatory sentences, and the increase of sentences in relation to child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The amendment to the Judicature Act dispensed with the former requirement of a non-summary (preliminary) inquiry in the case of statutory rape (i.e. when the victim is under 16 years of age and consent to sexual intercourse is irrelevant). Non-summary inquiry was a pre-requisite conducted by the Magistrate Court before an indictment was filled in the High Court, and often prolonged the inquiry.

The code of Criminal Procedure Act No. 15 of 1979 allowed police to detain persons arrested without a warrant for only 24 hours. The amendments to this Act extended the period of detention up to three days for those persons arrested without a warrant for child abuse. This amendment offers priority to cases of child abuse and also prescribes that child victims be referred to institutes of child care and protection while the trial is pending.

The amendment to the Penal Code prohibits the use of children (persons urder the age of 18 years) for the purposes of begging, sexual intercourse and the trafficking of narcotics and drugs. It also imposes a legal obligation on those who develop films and photographs to inform the police of indecent or obscene material in relation to children.

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[4] While this case study does not discuss in detail NCPA activities in the area of protection, one significant achievement has been the establishment of a sex crime surveillance unit, with the assistance of the International Labour Organisation, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC).



As a step to formulate more child-sensitive court procedures, the NCPA has appointed a legal subcommittee to assess the feasibility of introducing an inquisitorial judicial system to child abuse cases. Areas for legal reforms thus include:

1. Expediting the conclusion of trial;

2. Increasing the penalties;

3. Making court procedures more child-sensitive; and

4. Encouraging the reporting of child abuse cases.

Furthermore, amendments to the Evidence Ordinance now permit the use of video recorded evidence of the preliminary interview of a child witness which minimizes the psychological trauma a child victim might endure in a court of law. Also included are provisions to eliminate the requirement for child witnesses to take an oath, as well as to allow the age indicated in a doctor's certificate to be considered *prima facie.*

According to the powers vested in the NCPA by section 33 of the NCPA Act, it is in a position to carry out its own investigations on child abuse cases through authorized officers without a search warrant. The Authority has thus far successfully carried out seven such investigations.

NCPA has developed a network of development officers of *Samurdhi,* a poverty alleviation programme at the community level launched by the Government of Sri Lanka. These development officers have been assigned to work in the prevention of child abuse, utilizing existing infrastructures to reach grassroots levels.

The establishment of child protection committees at the district level is another approach to reach target groups all over the country. These committees consist of a multidisciplinary group of individuals and carry out activities in many areas.

C. EVALUATION

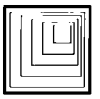
1. Innovativeners

The problem of CSEC has been growing rapidly since the 1980's, especially in the Western Province. At that time, NGOs and other concerned activists began to lobby for the strengthening of laws relating to child sexual abuse. Such lobbying caught the attention of the Chief Minister of the Western Province, who initiated the first-ever political intervention, despite the hesitation and disinterest of previous governments. The Chief Minister was thus influenced and motivated by the campaigning of NGOs, including P.E.A.C.E. She took up the issue of child prostitution in her political agenda and received unanimous support from all political parties, irrespective of their political ideologies. When the Chief Minister was elected President of Sri Lanka, amendments to the Penal Code were brought into the Parliament and unanimously passed. Furthermore, the President established a Task Force to protect children, leading to the creation of the NCPA.

The NCPA structure is innovative and consists of a multidisciplinary team of professionals, community members, and representatives from NGOs. The Authority has the advantage of being directly under the purview of the President, which ensures a high level of political support. This facilitates cooperation amongst different governmental sectors, which is a prerequisite to the success of programmes of this nature. Without this strong political support and cooperation among the various professionals in the Board, the sustainability of the organization would be endangered. The task of the Panel, which is to assist in the implementation of the Board's decisions, is of vital importance, as its linkage with the *Samurdhi* Campaign and district level Child Protection Committees allow access to communities.

2. Efficiency/effectiveness

The inclusion of a lawyer, medical doctor, psychologist, law enforcement officer and social worker in the NCPA Head Office staff facilitate all NCPA's areas of activities, the use of existing infrastructure, such as the *Samurdhi* movement and the distribution system of the Department of Education not only



increases efficiency, but also ensures a wider dissemination of messages on child abuse to relevant groups. This use of existing infrastructure in the process of awareness raising also ensures that the messages reach target groups all over the country. The impact of the awareness raising is being perceived; from 1994 to 2001, according to the NCPA Chairman, there has been a tenfold increase of reporting of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation to the Attorney General's Department.

3. Relevance

The public's response to the poster campaigns has been positive, as indicated by the number of telephone calls and letters received by the Authority requesting more posters for display. The impact of the skills development of professionals is also evident. Doctors who have not received the handbook "Child Abuse: a Manual for Doctors" have been requesting their own copies. This is a valuable desk reference for medical officers who work with children. It sensitises the doctors on the issue and provides valuable information on how to detect cases of child abuse.

According to the police officer in charge of the Women's and Children's Desk in Colombo, those employees who received training are more sensitive to the problem of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, and can empathize more with child victims. Recent studies have revealed that there is a sharp rise in reports and prosecutions of child abuse in the southern province.

4. Impact

The impact of the legal reforms and the skills development of law enforcement officers is also apparent through the outcomes of several recent cases. A male schoolteacher, who sexually abused several boys in the South, received a sentence of 34 years imprisonment. The husband of a warden in charge of an orphanage was punished severely for raping a young girl. His sentence was for 14 years imprisonment. Just a few years ago, sentences for such offences were comparatively mild and were sometimes even suspended.

Legal reforms, which are a semi-permanent measure, also ensure the sustainability of the impact of NCPA's work. Amendments to the Judicature Act have shortened court proceedings due to the fact that preliminary investigations are eliminated in cases of statutory rape. Amendments to the Evidence Ordinance, which permit the introduction of video evidence, and other proposed amendments to juvenile justice laws approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, will make court proceedings much more child-sensitive.

5. Conclusion

NCPA is a governmental organization with a mission to ameliorate all forms of child abuse. Its mandate includes a broad range of authority, objectives and duties on formulating a national policy for the prevention of child abuse, the protection and treatment of child victims, and for the coordination and monitoring of action against all forms of child abuse. Its strategies in combating CSEC seem promising, as its achievements after two years of implementation have been substantial. The impact of legal reforms recommended by the NCPA to protect children against various form of child abuse, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, has been remarkable.

Sri Lanka's model is especially suitable for replication in developing countries. Important pre-requisites are high levels of political commitment and strong leadership. The multidisciplinary approach and inter-sectoral cooperation are fundamental to successful prevention and treatment of CSEC, as the involvement of different governmental departments in the process can be hindered by lengthy bureaucratic procedures.

The combination of NCPA's programmes with other related projects and public awareness raising on the psychosocial hazards of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse has made a combined impact among the general population. This would not have been possible without the voice and concerted efforts of the Sri Lankan community, NGOs and other activists which opened doors and led to the establishment of the NCPA.

Focus on the Victim's Rights and Dignity: New Approaches to Legislative Development in Thailand

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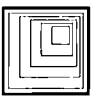
A. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

The increasing intensity of problems related to Thailand's domestic prostitution and cross-border trafficking led to the realization among the Thai Government, government authorities and concerned NGOs that immediate collective action was crucial to ameliorating the situation. Eradicating exploitative commercial sex and trafficking in children and women had become virtually impossible for any one agency to undertake by itself, and the solidification of political commitment to tackle the issue at the highest level was widely viewed as imperative.

This environment of growing concern led to an addition to the National Policy and Plan for Action in 1996 - termed the Prevention and Eradication of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. Formulated through the work of the two National Committees of the Office of the National Commission on Women's Affairs (ONCWA), it signified a high-level political initiative that had the backing of both Thai civil society and international bodies. The committees themselves (the National Committee on Measures for Trafficking in Women and Children, and the National Committee on Family Development and Combating Against Violence) comprised multisectoral members that included planners, academics, NGOs, activists, representatives from the National Police Bureau (NPB), the Department of Public Welfare (DPW), the Immigration Bureau and representatives of international NGOs and United Nations agencies.

The ONCWA, established by Order of the Prime Minister's Office in 1983, thus became the leading force in the country's initiatives in combating commercial sexual exploitation. As a national coordination agency, the main objective of the ONCWA is to promote and facilitate the work of implementing agencies in line with ministries and NGOs on women-related issues. Its objectives include the advancement of women through the submission of policies and master plans for the promotion of women's activities, roles and status to the Council of Ministers, and the recommendation to the Prime Minister of needs for new legislation or revisions/amendments to existing legislation.

Recently, however, there was an agreement among the concerned agencies that the problem of commercial sexual exploitation in Thailand mostly involved victims who were under age 25; as such, it was recommended that the responsibility for national coordination should shift to the National Youth Bureau (NYB), the highest government agency responsible for youth affairs. The NYB - which formulates programmes for youth, organizes training and research, and serves as a focal point for the coordination, dissemination and publicity of all youth activities - took over this mandate in June, 1999.



B. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT MODEL

1. Model profile

National Policy and Plan for Action of the Prevention and Eradication of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

In 1996, the 1990-2000 National Policy and Plan for Action was revised by the ONCWA to better reflect the mounting problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children. The Plan was altered to include strategies for the prevention and suppression of commercial sexual exploitation, as well as means for the assistance, protection, recovery, and reintegration for child victims. The revised Plan also delineated a working mechanism for coordinating these various activities.

One of the most significant aspects of the amendment to the Plan - known as the National Policy and Plan for Action of the Prevention and Eradication of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children - was its role as a springboard for further action at the national level. The two National Committees of ONCWA immediately demonstrated the solid commitment behind the new Plan by spearheading initiatives to revise, amend and formulate five key laws, which are considered amongst the most advanced in Asia. Moreover, the Plan can also be attributed to the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding, which signified a more intense effort to prevent cross-border trafficking and to better assist trafficking victims. The personal efforts of Dr. Saisuree Chutikul, the Chairperson of the two Committees and a noted educator, were particularly vital to the atmosphere of cooperation that ensued between GOs, NGOs and several international organizations.

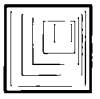
2. Problem addressed

The original impetus behind commercial sexual exploitation in Thailand took place during the Viet Nam War in the 1960s, when the massive presence of American soldiers prompted the recruitment of women as sex workers. After the war ended,

the commercial sex industry was sustained by the Thai Government's intense promotion of the country as a tourist destination, as well as the burgeoning of the Thai *nouveau riche* and new middle class, which provided another source of growing demand. This demand was not solely confined to adult women - young girls and boys also were lured or forced into Thailand's commercial sex industry. By the mid-1980s, this particular aspect of commercial exploitation - in essence, the commodification of children - began to receive extensive media coverage.

In response to the growing problem, several key individuals and NGOs began to take decisive action in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In particular, the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT), the Foundation for Women, the Friends of Women Foundation, the Center for Protection of Children's Rights, and the Foundation for the Better Life of Children, were instrumental in increasing public awareness and bringing the issue to the attention of the Thai Government. In addition, this climate of mounting advocacy gave rise to two new prominent NGOs, End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) in 1991 and the Coalition to Fight Against Child Exploitation (FACE) in 1995. Both specifically focused on the rights of child victims and the development of relevant law enforcement procedures and mechanisms within Thailand.

On a broader level, Thai society has undergone many basic changes in regard to human rights and human dignity due to popular demands for political reform since the 1970s. The zenith was the promulgation of the first people's constitution in October 1997, which accorded additional protection for children and women, and the financial crisis of that same year, which impelled many of the newly impoverished to enter the commercial sex industry for income. This "step forward", occurring simultaneously with wide scale economic and social setbacks, underlined the exigency of dealing with the issue of commercial sexual exploitation.



3. Model objectives/activities

Legislative changes

The five key laws aforementioned are noteworthy due to their emphasis on the decriminalization of victims of commercial sexual exploitation, as well as the resulting training of police officers and social workers to ensure legal enforcement. The laws, which include four amendments and one new piece of legislation, are the result of twelve years of hard work and persistence on the part of Thai activists, NGOs, academics, and government officials to convince the national parliament that legal reform is indispensable to confronting the problem.

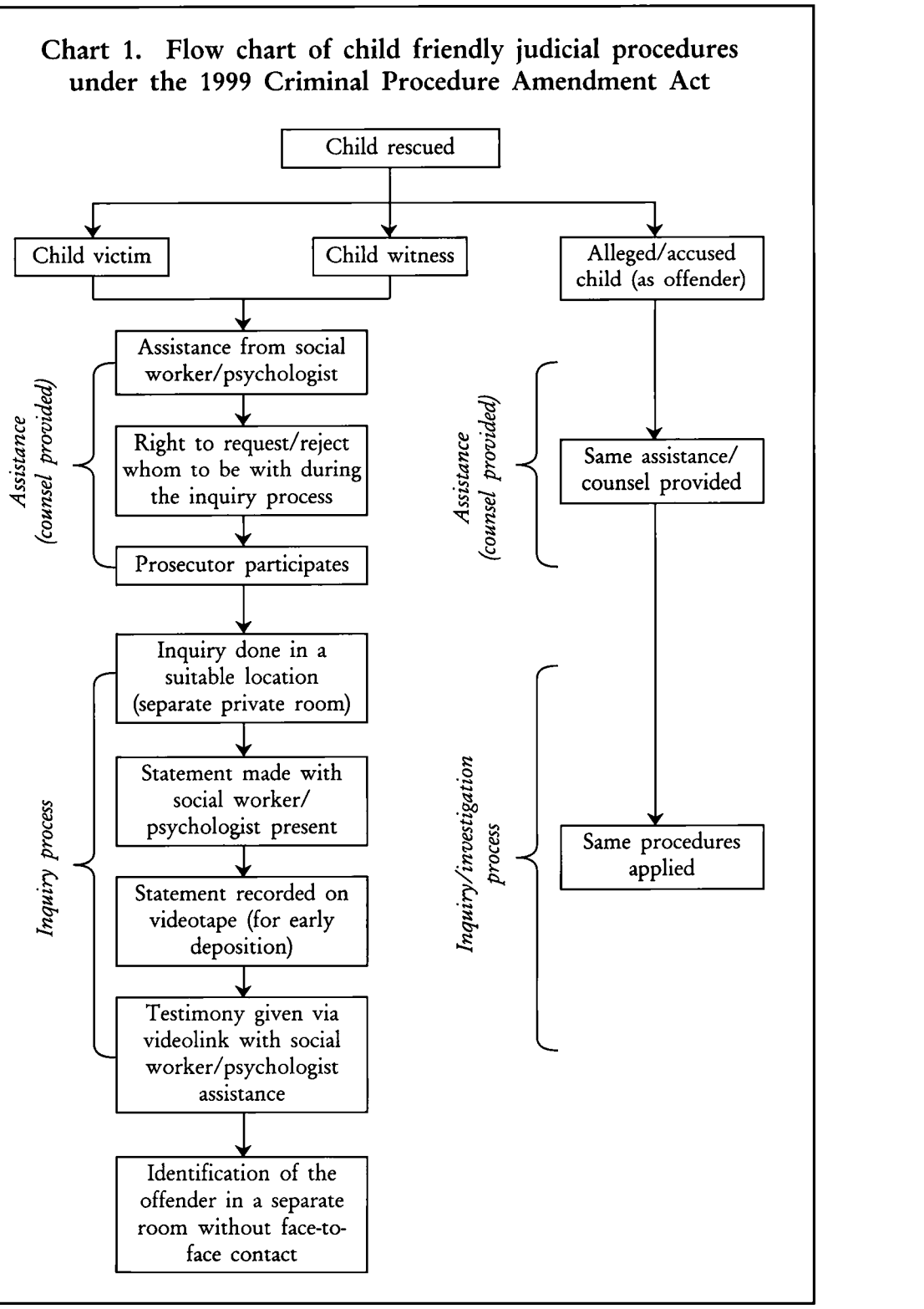
In 1996, the national parliament passed the Prostitution Prevention and Suppression Act, replacing the Prostitution Suppression Act of 1960. This new Act, the product of collaborative efforts between governmental and non-governmental organizations, eradicated the former Act's focus on criminalizing prostitutes. Previously, prostitutes could be imprisoned for two years, while brothel owners faced only one year, and procurers only three months. The 1996 law reduced the penalties prostitutes face, while procurers, traffickers, pimps and brothel owners can, however, be more severely punished through fines and imprisonment. Further, if the offence causes injury or death, the penalty can be a life sentence or even the death penalty. In addition, parents or guardians who collude with procurers or traffickers in forcing children into prostitution can be punished through fines and imprisonment, and can have their guardianship revoked. The 1996 Act also establishes a Committee for Protection and Vocational Development to assist victims, and creates provisions for NGOs to set up their own shelters and vocational development programmes.

In November 1997, the parliament passed the Measures in Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Children Act, a revised version of the 1928 Trafficking in Women and Girls. The new Act extends coverage to boys and girls under 18 years of age and increases penalties for traffickers. The Act instructs law enforcement agencies to take legal action against perpetrators, and stipulates that people who aid exploiters should receive equal punishment. Officials are given the right to search various public places, such as airports and

sea ports, in order to prevent sexual exploitation and assist victims, and are also conferred increased authority to detain victims for questioning within prescribed time limits. Also, courts are empowered to take depositions from victims immediately following rescue, even if the people who committed the crimes have yet to be identified. Victims of commercial sexual exploitation may be provided with services such as temporary shelter and vocational training, and can also be assisted in returning to their homes, whether in Thailand or elsewhere.

The third piece of legislation that falls under the Thai model is the Penal Code Amendment Act (No. 14). This Act, passed in 1997, redefines sexual offences to include the procurement or trafficking of boys or girls for the purposes of sexual gratification. All children under 18 are protected under the law, regardless of whether they had given consent or not, with offenders facing fines and imprisonment. The Act gives Thailand the authority to prosecute anyone who procures or traffics any adult or child, no matter where the offence is committed and regardless of the victim's nationality. This provides Thailand with extraterritorial jurisdiction over cases of rape and other forms of sexual abuse.

A fourth and very significant legislative change is the 1999 Criminal Procedure Amendment Act. Efforts in the formation of this Act involved concerned NGOs, judges, attorneys, police and National Commission for Women's Affairs staff, backed by the support of UNICEF Thailand. Earlier versions of this Act had led to unnecessary trauma for victims of child abuse, who were coerced into describing the circumstances of abuse to several different authorities during the investigation and trial. Further, victims had to face their abusers in the courtroom and submit to cross-examination, and during the delay prior to the Act trial, the children were often bribed or threatened to manipulate them into changing their testimony. The procedures under the new law (see Chart 1) allows children to give videotaped statements, to avoid repeated questioning, and to provide evidence to the court via video link with the assistance of a social worker or psychologist. The prosecutor or the victim may also request that the victim or a witness present an early deposition if the offender has not yet been identified, or if


Chart 1. Flow chart of child friendly judicial procedures under the 1999 Criminal Procedure Amendment Act
Child rescued
Child victim
Child witness
Alleged/accused child (as offender)
Assistance from social worker/psychologist
Right to request/reject whom to be with during the inquiry process
Prosecutor participates
Assistance (counsel provided)
Same assistance/ counsel provided
Assistance (counsel provided)
Inquiry done in a suitable location (separate private room)
Statement made with social worker/ psychologist present
Statement recorded on videotape (for early deposition)
Testimony given via videolink with social worker/psychologist assistance
Identification of the offender in a separate room without face-to-face contact
Inquiry process
Same procedures applied
Inquiry/investigation process

it would be difficult for the victim or witness to attend the trial. Following passage of the amendment, several months were required to establish the infrastructure, such as videotaping equipment, and to implement and test the procedures. The amendments came into force throughout the country in September 2000.

The final law relevant to the Thai model is the 1999 Money Laundering Control Act. In many countries, the main target of money laundering laws is drug trafficking; in Thailand, however, the law also aims to prevent prostitution and the trafficking of women and children. Section 3 of the Act details many offences relating to the commercial sex industry, including the operation of brothels, the procurement, seduction, or trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation, and offences under the Measures in Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Children Act.

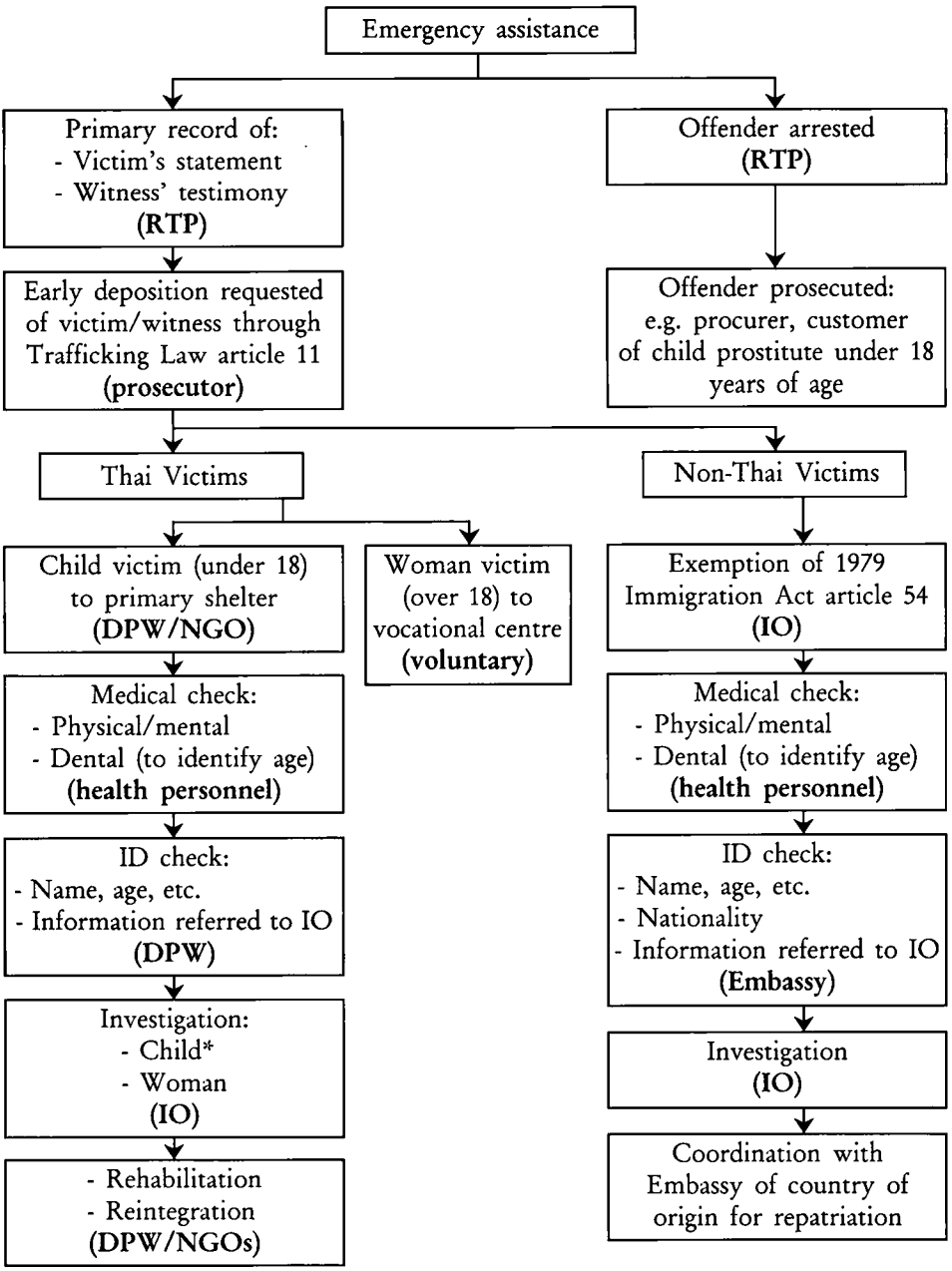
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

In 1999, the Office of the National Commission for Women's Affairs completed a Memorandum of Understanding on Procedures for Women and Children as Victims of Trafficking. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the permanent secretary of the Prime Minister's Office, the director general of the Royal Thai Police, the director general of the Public Welfare Department, the chairperson of the Thai Coordinating Committee on Foreign Children, and a representative of the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women. The MOU established a standard set of procedures (see Chart 2) for dealing with victims and perpetrators of trafficking based on the previously mentioned laws and regulations. There are separate procedures for Thai victims needing reintegration and for non-nationals, as the latter are granted exemption from prosecution under the immigration laws and set aside as witnesses. In due course, public welfare officials cooperate with respective embassies to arrange for their safe repatriation.

In addition to providing a standard set of procedures and facilitating the enforcement of the laws, the MOU signifies both the intention and the covenant of all parties concerned to work together for a common cause. In this manner, the MOU has indeed proved to be a highlight of the Thai model.



Chart 2. Memorandum of Understanding flow chart on procedures to assist children and women victims



RTP = Royal Thai Police
IO = Investigation Officer
DPW = Department of Public Welfare
* = by Criminal Procedure Amendment Act (No. 20) 1999 (see Chart 2)

The actual creation of the MOU required several years of preparation and consultative work. Following the Mekong Subregional Conference on Trafficking in Women and Children, held in November 1997, a number of NGOs conducted research and presented recommendations to various government agencies, other NGOs, and international organizations. A seminar and training session ensued for law enforcers, such as immigration officers and border police, as well as for Department of Public Welfare social workers and NGO staff. Finally, in 1998, a national committee was set up to recommend appropriate strategies – the MOU constitutes one such strategy.

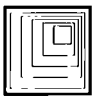
To date, nine training courses on the MOU have been conducted, with approximately one thousand officials in attendance. The response from those who have attended has been positive, and more courses are planned. Meanwhile, the National Youth Bureau and the Thai network have been working on a MOU between the Government and NGOs, a MOU among NGOs, and a MOU between the Governments of Thailand and Cambodia. Additional bilateral and multilateral MOUs may be constructed in the future in order to extend and enhance the original MOU's success.

C. EVALUATION

1. Responsiveness/relevance

The 1996 National Policy and Plan for Action of the Prevention and Eradication of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, as well as the MOU and the five legislative developments, are the culmination of the endeavours and demands of NGOs, the media, and the general public. All components of this Thai model were fabricated after extensive consultations with concerned groups, including those involved in implementation. As demonstrated by the 1996 revision, the overall ten-year National Policy and Plan of Action itself is periodically reviewed in order to keep abreast of new conditions and needs.

As aforementioned, the Office of the National Commission for Women's Affairs served as the organizing centre of this network, before the mandate was shifted to the National Youth



Bureau. The Royal Thai Police, the Office of the Attorney General, the Public Welfare Department, the Immigration Bureau and the National Office for Women's Affairs continued to participate in the effort to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth. In addition, relevant NGOs, international organizations and experts still maintain their involvement, and new actors, both within Thailand and abroad, are added to the training process as needed. It is the continually growing membership of this entire network, with its multifaceted expertise and faculties, which acts on cases and upholds the best interests of the victims. As such, the network's flexible capabilities may be termed as quite responsive and relevant to the challenge.

2. Efficiency

Soon after the enactment of the Prostitution Prevention and Suppression Act in 1996, the ONCWA commissioned the Coalition to Fight Against Children's Exploitation (FACE) to study the law's enforcement. It was found that among the 88 cases under the study: (a) the various Department of Public Welfare shelter homes adequately cared for the child victims referred to them; (b) in quite a few cases, the police failed to lodge proper charges; and (c) similarly, in some cases the defendants were discharged due to "lack of adequate evidence". This proves that, in terms of effective enforcement of this Act, law enforcers require much more training and awareness instruction.

Following the enactment of the Measures in Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Children Act in 1997, and the subsequent signing of the MOU, the Office of the National Commission for Women's Affairs (and later on, the National Youth Bureau) conducted a series of nine training sessions, as mentioned earlier. In preparation for this paper, the NYB conducted an evaluation of this training in four provinces: Srakaew, Kanchanaburi, Songkhla and Chiangmai. It was discovered that most law enforcers are well aware of the existence of the new laws and the MOU, and suitably applied them when incidents occurred. However, there still exists a degree of uncertainty among some officers that the MOU does not enjoy legal status. In response, it was explained that the

signing of the MOU by the highest officials of the respective agencies, and their subsequent relevant orders, constitutes adequate authorization for action, which rectified the confusion.

In their totality, the provisions of the new laws and the MOU have facilitated rather effective cooperation among all parties concerned in dealing with cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children and women. These instruments signify a new trend in Thailand to welcome collaborative efforts in the protection of the rights and dignity of victims.

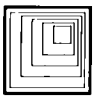
3. Innovativeness

A focus on the welfare of child victims of commercial sexual exploitation rather than on criminalization represents a major shift in Thai official attitudes, although more time and training is necessary before such changes become thoroughly entrenched. In addition, an emphasis on punishing brothel owners, traffickers, pimps, and customers, rather than prostitutes, can also be regarded as an innovative feature of the Thai model. Parents and guardians who collude in commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth are also allotted appropriate punishment. The potential charge of life imprisonment or the death penalty in the case of injury or death evidences the new and heavier penalties prescribed.

The more intimate working relationship between government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations is also new. For instance, the police and NGO workers now collaborate in rescuing victims, with those under 18 years of age automatically sent to Department of Public Welfare shelter homes for rehabilitation and vocational training. As previously earlier, if the victim is a foreigner, the immigration police waive prosecution and entitle the victim to act as a witness before the repatriation process.

4. Sustainability

Both the new Constitution and the legislative developments comprise a permanent framework for dealing with the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children and women. To add to this realm of legal reform, two new bills, both



addressing child pornography, are presently being considered by the national parliament. The first bill aims to control and punish the exhibition and transmission of child pornography in the electronic media or on the internet. The second bill, an amendment to the Penal Code, aims to punish those who photograph children for pornographic purposes, and intends to exact heavier penalties on those who produce and/or distribute child pornographic materials. At least one more bill that deals with the issue (in this case, to protect witnesses) is under consideration.

5. Impact

In a specific sense, there are several practices that have evolved in the past few years which may be cited as concrete examples of the successful impact of the Thai model. In one such example, as a result of the MOU guidelines and the legal developments, it is now regular practice in all public health offices throughout the country to require a physical examination at least once per month of all women working in the sex industry. This has assisted in reducing sexually transmitted diseases and promotes overall better health. In another example, the Crime Suppression Division of the Royal Thai Police has created their own rescue operations unit, with the Public Welfare Department also creating a special division to help participate in these operations, as well as to take care of victims referred to them. Similar counterpart units in all provincial public welfare offices have also been established.

Generally speaking, the most important impact of the Thai model is the actual disappearance of the open and blatant presence of children under 18 years of age in sexual entertainment venues. At most, these practices have gone underground; however, their numbers have clearly been reduced. This is just one of the indications that the essential infrastructure to combat the problem is now effectively in place. From this point forward, a more profound impact will depend on the political will of the Thai Government, the ethical convictions of NGOs and IOs, and the technical and professional competence of all personnel concerned.

6. Conclusion

Historically, the entire movement that exposed the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children started in Thailand, and Thailand remains one of the countries most affected by it. The approach that evolved over the past decade began with the realization that the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth constitutes a grave threat to the core fabric of our social values and ethics. In order to better assist children and youth that are either enticed or lured into the industry, the approach adopted the view that these are victims, not criminals, who are in dire need of protection.

The new perspective also incorporated the expertise and recommendations of a variety of professionals, not only in court cases, when social workers and child psychologists may be called in, but also in the formulation of policy and action strategy, when NGOs and international organizations can provide valuable input. The fact that these international bodies and civil society organizations were not only allowed to participate, but actively sought out by government agencies, is something markedly different from just a decade ago.

In addition, the new approach deems systematic planning as common practice, with seminars, consultations, and proper documentation as basic procedures that are fundamental to policy formulation and implementation. Follow-up, monitoring and evaluation ensure that personnel at all levels of action are competent and responsive to the needs of victims, and that practical feedback is incorporated into present and future initiatives.

In sum, the Thai experience demonstrates that: (a) clear articulation and adequate documentation of the problem can move decisive action; (b) for such action to be truly effective, the expertise and collective efforts from a wide variety of relevant actors are essential; and (c) these initiatives must uphold social justice and human dignity, which can only be realized when the rights of young victims of commercial sexual exploitation are genuinely protected.

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